

# 20th Century & Contemporary Art Evening Sale

New York Auction / 17 November 2021 / 7pm EST

Sale Interest: 48 Lots



[View Sale](#)



[Conditions of Sale](#)



PHILLIPS

# 20th Century & Contemporary Art Evening Sale

New York Auction / 17 November 2021 / 7pm EST

Sale Interest: 48 Lots

## Auction & Viewing Location

17 November 2021 7pm EST  
432 Park Avenue, New York, NY, United States, 10022

## Viewing

8-17 November 2021  
Monday-Saturday 10am-6pm  
Sunday 12pm-6pm

## International Global Highlights Tour

### London

6-14 October 2021  
Monday-Saturday 10am-9pm  
Sunday 12pm-6pm  
30 Berkeley Square

### Southampton

9-28 October 2021  
Tuesday-Sunday, 11am-6pm  
Monday, 31 May, 11am-6pm  
1 Hampton Road

### Manhattan

8-17 November 2021  
Monday-Saturday 10am-9pm  
Sunday 12pm-6pm  
432 Park Avenue

## Sale Designation

When sending in written bids or making enquiries please refer to this sale as NY010721 or 20th Century & Contemporary Art Evening Sale.

## Absentee and Telephone Bids

tel +1 212 940 1228  
[bidsnewyork@phillips.com](mailto:bidsnewyork@phillips.com)

## Contemporary Art Department

Amanda Lo Iacono  
New York Head of Department & Head of Auctions  
+1 212 940 1278  
[aloiacono@phillips.com](mailto:aloiacono@phillips.com)

# 20th Century & Contemporary Art Evening Sale

New York Auction / 17 November 2021 / 7pm EST

Sale Interest: 48 Lots



1  
**Shara Hughes**  
*Inside Outside*  
Estimate  
\$250,000 — 350,000



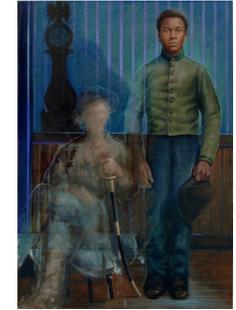
2  
**Jadé Fadojutimi**  
*My Umbrella Has A Nourishing ...*  
Estimate  
\$150,000 — 200,000



3  
**Ewa Juszkiewicz**  
*Girl in Blue*  
Estimate  
\$80,000 — 120,000



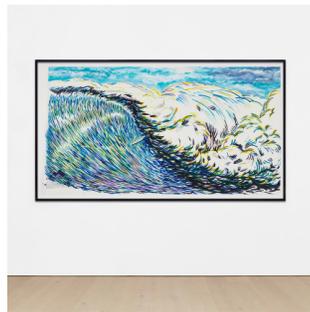
4  
**Kwesi Botchway**  
*Green Sofa*  
Estimate \$30,000 — 50,000



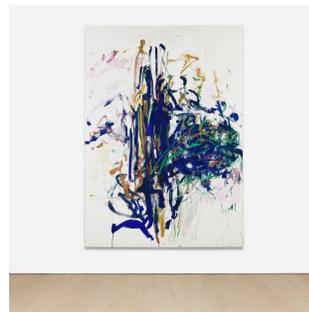
5  
**Titus Kaphar**  
*Fade With Time*  
Estimate  
\$400,000 — 600,000



6  
**David Hammons**  
*Puzzling Times*  
Estimate  
\$1,000,000 — 1,500,000



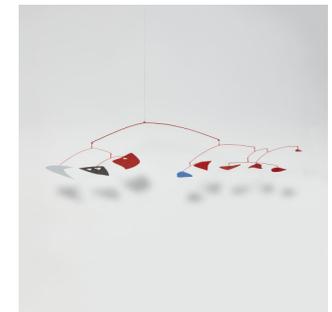
7  
**Raymond Pettibon**  
*No Title (Let him come...)*  
Estimate  
\$1,500,000 — 2,000,000



