

Maggy Mauritz
The erased lettrist
4.11-31.12.2021
Loeve&Co



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The history of art is not set in stone, nor in granodiorite, like Rosetta Stone... These last decades, on the contrary, have proven that it must constantly be corrected, to make room for artists who, because they were women or from extra-western scenes, have too much for a long time given their importance downplayed or denied. Regarding Maggy Mauritz, as written with biting irony the great specialist Frédéric Acquaviva: *how to be more underground than being a Lettrist woman artist?*

One of the last *avant-garde* formed, Lettrism has in effect long evolved in a parallel universe to artistic recognition. Defined from 1947 by its creator, the Romanian Isidore Isou came to Paris to challenge Surrealism, like an Art *which accepts the subject of letters reduced and become simply themselves (adding to or completely replacing the elements poetic and musical) and which goes beyond them to mold in their block of coherent works*, Lettrism will have been both a bunker and a melting pot, a hyper-welded group until isolation, from which was born by split into 1952 a dissident sub-group, led by Guy-Ernest Debord, Gil J Wolman, Serge Berna and Jean-Louis Brau, brought to know a certain fame under the name International Situationist...



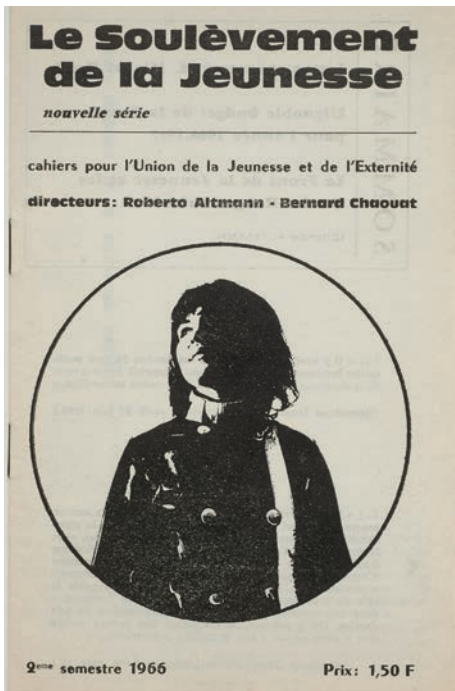
*Renovation of Dance and Poetry
at the Théâtre de l'Ambigu, Paris, May 20,
1965 (In the center, Maggy Mauritz)*

Like many *avant-garde* groups of the twentieth century, the lettrist movement does not shine by the place it gives to female artists, most often themselves women of artists, as it is customary to play utilities, in group demonstrations - to make number? - or for their plastic or even decorative qualities. While Lettrism has remained longer than many others a semi-clandestine movement with a sulphurous aura, the women who worked in it, as Acquaviva points out, were found more invisible. In the case of Maggy Mauritz, however, we can really speak of *erasure*. In fact, when she appears on the cover and as the face of the manifestos of the Soulèvement de la jeunesse, a real conceptual toolbox of May 1968, his name does not appear anywhere any more that it is not mentioned when she was participating in the *Renovation of Dance and Poetry* at the Ambigu Theater in 1965, or when she exhibits a large-format painting (co-produced with her husband Roberto Altmann) in 1966 at the Stadler Gallery on for the *Nouvelles Hypergraphies (Onze lettristes)* however the other women of the group, Micheline Hachette or Aude Jessemin were credited !

Fortunately, times are changing, and recognition of lettrist artists - finally somewhat institutionalized - is accelerating,



