

## The Trinity College Dublin Art Collections

**Artist:** Pierre Jacob Tal-Coat  
**Title:** *Galerie Maeght, Paris 1962*  
**Medium:** lithograph poster

b. 1905, Clohars-Carnoët, France d. 1985, Saint-Pierre de Bailleul

Pierre Jacob Tal-Coat was a French painter, print-maker and sculptor. Tal-Coat's birth name was Pierre Louis Jacob. He was born in Brittany, a fisherman's son, and came to Paris in 1924. He chose the surname Tal-Coat (Breton for "Wood Face") to avoid being confused with the artist and poet Max Jacob. He was self-taught as an artist, having worked as a porcelain painter in the faience factory at Quimper. In 1925 he went to Paris to do his military service, and while there was drawn into a series of artistic circles who admired the works of Picasso, Matisse and Cezanne.

In 1947 Tal-Coat abruptly changed his style under the influence of traditional Chinese paintings, notably landscapes of the Song period (960–1279). He began to express his experience of landscape by means of a few broad strokes against pale and delicate backgrounds. His observation of natural phenomena, foam on a rock or rain over a mountain, was executed in an abstract manner in an effort to express the essence of nature in an emotional sense, rather than by purely descriptive means.

Tal-Coat quickly became one of the most important figures in the post-war School of Paris. One of the founders in the mid-forties of Tachisme, a lyrical abstract movement that was the French version of Abstract Expressionism, his paintings were acclaimed and admired by fellow artists. He exhibited regularly in France and abroad during his life-time and received the Légion d'honneur in 1960. However, because of his need to commune with nature and to escape from modern life he remained a recluse in the village of Saint-Pierre de Bailleul, Eure, until his death.

The information in this article has been taken from Grove Dictionary of Art online and David Scott, *The Modern Art Collection Trinity College Dublin*, (Trinity College Dublin Press, 1989).

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