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15 MARS
16 JUILLET 2023

MONET
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LÉON FRÈRE DE L'ARTISTE
ET COLLECTIONNEUR

MONET

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*Françoise Cauvin-Monet
(1926 - 2017)*

Dessinatrice, peintre

*Musée du Luxembourg, jusqu'au 16 juillet 2023
Galerie Au Médicis, du 11 au 21 mai 2023*



Françoise CAUVIN -MONET
(1926 -2017)

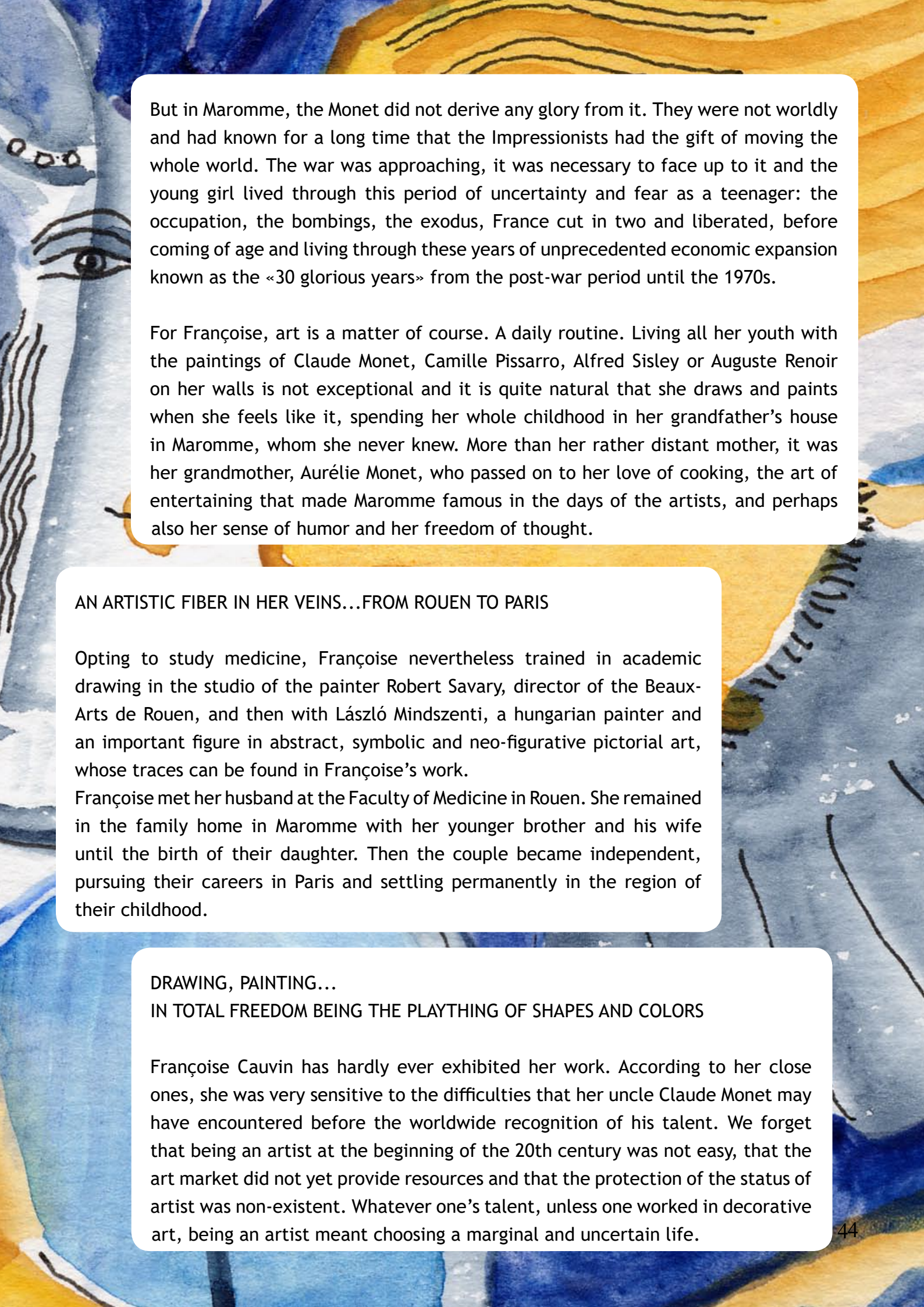
THE NORMANDY COAST AS A FAMILY HOME

Françoise Cauvin was born on 9th of September 1926, into one of those families that one might be called «19th century bourgeois», yet whose fortune was not so much the result of a name, rank or heritage. Rather, it was from the industrial revolution that opened up prospects for those who knew how to seize the opportunities created by the technological and scientific upheavals of the time. When the two young Monet brothers arrived at their aunt's house in Normandy - while Claude was bored at school and dreaming of the life of an artist - Léon, the elder brother, was a grocery shop clerk before taking an interest in chemistry and then joining a Swiss chemical company as a sales representative, which was developing in the dye, pigment and textile markets. « Colors » then entered the Monet family !

Léon Monet, Françoise's grandfather, was one of the first entrepreneurs to ride the wave of industrialization and who had the intelligence, the talent and the idea to develop these flourishing industries, quickly putting their families out of business while obtaining the recognition of their peers. A family from the land, but from a very fashionable one, the antechamber of a Paris that was not at the time as prized as it is today. Léon and Claude Monet were therefore born in Paris, but quickly and permanently settled in the Normandy region, from Le Havre to Rouen, and more particularly in Maromme for Léon Monet and his family, who made his large house the cradle of several generations.