Maggy Mauritz dressed by Courrèges, Lausanne, 1968



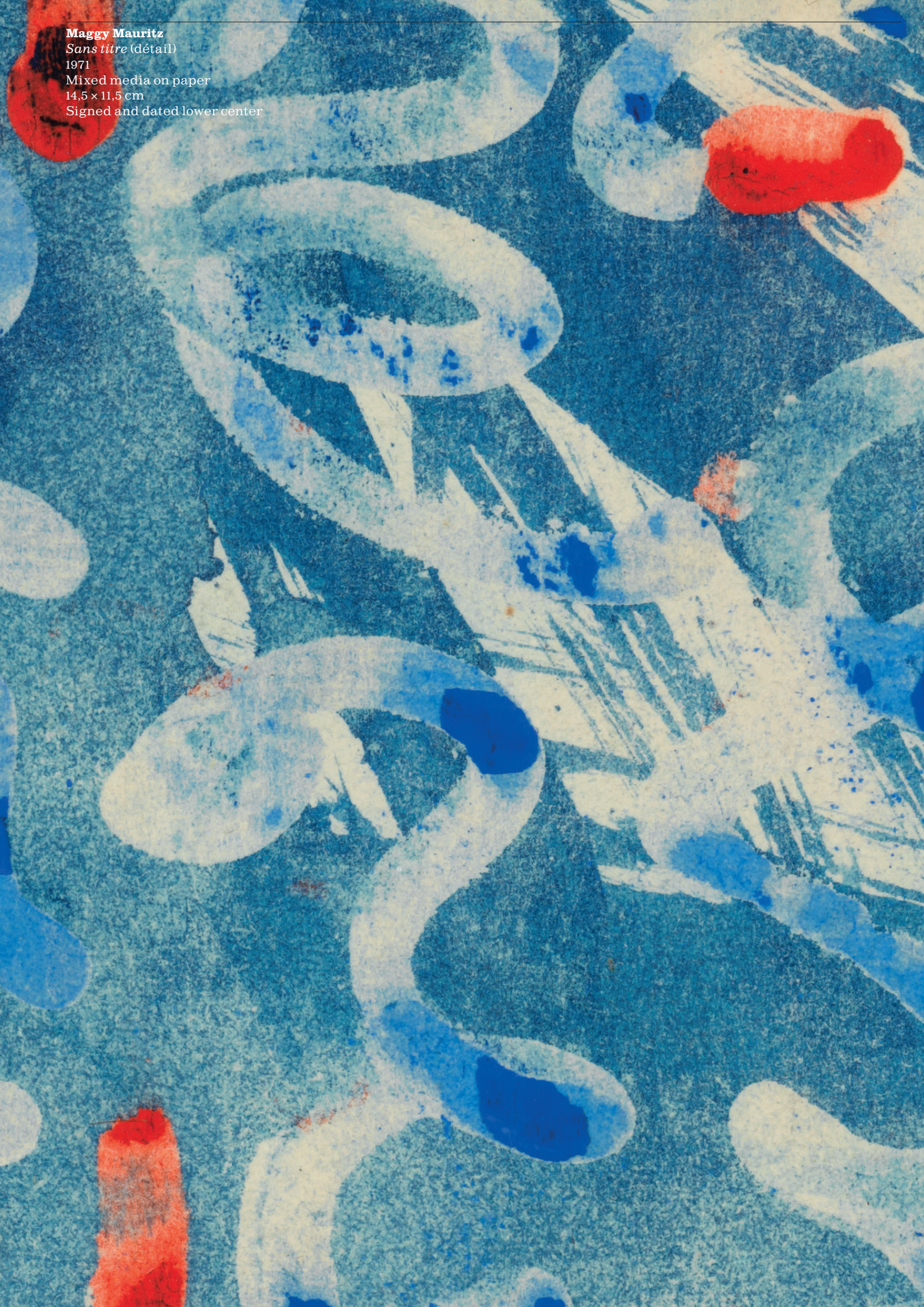
Maggy Mauritz on the front cover of the Cahier «Le Soulèvement de la Jeunesse» nouvelle série n°1, 1966

since the great exhibition *Bientôt les Lettristes* orchestrated in Paris at the Passage de Retz by Frédéric Acquaviva and Bernard Blistène (with the collaboration of Nicolas Liucci-Goutnikov), amplified in by the retrospective Isidore Isou at the Center Pompidou. It was during this exhibition that Frédéric Acquaviva was - finally - able to meet Maggy Mauritz, then put a name, and a work, on this furtive silhouette which, until then, haunted the margins of lettrist history without to find a place in it. Many biographical elements, or even psychological, would be likely to enlighten the mechanisms that led to this incredible and so unfair erasure. But nothing will dispel it with more sparkle than the revelation of the work itself which, as pointed out Acquaviva, *testifies to a real originality by many aspects.*

The exhibition *Maggy Mauritz: the erased lettrist* is the first solo exhibition of the artist... at the age of eighty! Self-taught artist, like almost the majority of Lettrist artists, Maggy Mauritz discovered and experienced the techniques of hypergraphia and shorthand thanks to Roberto Altmann, her former husband. Having worked several years in the New York financial world, she returns to Europe at the beginning of the years 1970 more precisely in Liechtenstein where she co-directs with her husband the Vaduz Art and Communication Center. They organize there, from 1974 and until 1980 a series of exhibitions: Jacques Villeglé, Constantin Xenaxis (1976-1978) International Graphik 1975, Tom Phillips, Arthur Aeschbacher or even Joao Rabascall. She launches the Artes Bellae editions, publishing in part of her husband's lithographs (1989-1990).