8  
**Joan Mitchell**  
*Untitled*  
Estimate  
\$4,000,000 — 6,000,000



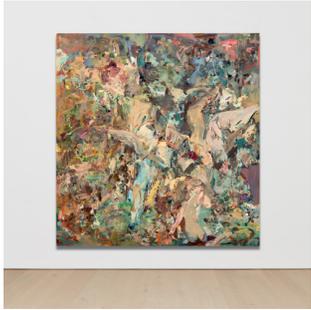
9  
**Georgia O'Keeffe**  
*Crab's Claw Ginger Hawaii*  
Estimate  
\$4,000,000 — 6,000,000



10  
**Alexander Calder**  
*White Moon*  
Estimate  
\$4,000,000 — 6,000,000

# 20th Century & Contemporary Art Evening Sale

New York Auction / 17 November 2021 / 7pm EST



11  
**Cecily Brown**  
*Untitled*  
Estimate  
\$3,500,000 — 4,500,000



12  
**Willem de Kooning**  
*Composition*  
Estimate  
\$800,000 — 1,200,000



13  
**Rudolf Stingel**  
*Untitled*  
Estimate  
\$1,800,000 — 2,500,000



14  
**Barkley L. Hendricks**  
*FTA*  
Estimate  
\$4,000,000 — 6,000,000



15  
**Amy Sherald**  
*Welfare Queen*  
Estimate  
\$1,200,000 — 1,800,000



16  
**Francis Bacon**  
*Pope with Owls*  
Estimate  
\$35,000,000 — 45,000,000



17  
**Luc Tuymans**  
*Wallpaper*  
Estimate  
\$1,500,000 — 2,000,000



18  
**Pierre Bonnard**  
*Panier de fruit*  
Estimate  
\$2,000,000 — 3,000,000



19  
**Honor Titus**  
*Linden Blvd Jazz Radio*  
Estimate \$30,000 — 50,000



20  
**Matthew Wong**  
*Time After Time*  
Estimate  
\$800,000 — 1,200,000

# 20th Century & Contemporary Art Evening Sale

New York Auction / 17 November 2021 / 7pm EST



21  
**Avery Singer**  
*European Ego Ideal*  
Estimate  
\$1,500,000 — 2,500,000



22  
**Mark Tansey**  
*Garden*  
Estimate  
\$700,000 — 1,000,000



23  
**KAWS**  
*THE WAY HE KNOWS*  
Estimate  
\$850,000 — 1,000,000



24  
**Wassily Kandinsky**  
*Fliessend*  
Estimate  
\$2,000,000 — 3,000,000



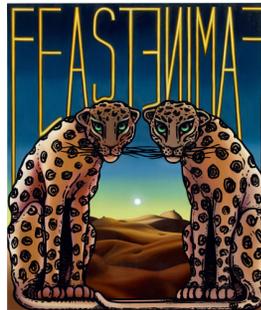
25  
**Jean-Michel Basquiat**  
*Untitled (from Famous Negro At...)*  
Estimate  
\$750,000 — 1,100,000



26  
**Peter Saul**  
*Ice Box #3*  
Estimate  
\$350,000 — 450,000



27  
**Jean-Michel Basquiat**  
*Untitled (The Door)*  
Estimate  
\$6,000,000 — 8,000,000



28  
**Emily Mae Smith**  
*Feast and Famine*  
Estimate  
\$200,000 — 300,000



29  
**Gerhard Richter**  
*Weiß (White)*  
Estimate  
\$4,000,000 — 6,000,000



30  
**Robert Ryman**  
*Series #25 (White)*  
Estimate  
\$1,000,000 — 1,500,000

# 20th Century & Contemporary Art Evening Sale

New York Auction / 17 November 2021 / 7pm EST



31  
**Frank Stella**  
*Double Concentric Square*  
Estimate  
\$1,500,000 — 2,500,000



32  
**Carmen Herrera**  
*Amarillo y Negro*  
Estimate  
\$500,000 — 700,000



33  
**Andy Warhol**  
*The Last Supper/Be a Somebody...*  
Estimate  
\$6,000,000 — 8,000,000



34  
**Christopher Wool**  
*Blue Fool*  
Estimate  
\$800,000 — 1,200,000



35  
**Milton Avery**  
*Brown Bolero*  
Estimate  
\$1,500,000 — 2,500,000



36  
**Lynette Yiadom-Boakye**  
*Six PM, Malaga*  
Estimate  
\$500,000 — 700,000



