

The Trinity College Dublin Art Collections

Artist: Pierre Alechinsky
Title: *Boréalité Rouge*
Medium: lithograph
Notes: signed: Alechinsky

b.1927, Brussels, Belgium

Pierre Alechinsky was a painter, draughtsman, printmaker, film maker, ceramic artist and writer. From 1944 to 1946 he studied book illustration and typography at the Ecole Nationale Supérieure d'Architecture et des Arts Décoratifs in Brussels. In 1947 became a member of the Jeune Peinture Belge group and in this same year, he held his first solo exhibition at the Galerie Lou Cosyn. In 1949 Alechinsky became a key member of the CoBrA art movement which included artists Karel Appel and Asger Jorn. This group was formed in 1948 as a reaction to the French Surrealists and was named for the cities its founding artists came from – Copenhagen, Brussels and Amsterdam. CoBrA artists preferred their work to be spontaneous and direct, experimental, colourful, expressive and took inspiration from folk art and children's literature. While a member of the CoBrA group, Alechinsky focused mainly on organising exhibitions and running their eponymous magazine. When the group was disbanded in 1951 Alechinsky decided to go on to study engraving in Paris. In the mid-1950s, Alechinsky moved to Japan for a time to study the art of calligraphy, making a film on the subject, *Calligraphie japonaise*, in 1956. Alechinsky was particularly interested in the way these calligraphers worked; they placed their paper on the floor and bent to it from a standing position, in this sense, they used their whole body in the process of calligraphy. Alechinsky's time spent in Japan had a lasting influence on his style of painting.

The artist has exhibited internationally, with shows in France, Germany, Italy, Belgium, the United States and the United Kingdom. In 1977 Alechinsky was awarded the Andrew W. Mellon Prize for Painting and received the French Grand Prix National for Painting in 1984. Alechinsky taught at the French National School of Fine Arts in Paris from 1984 to 1987.

Other works by the artist can be found in: Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York; Art Institute of Chicago, Chicago; Museum of Modern Art, New York and the Tate Gallery, London.

Information contained in this article is from www.groveart.com, www.cobra-museum.nl, <http://www.moma.org> and www.artnet.com.