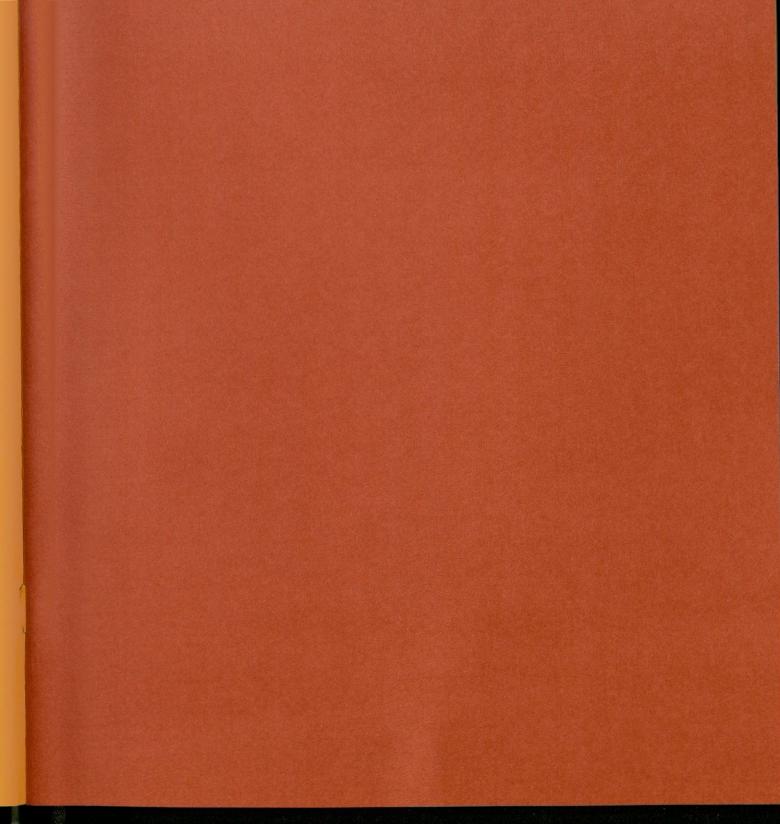


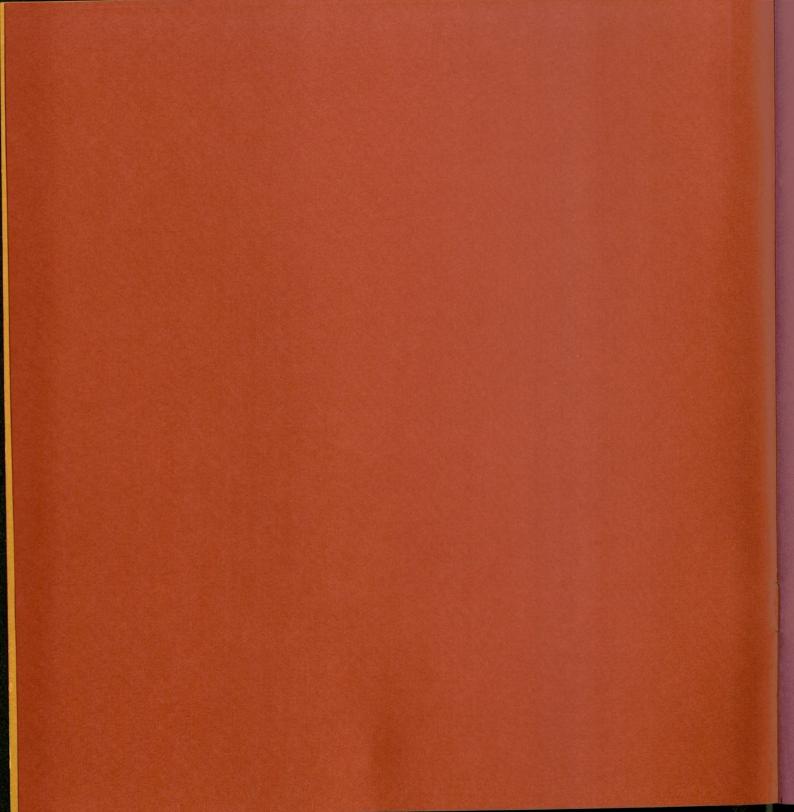


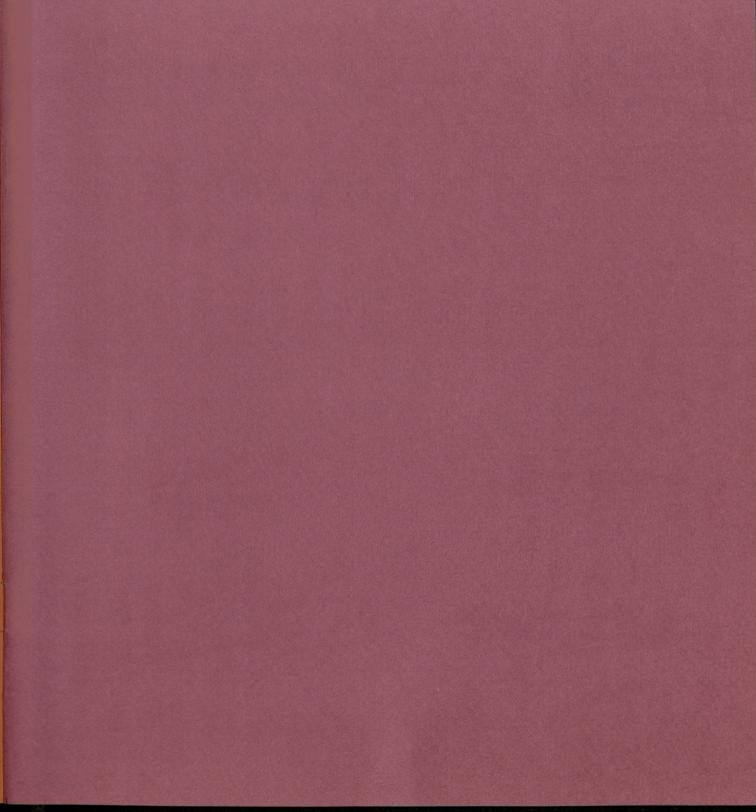
COVER PHOTOGRAPH

From right to left, top to bottom: Mancoba, Pedersen, Ortvad, Bille, Nielsen, Mellerup, Joergensen, Thommesen: Karel and Toni Appel, Dotremont, Ferlov, Alfelt: Jorn, Corneille, Constant, Heerup.

L'Oeil, no. 96, (December 1962) p. 61







CODRA AND THE MODERN

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

It has been the good fortune of the University Art Gallery to count Rachael Sadinsky, student organizer and curator of this exhibition, as an indispensable member of our modest staff. Cobra and the Modern Unconscious: Appel, Corneille, Alechinsky was conceived and installed by Ms. Sadinsky with great attentiveness to detail. Her introductory essay in the catalog situates the artists selected in the context of their times and provides the viewer with an analysis of the motivating forces behind the group to which Alechinsky, Appel, and Corneille had belonged. The recent acquisition of serigraphs, lithographs, and etchings by these artists has enriched our permanent collection in one of its strongest areas — European graphic art of the last 50 years.

We are pleased to present this exhibition and would like to extend our deepest gratitude to Rachael Sadinsky for the consistently high level of her contributions in time, energy, and intelligence to the University Art Gallery program. We would also like to acknowledge the invaluable assistence of our Gallery technician Walter Luckert, to Russell Rapp for his generous help with translations, and to Norma Moses, Gallery secretary, for her good cheer and cooperation.

