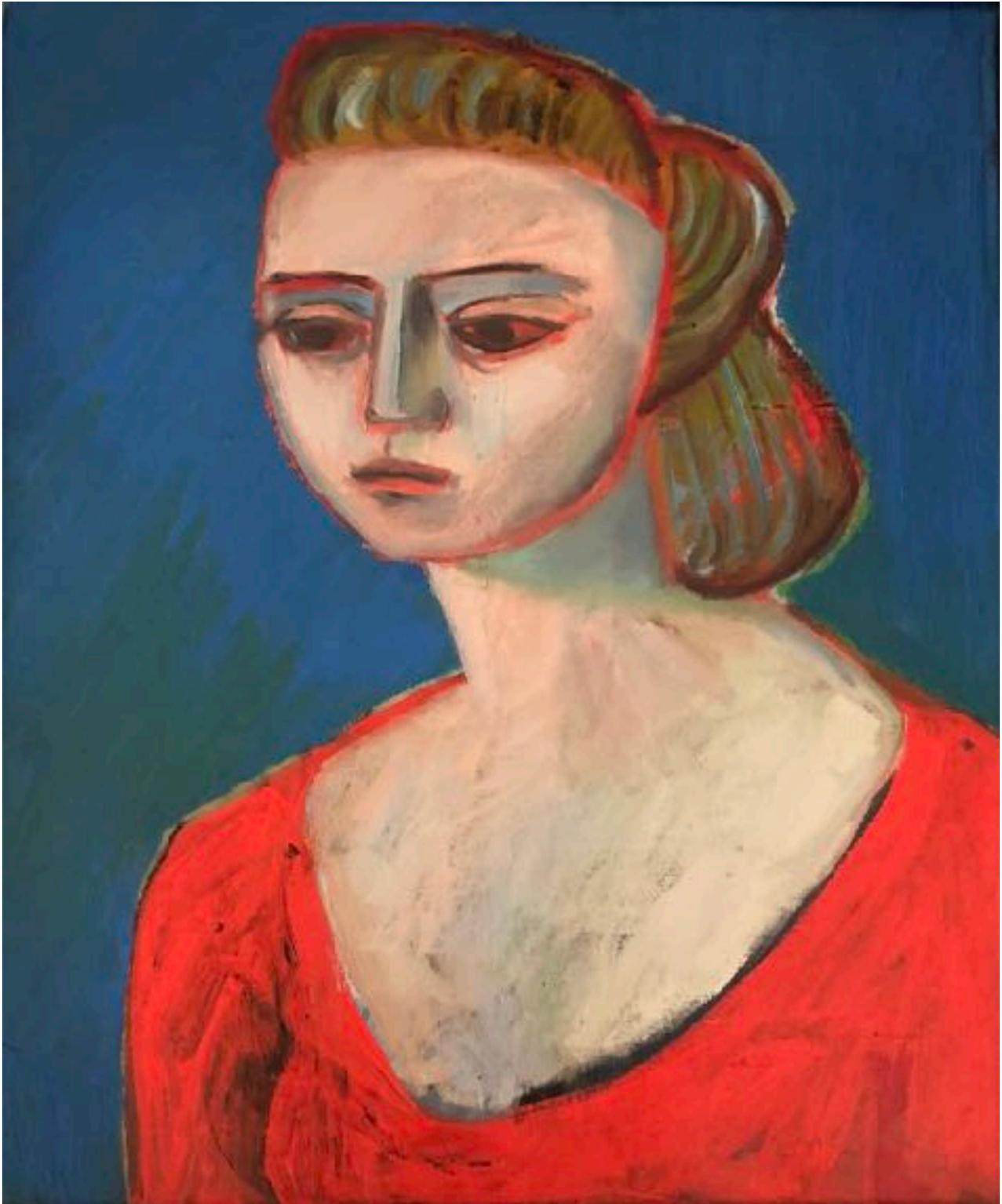


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Erik Laubscher

*Head of a Girl* [recto];

*Interior* [unfinished, verso]

signed and dated '53

oil on canvas

71 by 60cm



## Notes:

Featured here is a 1953 portrait by Erik Laubscher titled '*Head of a Girl*'.

