

# Jean-Paul Barbier-Mueller

1930–2016

## To My Pal,

Jean-Paul, when I reread the hundreds of emails you sent me, I worry that my weak prose might make you smile. Because everything is to be found in what you wrote: biblical, literary, and artistic knowledge; clever commentary, often humorous and sometimes ferocious. Your judgments on our common passions—on dealers, collectors, auction houses—have been as expected as they were feared, and they were always pertinent. Your superb magazine, *Arts and Cultures*, was a reflection of its founder, and the two words of its title perfectly express and embody who you are. Your son Gabriel, who produced an exhibition on the Samurai, said of this order that they wanted to teach honor, benevolence, loyalty, writing, and poetry to the young. You have done all that—as a collector, a museum director, an exhibition curator, and a researcher, but particularly as a friend.

Who knows La Pléiade? You do.

Who knows Toba country? You do.

Who knows Michel Butor? You do.

Who knows Ronsard's contemporaries and his successors?  
You do.

Who knows Antoine de Blondel and Bernard Bardon de Brun? You do.

Who knows the Naze? You do.

Who knows Tabiteua? You do.

Who knows Indonesia, New Ireland, the Lobi, the Nazca, the Fang, the Cyclades, Côte d'Ivoire, Bali? You, you, and you again. I could make a list of what you know, but it would take so many pages ... .



You have more than a passing acquaintance with everything—you really know it. You wrote to me a few hours before you departed this past December 22nd, “You know, I’m not kidding—I have a feeling I won’t be around for much of Chanukah this year.” You even know the Hebrew calendar. What am I saying—you know all the calendars!

Note, Jean-Paul, that I am writing in the present, because as Federico García Lorca, one of your favorite poets, once said, “Nothing is as alive as a memory.” And the memory of you inhabits me.

Pierre Moos