UNCONSCIOUS*

* Appel, Corneille, Alechinsky

In the spirit of optimism following World War II, a number of European intellectuals was attracted to Marxism and its promise of a new classless society to replace the troubled nation-states of the modern era. Sympathetic to this new society, Belgian writer Christian Dotremont (b.1922, Tervueren), Danish painter Asger Jorn (b. 1919, Verjrum, d. 1973, Copenhagen), and Dutch artists Christiaan Karel Appel (b. 1921, Amsterdam), Corneille Guillaume van Beverloo (b.1922, Liège, of Dutch parentage), and Constant Anton Nieuwenhuys (b.1920, Amsterdam) founded the group Cobra in Paris in 1948. Revolutionary both in political and artistic principles, they intended to create a "new art" representative of this new society and to help in its formation. To the artists of Cobra. this "new art" entailed devising different and experimental methods of creative expression. They rejected the intellectualism and aesthetic standards of traditional western culture in their search for a new artistic language. During this short collaboration in the years 1948-1951, Cobra artists actively expounded their beliefs in their periodicals and European exhibitions. The name "Cobra" was derived from the capitals of the artists' native countries: COpenhagen, BRussels, and Amsterdam. The name itself implies the aggressive nature and revolutionary orientation of the group. In the magazine Cobra, one contemporary reviewer of the group's manifestos and art articles noted "that this magazine reptile was to sink its poison fangs into its opponents."1

The context in which Cobra evolved is significant: the newly founded United Nations was experimenting in world organization for international cooperation despite the rising fears and tensions of the Cold War; the Marshal Plan, (an American scheme for European economic recovery as opposed to the Cominform, the Communist plan) was implemented. France, in the aftermath of de Gualle's resignation, was formulating a new power structure with the Fourth French Republic. Denmark, Holland, and Belgium were dealing with the economic crises of the post-war years.

• Existentialism, as formulated by the Danish philosopher Søren Kierkegaard and later refined by Heidegger, Jaspers, and Sartre, stressed the importance of the individual. Its impact during the late 1940s was an important and lasting one. Every man was viewed as a tragic figure, yet capable of heroic actions. Man's "freedom" was acquired through responsibility and commitment to action in the community of men. The metaphysical theories of Whitehead, Moore, and Russell represented another possibility: the philosophy of the organism, that is to say, a continuum between God and the natural world. God was identified as the unifying force behind world processess: (e.g., scientific theory, subjective experiences, etc.). Russell investigated crea-

tivity through scientific methods while Moore's ethical theory illustrated the non-objective meaning of "good" and "right." A third trend in philosophy was logical positivism of Ludwig Wittgenstein and the Vienna Circle: these philosophers exerted a radical influence on the nature of the field in that they believed metaphysics, theology, and ethics of modern cluture were meaningless. The aim of philosophy, according to logical positivists, was not to understand the world but to analyze the uses of language and the property of sentences. They stressed empirical knowledge gained through personal experience and observation, or through knowing what observations would be required to verify a personal experience.

Post-war society saw a number of influential experiments in the field of psychology: B.F. Skinner offered behavorist theories which involved stimulus and response in an objective and empirical approach. The Gestalt theorists investigated the nature of sensory experience and perception. The works of Freud and Jung had a major impact on western culture. Hoping to release man's true identiy, Freud explored the submerged unconscious and the occurrence of archetypes illustrating the "wisdom of the ages." The effects of his work left an indelible mark on western culture.

The arts of post-war Europe reflected serious experimentation in all media. "Musique concrète" introduced the elements of chance, randomness, and indeterminacy, as opposed to ultrarationality in totally organized music. The cerebral formulas of atonality in the works by Hanns Eisler and Harold Morris exemplify the trend of musique concrete; ultrarationality is illustrated by the 12-tone pitch arrangement by Schoenberg in which the pitches are organized in a continuous pattern. Another current practice in music was the war-related composition designed to serve as remembrances of the recent horror. Schoenberg's A Survivor of Warsaw and Henri Aauguet's Symphonie expiatoire are works in this mode. In the area of theatre, the post-war audiences experienced the proliferation of new works by the existentialist authors Sartre, Camus, and Montherlant. Their plays underscored the alienation and the intellectual and spiritual rootlessness of modern man. Key figures in the existential movement, these artists created psychological dramas of "extreme" situations. Borrowing techniques from the theorist poet Antonin Artaud, the new theatre functioned as a rite to strip the audience of the conventions of modern culture, such as reason and logical

language, through an assault of visual and tonal images, often violent and shocking.

