

## JEAN PLANQUE - LIFE AT A GLANCE

**1910:** Jean Planque is born on 7 July in Ferreyres, in the canton of Vaud, the only boy in a family of six children.

**1921-1925:** The Planque family moves close to Mont-sur-Rolle. Jean fails to shine at school. He is sent to lodgings in Geneva, where he works as a storeman.

**1925-1929:** He enrolls at the Ecole de Commerce de Lausanne and is awarded a diploma at 19.

It is on his way to school that he discovers modern painting. He is walking past the Vallotton gallery when he is so enthralled by a bouquet of flowers by Renoir, who he had never heard of, he goes inside to ask the price. He is scandalised by what he hears and even more so by the price of a small canvas by Cézanne, which seems unfinished to him.

**1929-1931:** Planque moves to Basle where he had a found a job with an insurance company. He learns the piano and takes up watercolour painting, guided by the painter and musician Walter Schöpfer, who introduces him to the world of museums and artists. Going past an art dealer's window, he is attracted by some watercolours by Klee he mistakes for children's drawings. The experience transforms his approach to painting.

**1933-1934:** He returns to live with his family after his employer goes bankrupt.

**1936:** Following the sudden death of his mother, he has to support his family and works in different jobs, including travelling salesman for a cattle feed producer.

**1939-1945:** Already at the start of the war, he develops the sale of lime which was used by farmers.

An excellent salesman, his commissions are large enough for him to only work part-time.

After moving to Ouchy, near Lausanne, in 1942, he meets René Auberjonois, Charles-Albert Cingria, Léo Fiaux and Henry-Louis Mermod. He also becomes acquainted with the publisher Albert Skira, who had opened a gallery in Geneva, from whom he buys several major paintings on behalf of a friend.

**1945:** At the end of the war, he develops a revolutionary concentrate to feed pigs, with a chemist friend. Sales of the product provide him with a regular income.

**1946:** He travels in Italy. The same year he happens to visit the Tanner gallery in Zurich and accepts to work for them for a few months.

**1948-1951:** Using the profits from his invention, Planque settles in Puylobier near Aix-en-Provence, following in the footsteps of Cézanne, the painter he most admires.

**1951-1952:** He returns to Paris and becomes an enthusiastic student at La Grande Chaumière and visits the city's museums. He is deeply moved by Manessier's abstract paintings. He has yet another revelation when he realises he has lost precious time and decides to catch up by visiting contemporary art galleries.

**1952:** He meets milliner Suzanne Cizey, who becomes his companion.

**1954:** Unable to patent his invention, he is suddenly forced to earn a living again.

In August, he visits Basel, where his friend Schöpfer suggests he visit Ernst Beyeler who had taken over a gallery and might need his services. It was the beginning of a fruitful collaboration would last until 1972.

**1955-1956:** Despite his initial reservations, he now develops a sudden fascination for the works of Dubuffet.

**1957:** Dubuffet asks to meet Planque and Beyeler, who form a partnership for the exclusive sale of the artist's lithographs. Planque also meets many others painters including Sonia Delaunay, Bazaine, Bissière, Clavé, Hantaï, Hans Berger and Kosta Alex with whom he strikes up lasting friendships.

**1958-1959:** Planque helps produce lithographs for Dubuffet and gradually gains his trust.

Meets Tobey and Sam Francis.

**1960:** On his fiftieth birthday, he meets Picasso for the first time when he delivers a portrait by Cézanne.

**1962:** Dubuffet finds himself without a dealer and Planque suggests the Beyeler gallery arrange the sales of his paintings in Europe while the Jeanne Bucher gallery does the same in Paris. He meets Giacometti, the first of several encounters between the two men.

**1963:** He visits the naïve artist Aloïse in her mental institution in La Rosière, near Gimel.

**1964:** He helps Dubuffet prepare for a major exhibition at the Palazzo Grassi in Venice where

*L'Hourloupe* is presented to the public for the first time.

**1965-1966:** He makes several visits to Picasso's home.

1967: Dubuffet argues with Planque over a minor incident. Planque is deeply affected by the fallout until the two men are reconciled in 1973.

1972: Planque falls ill and moves back to Morges and puts an end to his activity with the gallery in Basle, but continues to provide Beyeler with valuable advice. He begins writing his memoirs and throws himself back into painting.

1981: He moves to La Sarraz, a small town close to his native village of Ferreyres, where he lives surrounded by his pictures and continues to practice his painting.

1995: Suzanne Planque dies on 3 September.

1997: He sets up the Jean and Suzanne Planque Foundation.

1998: He dies on 27 August in a road accident.