



PROANTIC  
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## Jacques Birr (1920-2012) - The Great Macaw - Oil On Panel, 1984 Perroquet



600 EUR

Period : 20th century

Condition : Très bon état

Material : Oil painting on wood

### Description

Oil on panel, signed lower right "Jacques Birr" and dated "20.3.84". Dedicated lower left: "à Paul Grenier, ce grand Ara" (to Paul Grenier, this great macaw). Frame: 82 x 55 cm Artwork: 80.5 x 53.5 cm Against a ground of coloured greys, barely disturbed by scratched twigs and strokes of acid green, the macaw stands in three-quarter view, planted on a pale branch laid in broad runs of paint. All the bird's brilliance is concentrated in the plumage: vermillion at the head and breast, saffron yellows edged with black across the coverts, deep blues and turquoises in the flight feathers, then the long tail descending in arrows of red and blue to the foot of the panel. The eye, ringed in bare white, holds the viewer; the massive ivory-and-black bill anchors the composition. The handling is that of Birr's great

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years: frank, nervous, reworked with long black brushstrokes that redraw the feather over the colour without ever lapsing into description. This is the eye of a naturalist joined to that of a painter -- the animal's structure is exact, yet the paint remains paint. Jacques Birr (Paris, 1920 - Paris, 2012), animal painter, lithographer, draughtsman and sculptor. A chemical engineer by training, a graduate of the École nationale supérieure de chimie de Paris, he turned definitively to painting in 1958 and settled in 1969 in an old mill in Normandy. He painted from life at the Tertre Rouge zoo, at the Haras du Pin, and in Basel and Amsterdam. Durand-Ruel gave him an exhibition of sixty paintings in 1973, the Musée de la Chasse another in 1974 -- where a large condor vulture remains permanently held. He designed the "Percheron" postage stamp in 1978 and illustrated Montherlant's *Les Bestiaires* for Gallimard the same year; in 1997 the Monnaie de Paris devoted a major retrospective to him, "L'oeil et la vie". Chevalier of the Légion d'honneur, of the Ordre national du Mérite and of the Arts et des Lettres. Listed in Bénézit. A dedicated work, therefore coming directly from the artist's studio and remaining in private hands ever since.