Laubscher trained in London (1947-1949) and Paris (1950-1951). His decision to move his studies from London to Paris proved fortuitous on two fronts. It was in Paris that he met his future wife, the artist, Claude Bouscharain, also newly enrolled at the Academie de Montmartre after four years in New York.

Known for his straightforward no nonsense approach to life, Laubscher endeavoured to pursue Bouscharain in very poor French. Bouscharain, charmed by his determination, was able to respond in perfect English and the two married the following year in Cape Town.

Erik and Claude both benefitted from the creative influence of Fernand Léger, principal at the Academie de Montmartre from 1947, who taught two firm art making principles:

*"To obtain their maximum expressiveness, lines, forms and colour must be employed with the utmost logic..."*

and

*"Search for a state of organised intensity... I group contrary values together... between those two kinds of relationships, which are eternal subjects for painting, I look for a relationship of intensity."*

Laubscher remarked that Leger's principles stayed with him throughout his career. As a teacher, he imparted the same to his students.

*"Head of a Girl"* is a prime example of Laubscher's post-Paris period. Bursting from the two-dimensional plain of the canvas, the sitter's red dress is echoed in the plains of her visage, her pale skin off-set by the brilliant French Ultramarine of the background.

The painting is returning to South Africa via a sojourn in Paris, a gift from the artist to one of his children.

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*Provenance:*

The Artist's Personal Collection (Cape Town) and thence by descent (Paris).

Originally, this work was included by the artist in the "A" list of works destined to be maintained by the Heritage Trust he established in 2009. This changed after he failed to have the work returned from Paris.

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*Exhibited:*

New Group Exhibition, Cape Town [research in progress - this show took place in October 1953 but I have not been able to locate a copy of the catalogue]  
SMAC Gallery, Stellenbosch, *Erik Laubscher: A Major Retrospective Exhibition*,  
6 December 2009 to 25 February 2010, cat. no. 13

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*Of Interest:*

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=07Dj\\_ZTdXWA](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=07Dj_ZTdXWA)

A webinar focusing on the lives of Erik Laubscher and Claude Bouscharain

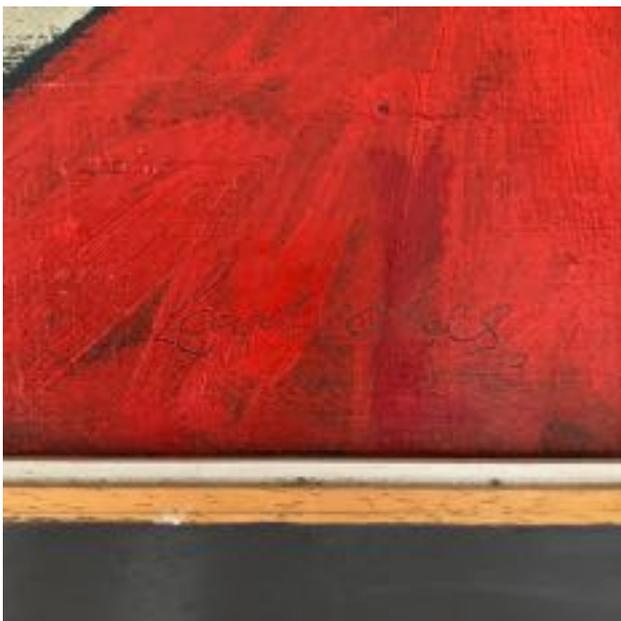
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The numbers and labels on the stretcher refer to:

(28) Laubscher's personal inventory of his paintings which he started as part of the process for his exhibition at SMAC Gallery in 2009.

(SMAC 13) catalogue number reference for the 2009 exhibition at SMAC gallery in Stellenbosch which coincided with the publication of the book edited by Hans Franssen.



signature detail (b.r. of painting)



Laubscher was quoted as having commented (cheekily) that for the price of a fridge or washing machine, you could purchase his “Head of a Girl”.

*Die Burger, 1953*