

JAN YOORS
TANTRA SERIES, 1975 - 1977

September 14 - November 25, 2017



Yellow Tantra, 1977
Tapestry
82 x 88 inches



Full Joy Tantra, 1975-1977
Vintage gelatin silver print
10 x 15 1/8 inches



Purple Tantra, 1976
Gouache
8 x 10 inches

L. Parker Stephenson Photographs is pleased to present its third exhibition of work by Belgian-American artist Jan Yoors (b. 1922 Antwerp - d. 1977 New York City). The presentation of his final series titled *Tantra*, dating from 1975-1977, includes vintage photographs, gouache paintings and a tapestry (the image of which was used for a Belgian postage stamp two years ago). Please join us for the **opening reception on Wednesday, September 13th, 6-8pm.**

Tantra represents the culmination of Jan Yoors' artistic vision and practice. Created in three separate media in the years preceding his death at age 55, the series was built around the tantric idea that focusing on a salient detail can lead to an understanding of the greater world. As in much of his earlier work, Yoors began with dramatically cropped photographs, then translated the shapes for his paintings and mural sized tapestries into blocks of vibrant color and deep black. His use of flattened shapes and saturated hues shares affinities with hard edge and color field painters as well as modernist design and pop art, however, Yoors consciously maintained independence from categorization.

After heroically serving in the Resistance during World War II, Yoors moved to London where he studied international law, then launched his career as an artist, sculpting and weaving. He immigrated to New York in 1950 and was joined the following year by his wives Annebert van Wettum and Marianne Citroën. Yoors relished the city's diverse cultures and found inspiration in the starkness of post-war modernist architecture as a tabula rasa for tapestries to spiritually animate a communal space. He described the tapestries "*as a way to give human - that is, lyrical - scale to massive corporate architectural environments, and to widen horizons and heighten the awareness of human vitality, dignity, and of the inherent joy of life.*"

Yoors worked with architects Gordon Bunshaft and Marcel Breuer on site-specific installations while also participating in gallery exhibitions. His tapestries were unique, designed for grand scale and woven by Annebert and Marianne on a 15-foot vertical loom in

their own New York home-studio. This differed significantly from noted artists like Fernand Leger, Alexander Calder, Juan Miró, Sonya Delaunay, Picasso and others whose paintings were scaled up, woven abroad and created in editions to meet demand.

Yoors' first museum exhibition was in 1955 at the Montclair Art Museum and he represented the United States at the International Biennial of Contemporary Tapestries, in Switzerland in 1962 and 1965. In the 1960s and 70s his weavings hung in galleries alongside those of Raoul Dufy, Miró, and Calder; and more recently the Museum of Art and Design featured one of his tapestries on the cover of its *Crafting Modernism: Midcentury American Art and Design* exhibition catalog. Since then, the FeliXart Museum in Belgium and the Baker Museum in Naples, Florida both hosted retrospective exhibitions accompanied by catalogs.

Over the next year, a biography titled *Hidden Tapestry: Jan Yoors, His Two Wives, and the War that Made Them One* by author Debra Dean will be published by Northwestern University Press. Yoors' abstract **photographs, gouaches and a tapestry** will be also included in *Machines for Living: Flamenco and Architecture in the Occupation and Eviction of Spaces* opening in **Madrid's Centro Centro** and continuing to **La Virreina Centre de la Image in Barcelona**. In addition, **Paris' Musée d'histoire de l'immigration** will feature his **Gypsy photographs** in a room of their own in the first major photographic exhibition on the Roma. His tapestries are in the **permanent collections** of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, the Art Institute of Chicago and the Museum of Art and Design, New York among many others, and his photographs are in the Studio Museum in Harlem (currently on view) and the Smithsonian's National Museum of African American History and Culture.

For additional information or to request images, please contact the Gallery at +1 212 517-8700 or by email at info@lparkerstephenson.nyc