Louise Monet, Françoise's mother, is Claude Monet's niece: art and painting are therefore at the very heart of the family, intrinsically linked. On the one hand, Léon was a collector, supporter and friend of artists in the region, and on the other hand, Claude Monet, who would become the master that everybody knows and who would tip French art into a new era: that of modern art, which would mark the break in every respect with the academic art known until then.

Françoise was born during the «Roaring Twenties». A time of freedom, of Art Deco creations, when women were muses and liberated. Paris is a party, the Normandy province celebrates its impressionists: Claude Monet died just after his birth, but after the dark years and the humiliations of his early years, the consecration took place during his lifetime. In 1917, he received his first public commission, impressionism resonated throughout the world and in 1927, the extraordinary exhibition of water lilies at the Musée de l'Orangerie opened its doors to the public. It was one of the largest monumental works of the time, the «Sistine Chapel of Impressionism», as the painter André Masson rightly said.



But in Maromme, the Monet did not derive any glory from it. They were not worldly and had known for a long time that the Impressionists had the gift of moving the whole world. The war was approaching, it was necessary to face up to it and the young girl lived through this period of uncertainty and fear as a teenager: the occupation, the bombings, the exodus, France cut in two and liberated, before coming of age and living through these years of unprecedented economic expansion known as the «30 glorious years» from the post-war period until the 1970s.

For Françoise, art is a matter of course. A daily routine. Living all her youth with the paintings of Claude Monet, Camille Pissarro, Alfred Sisley or Auguste Renoir on her walls is not exceptional and it is quite natural that she draws and paints when she feels like it, spending her whole childhood in her grandfather's house in Maromme, whom she never knew. More than her rather distant mother, it was her grandmother, Aurélie Monet, who passed on to her love of cooking, the art of entertaining that made Maromme famous in the days of the artists, and perhaps also her sense of humor and her freedom of thought.