• In literature, the proliferation of translations during the 1930s and 1940s gave international fame to Thornton Wilder, Sartre, Camus, Claudel, Hemingway, Eliot, and Faulkner. Of particular importance to formal structure, Hemingway radicalized twentieth-century writing by his journalistic style of short sentences and tough talk coupled with symbolism and stream of consciousness techniques. Eliot addressed himself to guestions of form evidenced by his predilection for establishing mood over empirical statements of fact. Camus' Myth of Sisyphus heightened the reader's awareness of the absurd — of the inescapable difficulty of living with the world or without it. Experimental authors in the 1940s, such as Beckett, Cayrol, Vercors, and Gascar wrote novels that were politically uncommitted and free of philosophical concerns. Across the channel, British authors were preoccupied with illustrating ideas rather than creating characters. Joyce's influence was perhaps the most significant: through the use of interior monologues and stream of consciousness, Joyce's works reinvented language.

• Of all the arts surrounding Cobra's formation, the movements and countermovements in the visual arts had the most pronounced influence on the group's inception. Yet for an adequate assessment of the important ideas in post-war society one must return to the early part of the twentieth century and the "de Stijl" group. Founded in Leiden, Holland, in 1917 by Theo van Doesburg and Piet Mondrian, this group of artists stressed reason and intellect through the rejection of sense data and visual reality. They sought to create a universal language involving geometric abstraction. Following the dissolution of de Stijl in 1931, this conception of art was maintained by the artists of the Abstraction Création movement in Paris. Led by August Herbin and Vantongerloo, the group's membership included a number of ex-de Stijl artists. These abstractionists attempted to promote non-objective art by mounting commercial exhibitions. Their artwork emphasized formal factors and has often been defined as art concret, a style of pure, precise visual forms. Like the de Stijl artist, the Abstraction group created objective forms divorced from the natural world, without lyrical and symbolic meaning.

A related trend which perpetuated the idea of objectivity was Abstraction Lyrique of 1947: it lasted through the late 1950s. Alternately known as Action painting, Informal Art, or Tachisme, this style embodied a psychic abstraction yet attached no significance to the spontaneous gesture paintings produced. This trend of abstraction was complemented by New York artists in the early 1940s through the late 1950s. These artists, called Abstract Expressionists, the New York School, or Action painters, included Arshile Gorky, Jackson Pollock, and Franz Kline. In contrast to their European counterparts, American expressionists were non-objective, in that their works illustrated the dynamic process of the artists' efforts.

Concurrent with these movements was the surrealist association of artists and poets originating in the late 1920s. André Breton's manifesto of 1924 proclaimed the rejection of traditional forms and subjects, including the very foundations of modern art: Cubism, abstraction, and expressionism. A primary force behind Surrealism was Freud and his notion of the submerged unconscious. Using techniques of dream analysis and automatism, Freud believed one's subjective reality is always present in the repressed image of word, the "original scene" of

the first trauma, obsessive imagery. Breton adapted Freud's methods of psychoanalysis to a visual arts orientation which emphasized a primordial source of creation. Breton stressed the mechanical, unpredictable, uncensored, accidental, and chance effects in automatism which eliminated the occurrence of repetition because control was deliberately absent.

 Automatism and other surrealist techniques had considerable influence on Cobra artists. Jorn was attracted to the formal tenets of the surrealists during his years of study in Paris around 1936. Following the works of surrealist artists Arp and Miro, Jorn hoped "to end up in automatic and spontaneous painting,"2 as illustrated by his work The Green Beard of 1939. Corneille was originally attracted to the surrealist poets, most notably Lautreamont, who illustrated man's integral relationship with all other forms of life. Soon afterward, Corneille began to work in the surrealist manner, i.e., automatic means in drawing and hazard in painting. The Belgian painter Pierre Alechinsky (b. 1927, Brussels) who joined Cobra in 1949 was also influenced by surrealism. Alechinsky's interest stemmed from the works of Klee and Miró in which biomorphic abstractions were created through the freeplay of brushstrokes.

 Another important post-war movement was art brut whose primary spokesman was the artist Jean Dubuffet. Celebrating the work of psychotics, children, and so-called primitive artists, Dubuffet believed the most potent art involved images that emerge spontaneously from the unconscious without the restraints and prejudices of academic training. As Dubuffet explained in a lecture entitled "Anti-Cultural Positions" given to the Arts Club of Chicago, December 1951: "Personally I believe very much in the values of savagery. I mean instinct, passion, mood, violence, madness." Later he added, "The whole art, the whole literature of Occident rest on the landing of elaborated ideas. But my own art, and my own philosophy, lean entirely on stages more underground. I try always to catch the mental process at a deeper point of its roots, where I am sure the sap is much richer."4

Art brut had a strong impact on Appel and Alechinsky. The former liked Dubuffet's savage forms and simple origin of subjects. Appel saw art brut as a means of making a fresh start in a deliberate rejection of all the academic training he had received. Similarly, Alechinsky was drawn to the vitality and instinct of art brut forms and its rejection of cold abstraction.

