

CORRESPONDANCES

Musée d'Orsay / Contemporary Art
8th October 2008 – 1st February 2009

This exhibition is sponsored by Audi.

Valérie Belin, *Corbeille de fruits [Basket of fruit]*, 2008 / Edouard Manet, *Vase de pivoines sur piédouche [Vase of Peonies on a Pedestal]*, 1864

Valérie Belin's justification for the connections between her work – strictly photographic – and that of the painter Edouard Manet, relates to both iconography and style.

More precisely she has chosen *Vase de pivoines sur piédouche [Vase of Peonies on a Pedestal]*, for which she has taken colour photographs of cleverly composed baskets of fruit.

The artist thus creates an initial link with Manet's work through her fondness for presenting still life without any narrative context, opening up the possibilities of the medium, whether painting or photography.

Valérie Belin's work is like Manet's "pieces of pure painting" where he renders, intensely and concisely, the essence of "modest" motifs like a basket of strawberries, a lemon, or an asparagus. This similarity can be seen in the photographer's technique of closing right in on her subject and using a close up frontal view, tight framing, an absence of décor and context, direct light and a print with strong contrast, to produce a distinct and accentuated image that is both spectacular and stark. This *minimalism* is accompanied in the work shown here by a composition centred on one unifying element – whether a basket or a vase – giving the whole image the density and appearance of a single large object.

Ellsworth Kelly, *Relief bleu [Blue Relief]*, 2007 / Paul Cézanne, *L'Estaque, Vue du Golfe de Marseille [The Gulf of Marseille seen from L'Estaque]* 1878-1879

Ellsworth Kelly, born in 1923 in Newburgh (New York), said: "When I was a young man, during my first visit to the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York, I discovered a painting very similar to *The Gulf of Marseille seen from L'Estaque* by Cézanne. The powerful triangular form intrigued me. After that, each time I went to the Met., I would go and look at this painting. I was not even painting then but I was already attracted by its form and colour."

Kelly observes nature, reorganises the world and flattens shapes until they become abstract.

In 1876, while painting in the village of L'Estaque, Cézanne wrote: "the area where I am now [...] is like a playing card. Red roofs against the blue sea [...]. The sun is so terrifying that it seems as though the objects are silhouetted, not only in black and white, but also in blue, red, brown and violet. I may be mistaken, but it seems to me the very opposite of modelling."

Exhibition curator: Laurence Madeline. Curator. Musée d'Orsay

PRACTICAL INFORMATION

Opening times: daily except Monday, 9.30am - 6pm, late night opening on Thursdays until 9.45pm

Admission: Museum ticket, full rate: €9.50; concessions: €7.00

Access: Main entrance, 1, rue de la Légion d'Honneur, 75007, Paris

Publications: *Valérie Belin / Edouard Manet*, format 160x240, paperback, 64 pages,

Bilingual edition in English/French, joint publication Musée d'Orsay/Argol, 15 euros.

Ellsworth Kelly / Paul Cézanne, format 160 x240, paperback, 64 pages, Bilingual edition in English/French, joint publication Musée d'Orsay/Argol, 15 euros.

Information: Website: www.musee-orsay.fr, tel: +33 (0)1 40 49 48 00