

Arch Daily
**The Almine Rech Gallery In New York
Presents An Exhibition Of Tapestries
Made By Le Corbusier**

By Mónica Arellano, August 8, 2022



Cortesía de Almine Rech Gallery

For sixty years, Le Corbusier used a wide variety of media to explore the themes and forms of his art, ranging from drawing to urbanism and including painting, architecture, and sculpture. He first discovered tapestry in 1936, in response to a request from Marie Cuttoli, who was then commissioning artworks woven in a factory in Aubusson from modern painters. However, it was twelve years later that he expressed his interest in producing woven artworks based on his drawings and found his way to this city in central France, where a true renaissance of tapestry had begun, at the initiative of Jean Lurçat and Jean Picart Le Doux.

This facet of Le Corbusier is little known, however, he made around 30 tapestries that speak of his creative processes and concerns outside of architecture. As a result, Almine Rech Gallery in New York will present an exhibition from September 14th to October 22nd, 2022, where historical tapestries from Le Corbusier's entire career will be collected. Many of the works –dating from 1936– are presented to the public for the first time, being drawn directly from the Le Corbusier Foundation or from private and public collections (such as MoMA).

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*"His interest in this art form serves as a response to the challenge posed to architects by Fernand Léger, who had blamed them for "radically imposing" their "smooth" and "new" surfaces. Le Corbusier came to believe that "by its texture, its material, by the reality of its production," tapestry "brings its own warmth to an interior," as he wrote in 1962 to Pierre Baudouin, a young professor at the art school in Aubusson. Starting in 1948, Baudouin allowed him to transpose some of his Purist compositions of the 1920s and to echo the assemblages of objects "with poetic reaction" that had followed."
- Almine Rech.*

Revealingly, Le Corbusier's work on the cartoons intended for Baudouin materializes the unity of his artistic thought. In contrast to his previous attitude during the Purist period, when his paintings had determined the plans of his houses, he affirmed in a letter to Brazilian architect Oscar Niemeyer that he had "found in tapestry an opening capable of receiving part of [his] mural work where [his] vocation as a painter finds its architectonic sustenance in full awareness."

"The variety of artistic techniques used by Le Corbusier to design the cartoons of some twenty-six tapestries that Baudouin produced can be seen in the artworks brought together by the gallery, from colored pencil to pastel, oil, and papier collé. In this way, the exhibition reveals all the resources of an architect who had told Guggenheim Museum director James Johnson Sweeney in 1957: "I am a painter, very seriously." Exploring all the processes used on paper, the exhibition expresses the vividness of his imagination by unveiling the originality and strength of his woven artworks within the wider context of postwar tapestry."

- Jean-Louis Cohen, architectural historian and curator of Le Corbusier: An Atlas of Modern Landscapes at MoMA (2013).