Her work, rich and inventive, combines several techniques, from spray stencils (of which she seems to be the pioneer) to German shorthand (used in the manner of Roman Opalka's infinite writings, as Acquaviva points out). In her work, the word is doubly surpassed graphically, according to a chiselling approach that is exemplary of the Lettrist aesthetic - or rather of the Lettrist approach to aesthetics: while the use of shorthand while conceals it from our understanding, its fragmentation into separate letters fragment it to the point of ideographic or even phonetic exacerbation.

Maggy Mauritz
Sans titre (détail)
1971
Mixed media on paper
14,5 × 11,5 cm
Signed and dated lower center



Maggy Mauritz

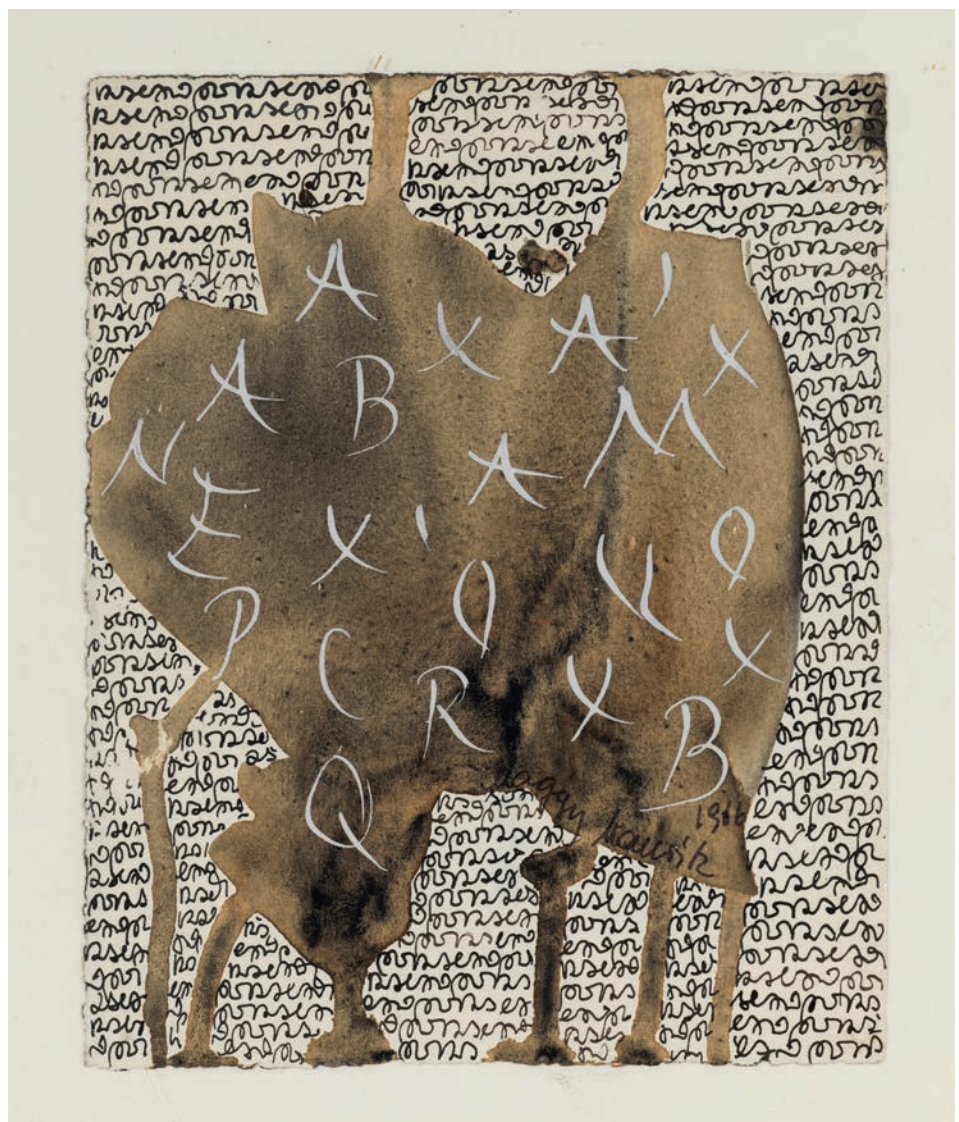
Untitled

1966

Mixed media on paper

16 × 12.5 cm

Signed and dated lower right



Maggy Mauritz

Untitled

1967

Mixed media on canvas

46.5 × 55 cm

Dated and signed lower right



Maggy Mauritz

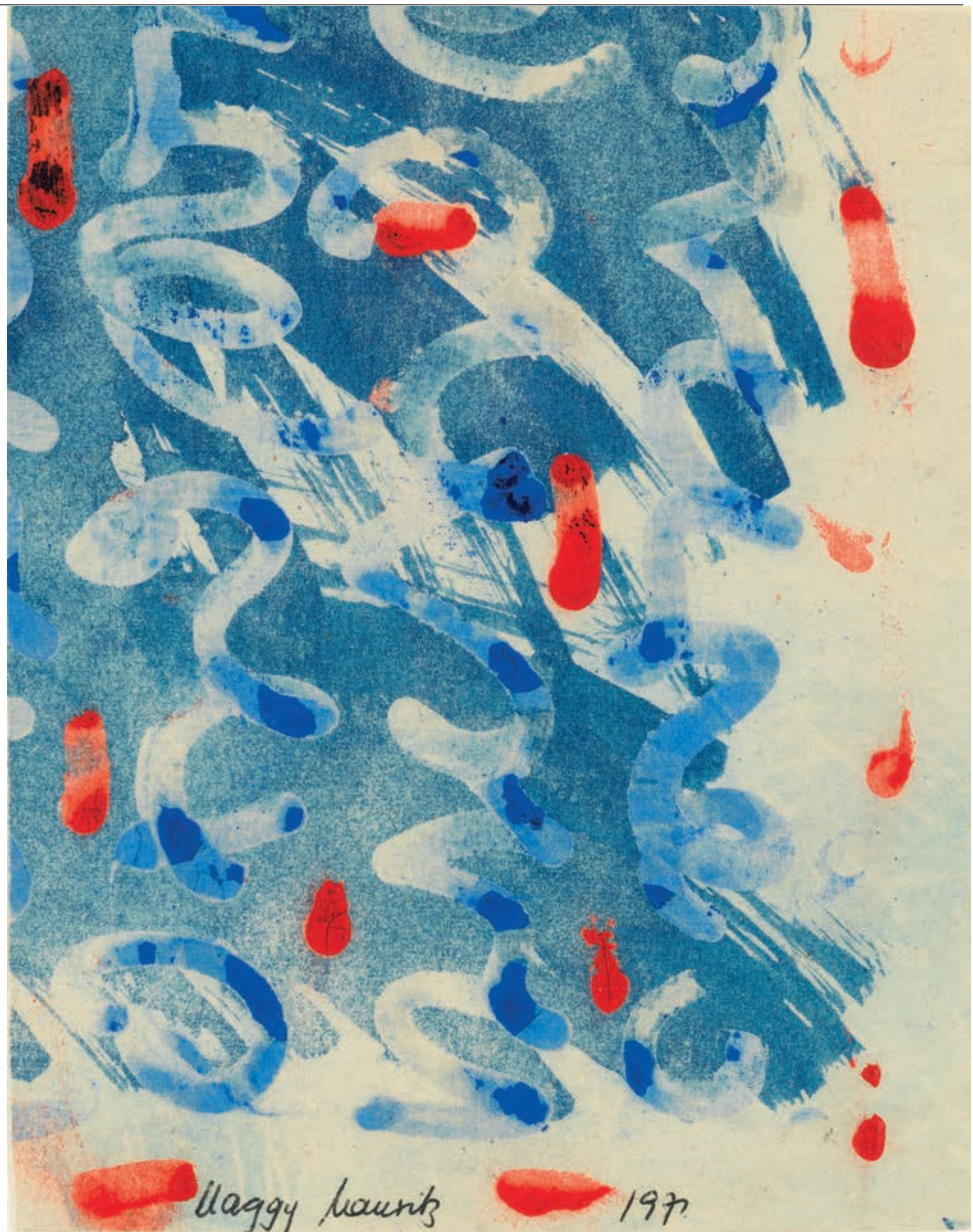
Untitled

1971

Mixed media on paper

14,5 × 11,5 cm

Signed and dated lower center



Maggy Mauritz
Sans titre (détail)
2015
Mixed media on canvas
71 x 51 cm
Signed and dated on the right