The major artists in Cobra were also involved in other projects and movements which strongly influenced and determined Cobra's orientation. Asger Jorn studied in Paris during 1936 at Académie Contemporaine under the training of Léger and was also influenced by Bauhaus and

Kandinsky. During this year he collaborated with Le Corbusier on mural decorations for the Paris International Exhibition. In 1938 Jorn returned to Denmark, where his activities included experimentation in ethnography, folklore, and children's art through his intense involvement with various art groups, such as Linien and Helhesten. These groups included writers and artists and offered periodicals of poetry, art and criticism in addition to hosting international art exhibitions. The Linien group, a surrealist association, hosted an exhibition in 1937 that showed works of Kandinsky, Klee, Arp, Miro, Mondrian, and Doesburg, in addition to works by its own members. The Helhesten periodical which appeared during the years 1940-44 featured articles on archaeology, children's education, ethnography of primitive people, folklore, film, theatre, art, literature, and psychology. The artists involved with Helhesten, many of whom were later associated with Cobra, described themselves as "spontaneous" and "experimental." They hoped to demonstrate the possibility for every man, regardless of his role in society, to express himself in a creative way, thus stimulating a new folk art. Of particular interest to Helhesten artists was mythology. Jorn and fellow members Carl-Henning Pedersen and Egill Jacobsen were termed "creators of new myths," based on their works of fairy tale creatures.

• In 1947 Jorn travelled to Belgium where he gave a lecture at an international artists' conference on behalf of the "Danish Experimental Group." The lecture

focused on the interpretation of symbolism in art and was the result of Jorn's experiments in automatic drawings. It was here that Jorn met Christian Dotremont and joined Le Bureau International du Surréalisme Revolutionnaire.

Founded in 1947 by Dotremont, Edouard Jaguer, and Noël Arnaud, the Revolutionary Surrealist movement was composed primarily of writers. Similar to Helhesten, this group was defined in terms of its Marxist political convictions and an experimental approach to art. A recurrent project of these artists was to explore the pictorial value of writing, a theme soon to become an important aspect of Cobra.

• Karel Appel received his formal training at the Royal Academy of Fine Arts in Amsterdam during 1940-1943. During the war Appel roamed Holland, singing in cabarets and exchanging landscapes for accommodation. After the war he discovered Matisse and Picasso, gaining a feeling for color from the first and a sense of form from the latter. Appel was later attracted to Jean Dubuffet and art brut in his effort to cast off his academic schooling and the influence of Paris. Also during this time he experimented with automatism. Corneille, a self-taught painter, studied design at the School of Fine Arts in Amsterdam. Continuing his studies in Hungary, Corneille discovered the surrealist poets Cendrars and Lautréamont and was attracted to their dark humor and experiments in automatic writing. In 1947, Appel, Corneille, and Constant attended the Belgium conference and were greatly impressed by Jorn's activities in

Denmark. With other artists in Holland they formed in 1947 an experimental group named Reflex. Openly Marxist, the members of Reflex hoped to improve the post-war situation by their art. As Constant wrote in a 1948 edition of the periodical Reflex, "art will be able to exercise its real function, that of a psychic instrument on behalf of all people."5 In pursuit of this aim, the Reflex artists rejected the old ideals of society which they felt were useless in repairing the warscarred world. Instead, they strove to create an experimental art — experimental in the sense that complete freedom in any conceivable way stimulates new creativity. Thus the Reflex artists had great interest in primitive displays of expression which they felt captured the action and essential force of the subject. A primary influence on the movement was Jean Dubuffet and art brut. Following an exhibition of children's art in Amsterdam's Stedelijk Museum, Constant noted its importance in that it illustrated "what enormous creative forces slumber in man's nature" The Dutch Experimental Group participated in a number of exhibitions in Holland plus an exhibition held in Copenhagen in 1948. Entitled Høstudstillingen, this was an international exhibition of experimental art which included works by Reflex artists and Danish artists. Here the stage was set for the Cobra collaboration.

