TEMPLON

Press release
October 12, 2026

GÉRARD GAROUSTE

Brisure

November 4 – December 30, 2026

Opening on Wednesday, November 4, from 12 pm to 8 pm.
Artist Talk: conversation between Gérard Garouste, Philippe Piguet and Pierre-Henry Salfati followed by a book signing on Thursday, November 19, from 6:30 pm to 8 pm.



L'Amandier, 2026, triptych, oil on canvas, 194 x 357 cm – 76 ½ x 140 ½ in. Photo © Laurent Edeline.

With *Brisure*, Gérard Garouste continues a body of work that has never ceased to shift the boundaries between painting and narrative, image and language, the visible and the invisible. On view at Galerie Templon, this new exhibition unveils a previously unseen ensemble of paintings, drawings, and sculptures created over the past four years.

The exhibition is accompanied by the publication, by Flammarion, of the eponymous book by Pierre-Henry Salfati, a Talmudic scholar, filmmaker, and screenwriter. In dialogue with the artist, the book offers a reintrepretation of passages from the Torah around the notion of *brisure*, or "breaking." Some of the works on paper gathered in the volume are also shown at the gallery for the first time.

Breaking lies at the heart of Gérard Garouste's practice. To break is to interrupt a form grown too settled, to crack open what is taken for granted, to shift one's perspective. "To break is to bring down whatever confines: certainties, habits of thought, fixed readings, so as to open new possibilities of meaning. Breaking is not an end in itself, but an opening," the artist observes.

This inquiry runs through his oeuvre, from *Zeugma* (2018), in which Garouste set the Talmud, mythology, literature, and personal history in conversation, to *Correspondances* (2021), devoted to Kafka and to his encounter with Marc-Alain Ouaknin. For many years, the texts of the Hebrew tradition have nourished his work alongside literature, myth, and art history. They offer him a space in which to reflect on language and the multiplicity of meaning: like the texts, his images never yield themselves once and for all.

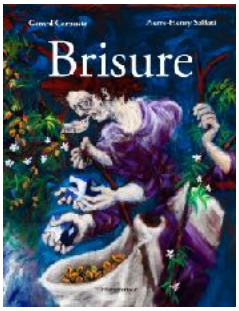
Brisure extends this inquiry by making the fragmentation and displacement of forms a pictorial principle as much as a principle of reading. The title refers to the *Chevirat ha-Kelim*, the "breaking of the vessels," a

notion from the Kabbalistic tradition that Garouste regards as an image of reading itself. What breaks ceases to be closed: words and images alike fragment, shift, and give rise to new associations. The artist willingly likens this way of reading to a "psychoanalysis of the text": the aim is not to uncover a hidden truth, but to let words, letters, and their manifold resonances open new paths.

This freedom of interpretation is embodied in his painterly gesture, in which bodies distort and figures stretch. Proportions waver, and scenes take on a theatrical dimension, poised between the grotesque and the marvelous. A great plastic intensity accompanies this instability: saturated colors, violent contrasts, visible matter, and rapid strokes lend the figures an almost physical presence. Deeply narrative, the painting thus summons images, associations, and stories that overlap without ever resolving.

The triptych ***L'Amandier*** (2026), the centerpiece of the exhibition, is among its most powerful expressions. Spanning 3.5 meters in width, the work unfolds, in a fantastical sunset landscape, a meditation on the quest for what lies behind appearances. In the Kabbalistic tradition, the almond tree and its fruit are bound up with this idea: to reach the kernel, one must break the shell that encloses it. The almond thus becomes an image of what remains hidden behind the image or the word, and of the need to open them and question them.

This reflection continues in two recent bronzes, ***Guer*** (2025) and ***L'Arbre de Vie*** (2024). Created in the wake of the events of October 7, 2023, the latter has hands rising from the ruins that surround an olive tree, a tree of life and a symbol of hope. On its branches, Hebrew letters, like so many fruits, form the phrase "Da Lifnei Mi Atah Omed" ("Know before whom you stand"). As in *L'Amandier*, the symbols do not deliver a single meaning: they open a space of associations, stories, and multiple readings.



Gérard Garouste et Pierre-Henry Salfati
Brisure
Publishing date: November 18, 2026
216 pages
€60

Biography

Born in Paris in 1946, Gérard Garouste is one of the major figures of contemporary French painting. Since the early 1980s, he has developed a profoundly singular body of work, built apart from movements and categories. A painter, but also a sculptor and set designer, he stages a dialogue among the great narratives of our culture: literature, mythology, art history, and his own lived experience. His painting, figurative, enigmatic, and shot through with both humor and tragedy, proceeds by association, displacement, and the "dismantling of images and words." His sources range from the Bible to popular culture, from Cervantes to Rabelais, from Dante to Goethe.
His personal story holds a special place in this work. In 2009, he published, with Judith Perrignon, *L'Intranquille, Autoportrait d'un fils, d'un peintre, d'un fou*, an autobiographical account in which he revisits his family history and his experience of bipolar disorder. The book, which met with considerable critical and popular success, offers an intimate insight into an artist for whom creation is also a means of confronting, displacing, and transforming his own history.
His importance was recognized early by major institutions. In 1988, the Centre Pompidou devoted a major monographic exhibition to him, and in 2022 mounted a vast retrospective bringing together 120 major paintings as well as sculptures, installations, and graphic works. Between these two presentations at the Centre Pompidou, his work was the subject of a retrospective at the Villa Medici in Rome in 2009 and a major exhibition at the Fondation Maeght in 2015, before being shown at the National Gallery of Modern Art in New Delhi in 2020.
Elected to the Académie des Beaux-Arts in 2017, to the seat previously held by Georges Mathieu, Gérard Garouste is also a Commander of the Ordre National du Mérite and an Officer of the Légion d'Honneur. His work is held in numerous French and international collections, including the Musée National d'Art Moderne – Centre Pompidou, the Musée d'Art Moderne de la Ville de Paris, the Fondation Cartier pour l'Art Contemporain, the Ludwig Museum in Cologne, and the MoMA in New York.
His artistic commitment has extended, since 1991, to La Source, an association he founded with Élizabeth Garouste. Built on the idea that creation can be a tool of emancipation and a means of fighting exclusion, La Source organizes art workshops for children and young people, particularly those facing social, economic, or academic hardship. This commitment, which places transmission and encounter at the heart of artistic practice, constitutes an essential extension of his work.
Gérard Garouste has been represented by Galerie Templon since 2002, the year of his first solo exhibition at the gallery, "Késive, la ville mensonge."