AN ARTISTIC FIBER IN HER VEINS...FROM ROUEN TO PARIS

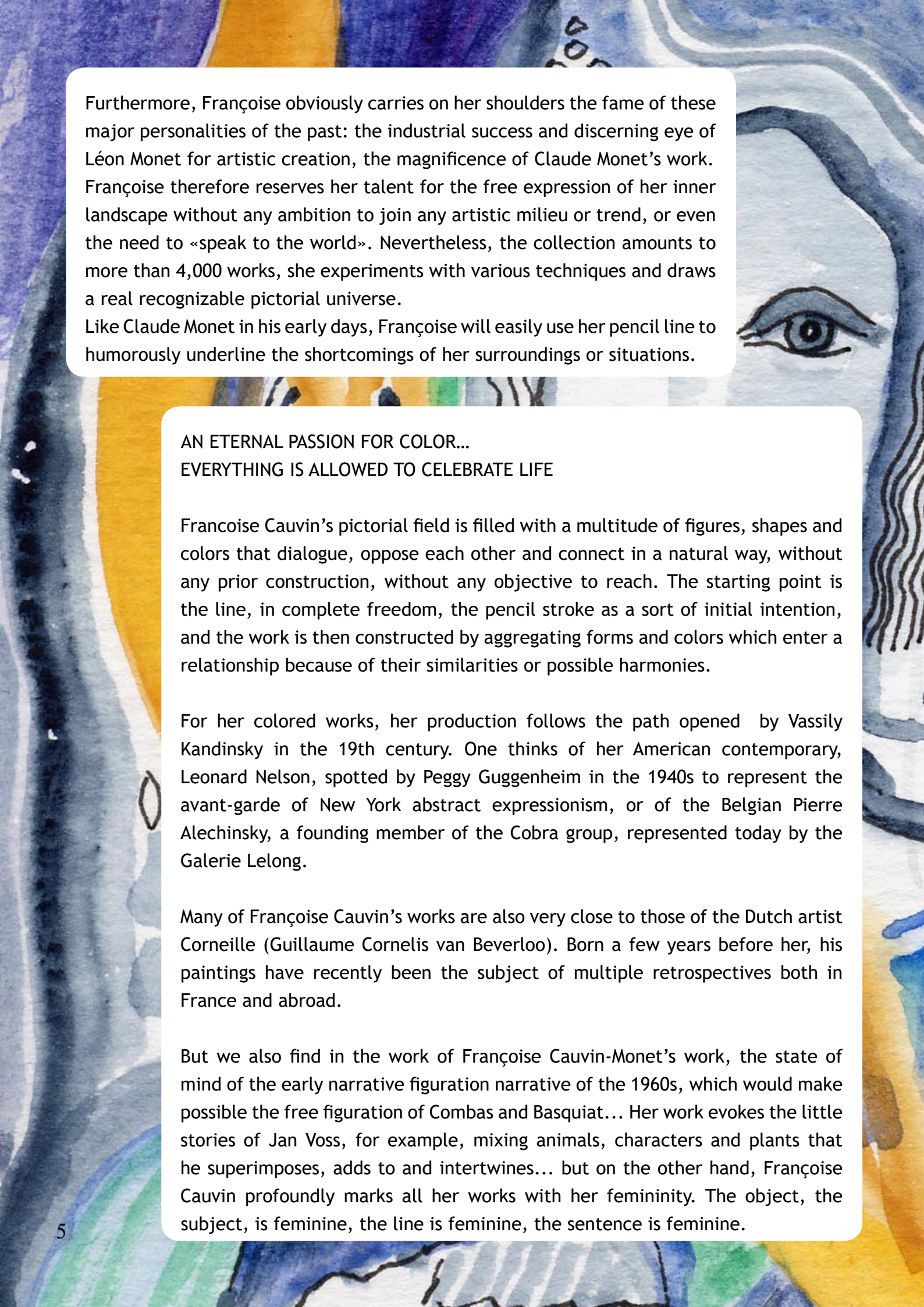
Opting to study medicine, Françoise nevertheless trained in academic drawing in the studio of the painter Robert Savary, director of the Beaux-Arts de Rouen, and then with László Mindszenti, a hungarian painter and an important figure in abstract, symbolic and neo-figurative pictorial art, whose traces can be found in Françoise's work.

Françoise met her husband at the Faculty of Medicine in Rouen. She remained in the family home in Maromme with her younger brother and his wife until the birth of their daughter. Then the couple became independent, pursuing their careers in Paris and settling permanently in the region of their childhood.

DRAWING, PAINTING...

IN TOTAL FREEDOM BEING THE PLAYTHING OF SHAPES AND COLORS

Françoise Cauvin has hardly ever exhibited her work. According to her close ones, she was very sensitive to the difficulties that her uncle Claude Monet may have encountered before the worldwide recognition of his talent. We forget that being an artist at the beginning of the 20th century was not easy, that the art market did not yet provide resources and that the protection of the status of artist was non-existent. Whatever one's talent, unless one worked in decorative art, being an artist meant choosing a marginal and uncertain life.

An abstract painting featuring a large, detailed eye on the right side, looking towards the left. The background is composed of various colors and textures, including blue, yellow, and purple. Wavy lines and organic shapes are scattered throughout the composition.

Furthermore, Françoise obviously carries on her shoulders the fame of these major personalities of the past: the industrial success and discerning eye of Léon Monet for artistic creation, the magnificence of Claude Monet's work. Françoise therefore reserves her talent for the free expression of her inner landscape without any ambition to join any artistic milieu or trend, or even the need to «speak to the world». Nevertheless, the collection amounts to more than 4,000 works, she experiments with various techniques and draws a real recognizable pictorial universe.

