

## Brief Biographical Chronology

- 1905 Wolfgang Robert Paalen was born July 22nd in Vienna
- 1913 Parents move to Rochsburg in Sagan/Silesia
- 1919 Moves to Rome, summers in Sagan
- 1922 Studies with Leo von Koenig in Tivoli and Berlin
- 1924 Studies with Adolphe Meyer in Berlin, meets Julius Meier-Graefe. Relation with Helene Meier-Graefe (Aya). Shows paintings in impressionist manner in Berlin Secession. Meets Serge Brignoni.
- 1924 Stays in Paris until 1926. Shows in the Galerie Figuet, Paris. Friendship with Marie-Luise von Motesietzky. Meets Max Beckmann. Studies cubist paintings.
- 1927 Visits Hans Hofmann School in Munich and Cassis. Rents studio in La Ciotat (Cassis). Meets circle of German artists (Westphal, Petersen, Becker) .
- 1929 Takes a studio in Paris, rue de Guerre. Meets Jean Hélion and Hans Hartung. Studies with Fernand Léger shortly. Participates in groupshow in Galerie Flechtheim, Berlin, and Salon des Surindépendants.
- 1930 Meets again Max Beckmann. Takes larger studio in rue Pernety. Participates in the annual show at Rheinische Sezession Düsseldorf. Meets the Breton artist Alice Rahon, whom he marries in 1931.
- 1932 Groupshow in Galerie Bonjean, Paris. Studies with Stanley William Hayter at Atelier 17 in Paris. Meets Peggy Guggenheim and other Surrealists.
- 1933 Illustration for a poem-book by Valentine Penrose. Visits the caves of Altamira in Spain.
- 1934 Starts to collect Cycladic idol-figures. Show at Galerie Vignon, Paris. A.E.Gallatin buys *Visage planétaires* for the Museum of Living Art in New York. Exhibits with the group *abstraction creation – art non figurative* (catalogue)
- 1935 Publishes *Reponse à une Enquete* in Cahiers d'Art (No.14, 1935). Travels to London to visit Henry Moore and Roland Penrose. Rents house in Le Bruse sur Seine during summer. Travels to Greece and Cycladic islands. Exhibits two paintings in the show *these-antithèse-synthèse* in Kunstmuseum Luzern (catalogue), organized by Hans Erni. Leaves *abstraction creation* group with Hans Arp and Sophi Taeuber. Meets André Breton. Participates at the show *Exposition de dessins surréalistes* in Les Quatre Chemins, Paris. Joins the surrealist group.
- 1936 Personal show in Galerie Pierre, Paris. Participates in surrealist shows: New York, Museum of Modern Art (Fantastic Art, Dada and Surrealism), London, Burlington Galleries (International Exhibition of Surrealism), Paris, Galerie Charles Ratton (Exposition Surréaliste d'Objets). Frontispiz to the poem-book *Le Nouveau Candide* of Valentine Penrose. Takes studio in rue Boulard, Paris. First *Fumage dessin fait avec bougie*.
- 1937 Meets Marcel Duchamp in occasion of the design of Galerie Gradiva in Paris. Participates in surrealist exhibitions in London (Artists International Society) and Cambridge (University Art Society). Travels to Sagan, Prague and Bohemia in summer. Prepares objects for the winter surrealist show in Paris. Illustration for Alfred Jarry's *Ubu enchainé*.
  - 1938 International Surrealist Exhibition in Paris (Palais de Beaux Arts, Galerie Wildenstein). Paalen is responsible for plant and water installations. Under the ceiling of Duchamp he creates an artificial lake with plants around (see photo of Denise Bellon). Personal show in Galerie Renou et Colle, Paris (Catalogue with text of André Breton). Illustration for a surrealist edition of Lautréamonts *Les Chants de Maldoror*. Meets Frida Kahlo and Diego Rivera during their visit to Paris. Invitation to Mexico. Summer in La Mesangère Varèngeville with Breton. Travels

