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Obituary

Jean Malifaud 2 July 1945 - 10 January 2026

- Features - In Memoriam - Obituaries and appreciations -

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Jean passed away early on Saturday. I saw him the day before at the hospital, still full of the wonderful energy I had known him to have since the beginning of our long journey of militant comradeship just after 1968, when he joined the League. Almost immediately, this became a deep friendship, with a very strong bond.

The beneficial whirlwind of that beautiful month of May 1968 transformed the brilliant, somewhat staid maths professor at the University of Jussieu into a permanent rebel, thanks to this alignment of the planets, cultural revolts, social revolts and international mobilisations, which almost naturally led him to join the League after the dissolution of the JCR by Marcellin, to embark with it on a great adventure which, alongside the Vietnamese fighters, in the continuity of the Tricontinental appeal, made us dream of the convergence of all struggles and permanent revolution.

We were all swept up in this companionship that turned our life choices upside down: permanent activism, political and trade union commitments, internationalist and anti-fascist commitments, which took up almost all of our daily lives and, above all, disrupted, to say the least, our more personal commitments.

Jean had many other passions: mathematics, cooking, restaurants, and woodworking. He loved convivial evenings, good food and good wine. He was a funny and generous man. He was also a loving husband, father, grandfather and great-grandfather. My thoughts go out to Danielle, his first wife, Catherine and Claire, their daughters, and their children. I think of Olivier, his son, and his mother Anne, Jean's partner. I also think of Françoise, whom he loved so much and who left us not so long ago. I think of Monique, of course, who was by his side for so many years, his companion in struggle and in his daily activism.

Jean was an important figure in the life of the League. He was involved in its leadership for many years and was a member of numerous committees. He played an important role in the many debates that took place within the League, alongside Olive, Hélène, François, Samy and so many others.

He was involved in all the solidarity actions with the struggle of the Indochinese peoples, demonstrations, then the occupation and transformation of the Place du Tertre into liberated territory, solidarity with Polish workers, demonstrations and clashes with the police to denounce the bloody repression of Mexican students, demonstrations for Lip, and the centenary of the Commune with Higelin.

Above all, he was committed to the Sandinistas for six months on the ground, participating with all his comrades in the solidarity brigades in concrete action to help kick-start the revolutionary process.

He was committed to anti-fascism, anti-racism, undocumented migrants, Palestine and Ukraine.

Since 1968, Jean had been very involved in the SNESup and FEN trade unions at the beginning, then, following the manoeuvres of the leadership until the split, in the creation of the FSU, to defend a militant trade unionism, where the orientations are the result of confrontations and a synthesis between the various orientations proposed in the FSU.

He was also one of the main leaders of the École Émancipée, a revolutionary trade unionist tendency which, after the departure of the FEN following the split, took on an important role and influence within the FSU. For the first time, the teachers' trade union movement opted for a renewable strike, and the ÉÉ was the component that made this development possible.

Jean was enthusiastic about large-scale movements and was willing to take a step back in order to try to create such a movement, enabling us to have a greater and more effective influence on social events, although the results were not always as hoped for.

Disappointment certainly, but never resignation!

Then came the time of greater divisions, over choices that made it impossible for some to remain together in the same organisation, GA, Ensemble, GES and L'APRÈS. We were always side by side in the essential battles, even more so since the brown plague and its henchmen, whom we wanted to “crush in the bud”, threaten every continent.

We thought ‘never again’, and now we find ourselves having to prepare for an even more difficult battle: stopping their advance. Jean would have been a key player in this, of course.

My comrade, my friend, we keep you in our hearts and take you with us into our battles of tomorrow.

No pasarán!

13 January 2026

PS:

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