

Côte Art Crawl
Culture, Travel



Serge Demailly, la Cadière D'Azur

|By LANIE GOODMAN

“The days of the ‘easel’ painting are fading,” predicted the American artist Ellsworth Kelly, while living in the French fishing village of Sanary-sur-Mer in the 1950s. As Kelly experimented with color grids, dozens more artists followed suit, kicking off a contemporary art revolution on the Côte d’Azur.

In Nice, Yves Klein “signed” the blue sky, calling it his first and biggest work, while Arman immortalized his neighbors’ trash under plexiglass. Down the road in Antibes, Hans Hartung splattered his canvases with spray guns and painted with olive branches; in the hills of Vence, Jean Dubuffet turned soil, stones and butterfly wings into paintings.

These artists and many more are on display in “Contemporary Art and the Côte d’Azur” (artcontemporainetcotedazur.com), an ambitious summer show featuring more than 1,000 pieces from 200 painters and sculptors working on the Riviera from 1951 to 2011. The exhibition, beginning June 25, will sprawl across 50 museums, galleries and schools from Cannes to Menton and include such highlights as a first peek at the Bernar Venet foundation near St. Tropez (above) and an open-air sculpture show in Mougins’s new Eco’Parc.