Maggy Mauritz
Untitled
2015
Mixed media on canvas
71 × 51 cm
Signed and dated on the right



Maggy Mauritz

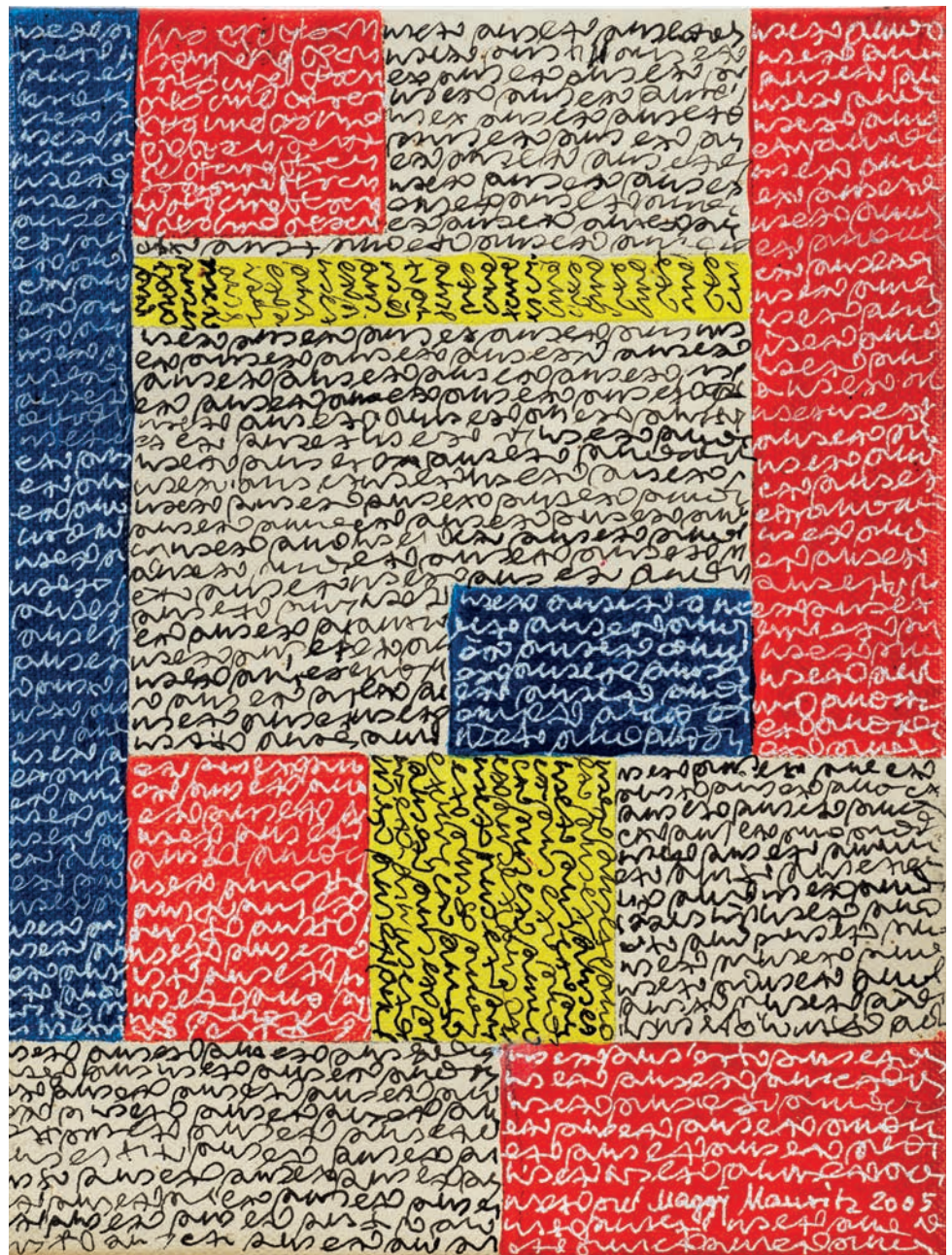
Untitled

2005

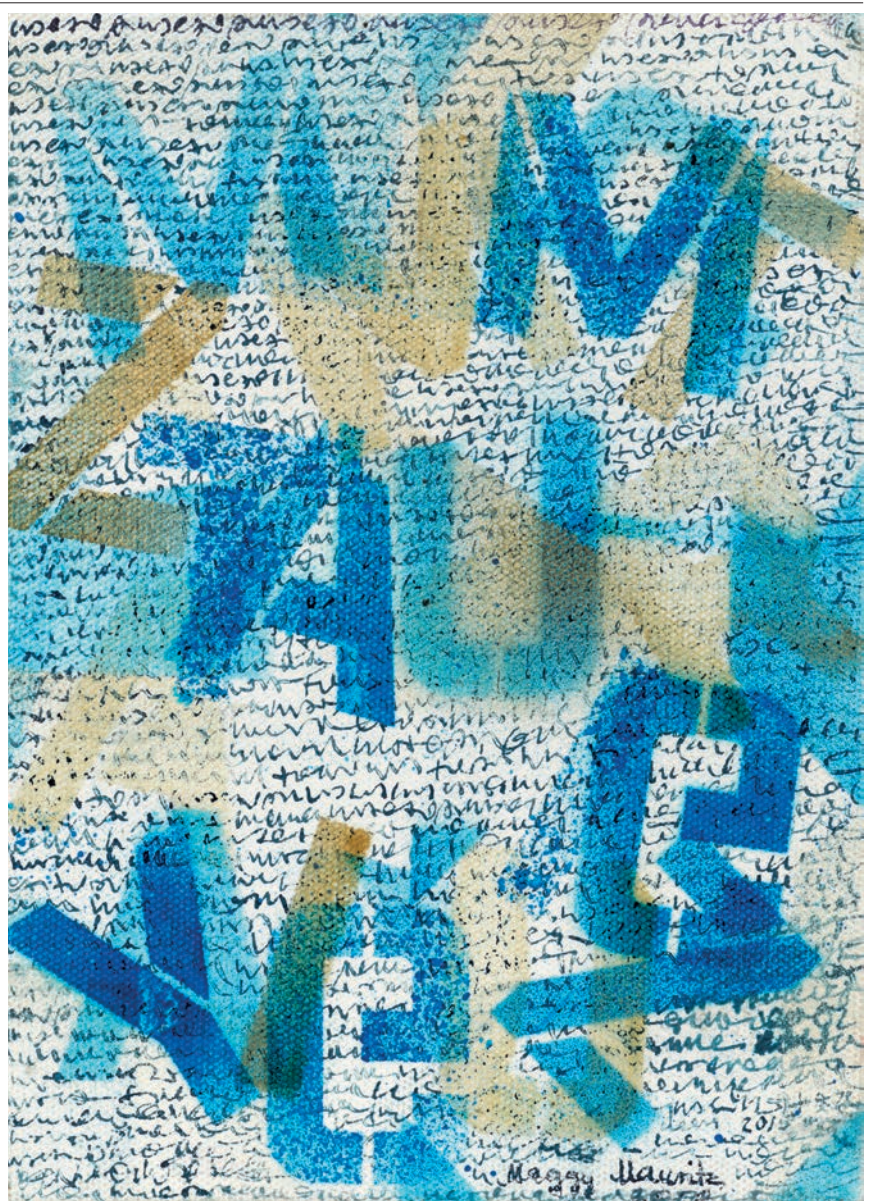
Ink and acrylic on canvas

23,5 x 18 cm

Signed and dated lower right



Maggy Mauritz
2015
Sans titre
Ink and acrylic on canvas
22 x 16 cm
Signed and dated lower right



Maggy Mauritz
Lettrist composition
2015
Mixed media on canvas, stencil
65 × 30 cm



Robert Robert
et SpMillot ont dessiné
ce communiqué
pour Loeve&Co
Écrans imprimables
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