• In 1948 Jorn visited Paris for an exhibition of his works created earlier that year in Djerba, Tunisia. While in Paris, he joined his fellow members of Le Bureau International du Surréalisme Revolutionnaire and attended a conference of the France-Belgium Revolutionary Surrealist group. Also present were the Reflex artists Appel, Corneille, and Constant. Disillusioned with the direction the meeting was taking, Jorn, Dotremont, Appel, Constant, and Corneille left. Later they met in the Notre Dame cafe and founded Cobra as an international group for experimental art.

- •After the formation of Cobra, the artists returned to their native countries, Jorn to Denmark, Dotremont to Belgium. Back in Holland, the Dutch contingent was openly ridiculed. Subsequently, Appel, Corneille, and Constant moved to Paris in 1950 and shared a studio on the rue Sauteuil. Thus Cobra was international both in membership and in centers of activity.
- Joining Cobra in 1949 was a Belgian artist who would soon become an important member of the group. Pierre Alechinsky's interest in visual arts was firmly established in 1924 when he entered the National High School of Architecture and Decorative Arts in Brusssels, where he studied engraving, typography, and book illustration. In 1947 he began painting. First experimenting in abstraction, he was later attracted to art created by children and the insane. Sharing the same anti-aesthetic and anti-intellectual position as the Cobra group, Alechinsky joined the association with the encouragement of fellow Belgian Dotremont. Once in Cobra, Alechinsky held the post of editor for a number of editions of Cobra and became one of the moving spirits for the group.

- The primary spokesmen for the group were Dotremont, Jorn, and Constant. Publishing Cobra manifestos and articles on art in the Cobra periodicals, they hoped to combat the rebuffs and refusals of Parisian society which characterized Cobra as "bastard art," and to belie the discouraging reactions elsewhere.
- Once formed, Cobra activities never ceased for its short existence. As one later day reviewer described the group, "Cobra was nothing if not gregarious and assertive." They worked on joint collaborations, such as the 1949 excursion to Bregnerød, Denmark, where a number of Cobra artists decorated a house from floor to ceiling. Also Cobra researched the collaboration of artist and poet in the creation of peinture-mots (word pictures), such as the pieces made by Dotremont and Jorn. There were international meetings to discuss the development of art. Moreover, the artists of Cobra published two periodicals: Le Petit Cobra under the editors Jorn and Dotremont, and Cobra, which rotated editorship and publication site to accommodate the international nature of the group.
- Other artists involved in Cobra during various times of its existence were the Dutch artists Theo Wolverkamp, Lucebert, Anton Rooskans, Eugène Brands, and Jan Nieuwenhuys; and the Belgian artists Louis van Lint and Hugo Claus. A large number of Danish artists, primarily ex-Helhesten artists, were also associated with Cobra: Carl-Henning Pedersen, Else Alfelt, Atlan, Ejler Bille, Jacques Doucet, Sonja Ferlov Stephen Gilbert, Avavar Gudnason, Henry Heerup, and Egill Jacobsen.

COBRA EXHIBITIONS

1948 - Galerie Jean Bard, Paris.

1949 – (March) – La Fin et Les Moyens, Brussels. This exhibition of 19 artists contained contributions of the Cobra group and Le Groupe Surréalisme Revolutionnaire.

(November) – Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam. This exhibition is considered to be the first official Cobra show.

1950 - Cobra, Galerie Apollo, Brussels.

1951 - Cobra, Librarie 73, Paris.

Cinq peintres de Cobra, Galerie Pierre, Paris.

Deuxième exposition internationale d'art experimental, Palais des Beaux-Arts, Liège.

Exhibiting the works of 35 artists, this was to be Cobra's final exhibition as a group. They attracted a varied mixture of artists "in order that they might die in beauty" (one of the slogans of the exhibition).

Major Cobra Retrospective Exhibitions:

1956 - Galerie Taptoe, Brussels.

