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Gagosian to Present the First Exhibition of Simon Hantaï's *the last studio* Paintings, Opening in Gstaad on July 9



Simon Hantaï, *Sans titre (Untitled)*, 1984, acrylic on canvas, 115 × 193 inches (292 × 490 cm) © Archives Simon Hantaï/ADAGP, Paris. Photo: David Bordes

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GSTAAD, June 18, 2026—Gagosian is pleased to announce *Simon Hantaï: the last studio*, opening at the Gstaad gallery on July 9. The exhibition, curated by Anne Baldassari, features sixteen of Simon Hantaï's *dernier atelier (the last studio)* paintings of 1982–85, which are distinguished by vibrantly colored abstract forms derived from a combination of folding and dripping techniques. Examples from the body of work were first shown in Hantaï's 2022 retrospective curated by Baldassari at Fondation Louis Vuitton, Paris, which incorporated a spectacular evocation of the artist's studio of the era.

Hantaï was the originator of the *pliage* (folding) technique, in which a canvas is crumpled and knotted, painted over, then spread out to reveal alternations between pigment and reserve. He produced the *last studio* works during his withdrawal from public life after representing France at the 1982 Biennale di Venezia (he declined to exhibit new work until 1998). Hantaï stapled many of the paintings atop one another in a studio installation that Baldassari deconstructs in her writing with stratigraphical precision, noting that Hantaï spent the interval from 1960 to 1982 “seeking, as Pollock had, to attain a boundlessness of painting via the continuous expansion of its formats. Now, by ‘padding’ the walls of the last studio with layers of painting-upon-painting, he seems to have achieved boundlessness via depth.”

The point of origin for the exhibition and its catalogue was Baldassari's extensive original research into a body of iconic photographic portraits of Hantaï at work, taken by his close friend Édouard Boubat (1923–1999) at the artist's own request. Boubat was an established Paris-based French photographer acknowledged as a representative of humanist photography alongside Henri Cartier-Bresson, Robert Doisneau, and Willy Ronis. In the 1970s, he was particularly famous for his international reporting for the Franco-American photo agency Rapho. In the context of the Gagosian exhibition, Boubat's shots function as a guide to Hantaï's series and sub-series, revealing aspects of their development, chronology, and display.

Hantaï did not show the *last studio* paintings during his lifetime, and their hybrid process and polychromic surfaces reflect a creative freedom that he enjoyed while laboring alone. The body of work has become, in Baldassari's words, "a modern myth," "an ecosystem in which painting—through the use of 'folding as method'—seems to take on a life of its own, generating, endlessly and *automatically*, motifs, figures, sequences, syntagmas, and systems." It is notably comprised of several smaller groupings including *Pliages interminables par réductions successives* ("endless folds through successive reductions"), in which the artist employs superimposition and cropping, tearing, folding, and painting canvases to create smaller compositions densely layered with color. The larger paintings on view in Gstaad were made by folding wet *pliages* and allowing the paint to run and drip along the creases in their surfaces.

The exhibition is accompanied by an illustrated catalogue, copublished by Gagosian and Skira, which features an essay by Anne Baldassari and an extensive portfolio of previously unpublished photographs by Édouard Boubat.

Unfolding Color, a retrospective of Hantaï's work centering on the period from 1956 to 1980, will be on view at Museum Frieder Burda in Baden-Baden, Germany, from August 15, 2026, through January 10, 2027.

For Simon Hantaï's biographical information and exhibition history, [please visit gagosian.com](http://gagosian.com).

#SimonHantaï

SIMON HANTAÏ

the last studio

Opening reception: Thursday, July 9, 11am–6pm

July 9–September 27, 2026

Promenade 79, Gstaad

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