Like Claude Monet in his early days, Françoise will easily use her pencil line to humorously underline the shortcomings of her surroundings or situations.

AN ETERNAL PASSION FOR COLOR...


EVERYTHING IS ALLOWED TO CELEBRATE LIFE

Françoise Cauvin's pictorial field is filled with a multitude of figures, shapes and colors that dialogue, oppose each other and connect in a natural way, without any prior construction, without any objective to reach. The starting point is the line, in complete freedom, the pencil stroke as a sort of initial intention, and the work is then constructed by aggregating forms and colors which enter a relationship because of their similarities or possible harmonies.

For her colored works, her production follows the path opened by Vassily Kandinsky in the 19th century. One thinks of her American contemporary, Leonard Nelson, spotted by Peggy Guggenheim in the 1940s to represent the avant-garde of New York abstract expressionism, or of the Belgian Pierre Alechinsky, a founding member of the Cobra group, represented today by the Galerie Lelong.

Many of Françoise Cauvin's works are also very close to those of the Dutch artist Corneille (Guillaume Cornelis van Beverloo). Born a few years before her, his paintings have recently been the subject of multiple retrospectives both in France and abroad.

But we also find in the work of Françoise Cauvin-Monet's work, the state of mind of the early narrative figuration narrative of the 1960s, which would make possible the free figuration of Combas and Basquiat... Her work evokes the little stories of Jan Voss, for example, mixing animals, characters and plants that he superimposes, adds to and intertwines... but on the other hand, Françoise Cauvin profoundly marks all her works with her femininity. The object, the subject, is feminine, the line is feminine, the sentence is feminine.



Less dreamlike than Chagall, she is nevertheless influenced by him. Especially in terms of themes: childhood, which she evokes in the same happy way as he did, the omnipresent animal world, the couple that merges into a single being, the fascination for circus artists... but also the rhythm of the canvas and the mixture of symbolic, stylized drawing and contrasting color. Picasso said of Marc Chagall : « I don't know where he gets these images from; he must have an angel in his head », and this is the feeling one gets when faced with Françoise Cauvin's works, an abundance and a fairytale that unfolds throughout the works.

DRAWING CONSTANTLY, EVERYWHERE, AT EVERY MOMENT.
CAPTURING EVERYTHING AROUND US ON THE SPOT...

Françoise Cauvin's drawings can be both caricatures, as well as academic portraits or landscapes, but also totally imaginary and stylized. One sometimes finds the influence of that genius of free and evocative line that was Jean Cocteau, from whom she also borrows her technique: Françoise uses black watercolor, sometimes Indian ink or graphite enhanced with oil pastel, gouache or white. Her drawings are often pasted on paper. She also collages papers or prints. Françoise has a real aptitude for drawing and sketches from her close ones, passers-by, circus performers or the animals that surround her. Her eyes are sharp, her line relevant, her dexterity captures the detail that immediately sets the tone. The pencil line underlies all his work. Always present here or there, visible or invisible, frame or decorum.

Françoise Cauvin painted mainly indoors. She did not follow the example of her great-uncle, who lived only to translate Mother Nature onto canvas, the multiple brushes dipped in oil, the infinite colorimetry of pigments and turpentine. Françoise opts for a more immediate creation. Acrylic on paper, canvas, cardboard... pencil, felt pen, collage, silk paper... Seizing the moment, an expression, a spontaneity. Several themes are recurrent and translate her daily life as a woman of the 20th century. Her couple and her loved one, her beloved daughter, the animals that touch her, the circus that gives her back her childlike soul for a moment. Numerous portraits or self-portraits of staged women: the singer, the dancer, the elegant woman, the mother, the pregnant woman... Rarer are the totally abstract works, a series of totems or the spirit of a stained-glass window, many are a humorous wink to reality. Beasts are so human, humans so animal...



Françoise Cauvin-Monet

(1926 - 2017)

Expositions

*Léon Monet,
frère de l'artiste
et collectionneur.*

*Musée du Luxembourg
15 mars - 16 juillet 2023
Paris (France)*



*Bestiaire et abstractions
de Françoise Cauvin*

*Galerie Au Médicis
11 - 21 mai 2023
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www.fcauvin-monet.fr

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