- to Germany, decides in Munich to leave Europe.
3. 1939 Personal show at Peggy Guggenheims Gallery *Guggenheim Jeune*, London. Critics of Breton and Herbert Read in *London Bulletin* (No.10, p.17) and *Minotaure* (No.12/13, p.90). With Alice Rahon and Eva Sulzer from London to New York. Meets Julien Levy, William Baziotés and Gerome Kamrowski. Travels to Canada, British Columbia. Collects Indian totemic art. Travels to San Francisco and Mexico in autumn. Rents studio in San Angel/Mexico near Frida Kahlo and Diego Rivera's house. Friendship with Manuel Alvarez Bravo and César Moro. Prepares Surrealist Exhibition with Moro.
  4. 1940 International Surrealist Exhibition in Galeria de Arte Mexicano, Mexico-City. Travels to New York for his personal show at Julien Levy Gallery. Meets Robert Motherwell, Adolphe Gottlieb, Jackson Pollock and Barnett Newman. Back in Mexico organizes visas for surrealists in Europe.
  5. 1941 Robert Motherwell studies with Paalen in Mexico for several months. Motivates Motherwell to collaborate on his DYN project. Motherwell translates his essay *L'Image Nouvelle* and Paalen introduces Motherwell to Breton. Gordon Onslow Ford and Jacqueline Johnson move to Mexico.
  6. 1942 The Nazis confiscate St.Rochusburg in Sagan. Order of Deportation to Gustaf Rainer Paalen who supposedly flees to Switzerland or commits suicide in Berlin. First issue of DYN is published in Mexico, until 1944 a total number of four magazines are printed, one of them double (Amerindian Number 1943). First issue contains Paalens *Farewell au surrealisme* which makes his distance to surrealism official. Participates in the show *First Papers of Surrealism* in New School for Social Research, New York.
  7. 1943 In New York he meets Isamu Nogushi and Luchita Hurtado del Solar.
  8. 1944 The German Bauhaus architect Max Cetto builds a studio-house for Paalen in San Angel, Mexico, the *Villa Obregon*.
  9. 1945 Publication of Paalen's essay *La crise du sujet dans la peinture moderne* in *Revue de L'IFAL*, Mexico. One man show in Galeria de Arte Mexicano, Mexico-City with 19 works from 1939-45. Correspondence with Motherwell about the planned book *Form and Sense* with collected essays of Paalen. After Mark Rothko and Jackson Pollock Peggy Guggenheim shows in May Paalen's new paintings from Mexico. After the end of the war (8<sup>th</sup> May) Paalen stays until summer with Motherwell in New York. *Form and Sense* gets published as the one and only number of the series *Problems of Contemporary Art* under the direction of Motherwell. Contact to the theologian and novelist Arthur A.Cohen, who was inspired by the life and destiny of Paalen for his famous novel *Acts of Theft*.
  10. 1946 Paalen and his companion Luchita Hurtado stay three months in Motherwell's house *Quonset* in East Hampton in Long Island. Private reading of Paalen's actual theatre play *The Beam of the Balance* with Motherwell and friends. In November one man show in the Nierendorf Gallery, New York. Nierendorf publishes the monographical book on Paalen by the German novelist Gustav Regler. The sculptor Louise Nevelson invites them to prolong their stay until January 1947 in her home in Long Island. Intensive contacts to New York artists Barnett Newman and Mark Rothko.
  11. 1947 Divorce from Alice Rahon, marries Luchita Hurtado del Solar. Becomes Mexican citizen after his attempts to acquire the US citizenship failed. Motherwell continues *DYN* (greek: The Possible) under the name *Possibilities* in New York with Harold Rosenberg. Works of Paalen in the Surrealism show at Galerie Maeght, Paris.

12. 1948 In February Paalen travels to New York and Chicago and plans a *DYNATON* exhibition in San Francisco. November and December in New York with Motherwell in East Hampton to discuss the foundation of a new art school with Rothko and Clifford Still. During a dinner with Rothko's in Manhattan he receives the invitation to teach in San Francisco and renounces. Rene d'Harnoncourt gives Paalen a one man show in the San Francisco Museum of Art. In Mill Valley he meets Henry Miller, Anais Nin and Jean Varda and works on his essay *Metaplastic*. The Onslow Fords acquire a house in Mill Valley and invite Paalen to stay. They meet Lee Mullican and travel together in Mexico before they decide to work together in Mill Valley in 1949/1950.
13. 1949 After travelling to New York the Paalens move to San Francisco to prepare the *Metaplastic* show at the Stanford Art Gallery, which is accompanied by lectures of Sybil Moholy Nagy.
14. 1950 The new Association *Dynaton* exhibits together at the San Francisco Museum of Art, title *A new vision*. With the exhibit the museum publishes the book *DYNATON*. Luchita divorces from Paalen to live with Lee Mullican.
15. 1951 Paalen returns to Mexico and travels through Yucatan. Works on his essay on the Olmec culture, published 1952 in *Cahiers d'Art*. In New York he exhibits with the Willard Gallery and meets Maria Wilson, with whom he travels to Paris. Rents the *Villa Seurat* of Kurt Seligmann in Paris. Exhibits in Galerie Pierre and gets again in contact with André Breton and the surrealists. Becomes member of the *Société des Americanistes*.
16. 1953 Summer in Breton's house in Saint Circ la Popie with other surrealists.
17. 1954 Exhibition at Geo Dupins Galerie Galanis-Hentschel, Paris. Illustrates the 2<sup>nd</sup> number of *Medium – Communication Surréaliste*, edited by Jean Schuster and José Pierre. Travels through Germany, visits Helene Maier-Graefe in Badenweiler. Travels back to America. Exhibition at the Paul Kantor Gallery in Los Angeles.
18. 1955 Buys a small house in Tépochtlan near Mexico-City.
19. 1956 Exhibition at Galeria de Arte Mexicano, Mexico-City.
20. 1957 Buys a Hazienda near Merida/Yucatan and dedicates himself more and more to his collection of Pre-Columbian Art.
- 1959 Commits suicide after a long depression in Taxco in the night of the 24th September.