1960 - Cobra 1960, Lefebre Gallery, New York.

1961 - Cobra dix ans après, Galerie Mathies, Paris.

1964 - Artists of the Cobra Movement, Makler Gallery, Philadelphia.

1966 – Cobra 1948/51, Boymans/Van Beuningen Museum, Rotterdam.

1968 - La Balance, Brussels.

Cobra, Galerie Ariel Seibu, Tokyo.

1973 - Cobra, Gallerie Mamede, Lisbon.

1974 - Cobra, Hotel de Ville, Brussels.

•When Cobra was founded in 1948 all the artists shared the post-war optimism for mankind's future. Marxism had particular interest for these artists in its internationalism and identification with the common man. Cobra artists felt they had a social responsibility to create a new art since they felt the pre-war movements (e.g., Surrealism, abstraction, and Social Realism) with their aesthetic pretensions of "Art for Art's sake" were unsuitable for this new society. Hence Cobra artists preferred to identify themselves as an experimental group. As Constant wrote in one of Cobra's manifestos, they hoped to create "an art which suggests rather than specifies and which, by means of awakening associations and (provoking) speculations thereupon, shall bring into existence a new manner of seeing."8 Blending innovative subjects with spontaneous compositions. Cobra artists developed a new art responsive to their motivations and assumed responsibilities.

The majority of forms basic to Cobra can be traced to Denmark and the experiments in folk art and myths by the Helhesten art group. Children's and primitive art also provided inspiration for Cobra artists. Blending these sources of subject matter with their previous experiments in automatism and spontaneous art, Cobra artists soon developed a "Cobra language." Characteristic of this language is the world of imaginary creatures that gave expression to the fundamental images of nature. During the Cobra years, the Danish members' subjects ranged from images recognizable to "primitive" or common people to imaginary beasts reminiscent of folklore

themes. Jorn worked on several projects, including historical pictures, and aganaks, a breed of friendly monsters. The Dutch Cobra artists primarily worked with bestiary creatures, fairies, child-inspired figures, and earthly paradises composed of mineral and vegetable forms. Appel's work reflected the optimism of the early Cobra years in his compositions involving birds and puppets. Corneille travelled to Africa shortly after Cobra was formed, where he found the native myths and brilliant light inspiring. Recurrent themes of his work during Cobra years included cellular and mineral compositions and aerial views of urban scenes.

When analyzing the Cobra language one finds it exhibits strong similarities to Jung and his notion of the collective unconscious. Jung's theory of archetypes – a definite set of mythological images of unknown origin – overlap with Cobra's art in that both revolve around fairy tales, myths, legends, and folklore, and that every man possesses this set of images. To the artists of Cobra, "The mass, which has been conditioned to concepts of beauty which originated outside of common human experience, does not yet recognize its own creative possibilities." The artists of Cobra hoped to stimulate the public into recognizing these common images and thus provide the basis for a "new art."

Two members of Cobra, Jorn and Alechinsky, explored symbolism in their art. As previously mentioned, Jorn's work before the Cobra years involved the interpretation of symbolism. Written over the years 1946-1951,

Jorn's book La Roue de la fortune: Méthodologie des cultes (1957) was based on his studies in folklore and automatism. Experimenting in automatic drawings, Jorn pursued the notion of the essential image apparent to all viewers. However, due to the multiplicity of interpretations, Jorn concluded each drawing must be subjectively analyzed. Examples of symbolic Cobra works are Jorn's War Visions, a series which incorporates a recurrent motif of an eagle, symbolic of the Cold War, and Alechinsky's Politique Internationale which illustrates the "big fish eating little fish" theory of politics.

•Through the use of automatism and techniques borrowed from children's, primitive, and psychotic art, the artists of Cobra deliberately rejected any stylistic formalism. Tapping a primordial source for their interpretations of given subjects, Cobra artists were "primary activators," employing bright color and line in a spontaneous and therefore unquiue style: as Appel explains, "What is

happening I cannot foresee; it is a surprise:"11

An important theory advanced by Cobra was the notion of a decentralized movement. Though Cobra was initiated in Paris, the group decided not to retain a central base in Paris, or elsewhere for that matter. By decentralization, Cobra hoped to avoid being classified and labelled, a method practiced by Paris movements (and centralized movements in general) to define their identity in relation to opposing movements. Cobra also considered centralization limiting in the sense that one may not freely experiment under an accepted identity and still be accepted

by the public. Hence the international association chose a marginal position which allowed greather periodical Cobra exemplified this notice that the periodical Cobra exemplified the public Properties of the public

• The guiding force of

basis was Christian Dotremont, and secretary general.

