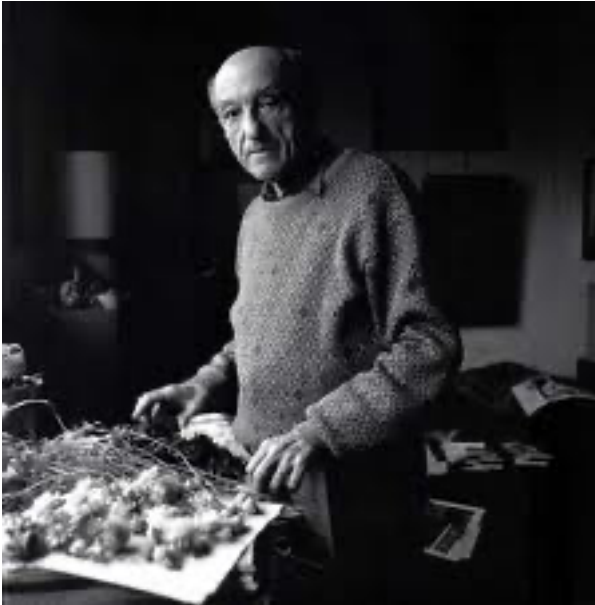


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Galerie Ritsch-Fisch



**Philippe Dereux** (1918–2001) is a major figure in European Outsider Art, a self-taught artist who made his mark on this movement with his unique creativity and visual poetry. His work, deeply rooted in exploring organic materials often considered marginal, is distinguished by his innovative use of fruit and vegetable peelings, which he incorporates into his compositions. This bold choice reflects a process of recycling and experimentation that defies conventional norms and represents a break from traditional academic art.

One of the key themes of his thinking and engagement is encapsulated in his *Petit Traité des épluchures* (Little Treatise on Peelings), a book that becomes the manifesto of a creative

approach where even the simplest material transforms into a visual language. His trajectory takes a decisive turn in the early 1960s when he meets Jean Dubuffet, the father of Outsider Art, who immediately recognizes the raw and instinctive potential in Dereux's work. Impressed by the sincerity of his approach, Dubuffet integrates Dereux into the movement, forming a partnership that fuels their mutual development in further exploring material and form.

The artist participated in several major exhibitions that allowed Outsider Art to enter the public space and gain international visibility. His works are housed in major museums, including the Museum of Outsider Art in Lausanne, where a substantial collection of his pieces is kept, underscoring his significant role in the evolution of this artistic current. His pieces, often made from organic materials like apple peels, orange skins, and onion layers, transform everyday objects into expressions that are both spiritual and aesthetic, linking matter-based painting with a form of humble poetry.

Philippe Dereux remains an essential figure today for understanding Outsider Art. Through his material-focused choices and visual approach, he raises pertinent questions regarding contemporary concerns with sustainability and consumption. His work, simple in appearance but profound in its implications, continues to resonate through time, questioning the place of art in modern society.

Ritsch-Fisch gallery

6 rue des charpentiers, 67000 Strasbourg -FR

[www.ritschfisch.com](http://www.ritschfisch.com) / [contact@ritschfisch.com](mailto:contact@ritschfisch.com)