Jorn explains, "It was Cour big shock (that was his never failed to impress us withit tation." Only now do I see the iforce which kept the Cobra moany kind of aesth formalism, but abseciously we arrived at a unit an atmosphere of continualism.

The essence of (being an experimental group, novations rather than definitive their artwork. Cobra artists perce remaining in process, in a contincontext of the history of modern to be seen as a bringing together, puthan ever before, of ideas and feeling in the late eighteenth and early nir the Romantic Period . . . it was a chembodying Romanti between art and soc where it laid its own spe

'R. Dahlmann Olsen, Danish Abstract Art: A Danish Contribution to International Development in Art Since 1933, (Denmark: Leif Thomsen, 1964): unpaged

²Guy Atkins, **Jorn in Scandinavia 1930-1953**, [New York: George Wittenborn, Inc., 1968]: page 33.

³Dubuffet and the Anti-culture, (New York: Richard L. Feigen and Co., 1962): page 2.

4lbid., page 8.

⁵Constant Nieuwenhuys, ''Cultuur en Contra- Cultuur,'' trans. Alexandra Broches, **Artists Proof** 6 (n. 9-10): page 79.

oldid.

⁷Atkins, Jorn in Scandinavia 1930-1953, pages 86-87.

Robert Welsh, "Dutch Painting and the Cobra Group," Canadart 20 [May 1963]: page 161.

⁹Willemijn Leonore Stokvis, **Cobra,** (Amsterdam: De Bezige Bij, 1974): page 515.

**Welsh, "Dutch Painting and the Cobra Group," page 161.

"Hugo Claus, **Karel Appel, painter,** (New York: Harry N. Abrams, 1962): page 5.

¹²Atkins, Jorn in Scandinavia 1930-1953, page 87.

13Stokvis, Cobra, pages 516-517.

FOOTNOTES

- Andreasen Erik. Carl-Henning Pedersen Paintings, Watercolors, Drawings. Pennsylvania: Carnegie Institute, 1968.
- Atkins, Guy. Jorn in Scandinavia 1930-1953. New York: George Wittenborn, Inc., 1968.
- Claus, Hugo. Karel Appel, painter. New York: Harry N. Abrams, 1962.
- Cummings, Frederick J., and Sharp, Ellen. Cobra and Contrasts The Winston-Malbin Collection.

 Detroit: Detroit Institute of Arts, 1974.
- Dotremont, Christian. "Cobra." L'Oeil 96 (December 1962): 56-65, 113-114.
- Dubuffet and the Anticulture. New York: Richard L. Feigen and Co., 1962.
- Henning, Edward B. The Spirit of Surrealism. Cleveland Museum of Art with Indiana University Press, 1979.
- Nieuwenhuys, Constant. Constant: von Cobra bis New Babylon. Munich: Galerie Heseler.
- Nieuwenhuys, Constant. "Cultuur en Contra-Cultuur." Trans. Alexandra Broches. Artists Proof 6 (n. 9-10): 78-79.
- Olsen, R. Dahlmann: Danish Abstract Art: A Danish Contribution to International Development in Art Since 1933. Denmark: Leif Thomsen, 1964.
- Sandberg, Willem. The Dutch Contribution to the International Development of Art Since 1945.
- Seuphor, Michel. Abstract Painting in Flanders. Paris: Editions Arcade et Fonds Mercator, 1974.
- Stokvis, Willemijn Leonore. Cobra. Amsterdam: De Bezige Bij, 1974.
- Welsh, Robert, "Dutch Painting and the Cobra Group." Canadart 20 (May 1963): 158-162.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Three hundred copies of this catalog were printed by the University Printshop, composition is by The TypePeople of Binghamton and graphic design is by J.E. Grossvogel.