37  
**Mickalene Thomas**  
*Portrait of Qusuquzah #5*  
Estimate  
\$400,000 — 600,000



38  
**Mike Kelley**  
*Memory Ware Flat #3*  
Estimate  
\$1,000,000 — 1,500,000



39  
**George Condo**  
*Collision Course*  
Estimate  
\$1,500,000 — 2,500,000



40  
**Bruce Nauman**  
*Untitled (from Fifteen Pairs of H...*  
Estimate  
\$1,000,000 — 1,500,000

# 20th Century & Contemporary Art Evening Sale

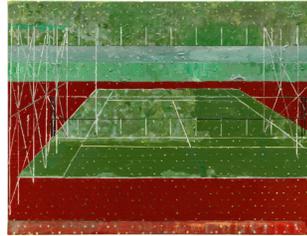
New York Auction / 17 November 2021 / 7pm EST



41  
**David Hammons**  
*Untitled*  
Estimate  
\$1,000,000 — 1,500,000



42  
**Nicolas Party**  
*Houses*  
Estimate  
\$400,000 — 600,000



43  
**Hurvin Anderson**  
*Country Club—Mixed Doubles*  
Estimate  
\$400,000 — 600,000



44  
**Max Ernst**  
*Ohne Titel (les hommes ne le sa...*  
Estimate  
\$500,000 — 700,000



45  
**Max Ernst**  
*Kachina, le chien de Peggy Gug...*  
Estimate  
\$280,000 — 350,000



46  
**Cy Twombly**  
*Untitled*  
Estimate  
\$600,000 — 800,000



47  
**Reggie Burrows Hodges**  
*On the Verge: Green*  
Estimate  
\$100,000 — 150,000



48  
**Max Ernst**  
*Portrait de Ernst Wilhelm Leber...*  
Estimate  
\$200,000 — 300,000

## 20th Century & Contemporary Art Evening Sale

New York Auction / 17 November 2021 / 7pm EST



PROPERTY OF A SOPHISTICATED EUROPEAN COLLECTOR

1

### Shara Hughes

*Inside Outside*

signed, titled, inscribed and dated "'Inside Outside"  
SHARA HUGHES 2018 NYC" on the reverse

oil and acrylic on canvas

77 7/8 x 65 7/8 in. (198 x 167.5 cm)

Painted in 2018.

**Estimate**

\$250,000 — 350,000

[Go to Lot](#)



*"I think that nature reflects emotions in so many ways. Beauty, pain, peace, sadness can all be seen in one day with the passing of time or with a weather pattern. Nature is constantly changing, you will never see the same flower twice in the exact same way." —Shara Hughes*

Oscillating between abstraction and figuration, the imaginary and the actual, Shara Hughes' *Inside Outside*, 2018 is from a series of landscapes the artist undertook in 2014. After years of devoting her practice to highly representational and detailed interiors, this series marked a shift by the artist into a more "instinctual" or "spontaneous" painting philosophy.

After a visit to the artist's studio in 2018, former MoMA curator Mia Locks commented: "These works begin with no particular idea in mind—no title, no roadmap. Instead, she starts by making aimless marks on a blank canvas, without any preconceived notion of what they will become. Pouring, splashing, spraying, dripping, churning, or scraping—there are innumerable physical actions Hughes might use as she negotiates form through paint. Her initial mindset is open; she lets herself play."<sup>i</sup> Locks' observations of Hughes' psychological approach to painting are poignantly evidenced in *Inside Outside*.



[left] Wassily Kandinsky, *Landscape with Two Poplars*, 1912. Art Institute of Chicago, Image: The Art Institute of Chicago / Art Resource, NY, Artwork: © 2021 Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York/ADAGP [right] Lee Krasner, *The Seasons*, 1957. Whitney Museum of American Art, Image: © Whitney Museum of American Art / Licensed by Scala / Art Resource, NY, Artwork: © 2021 Pollock-Krasner Foundation / Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York

In electrifying hues of vermillion, orange and green, a fantastic landscape unfolds before us. In the background, our vision is drawn towards a strip of color in pastel tones of coral and lavender—a path leading into a distant horizon. Solid swaths of paint in rich forest greens, stunning reds and deep blue evidence the artist walking a fine line between figurative vegetation and scenery, expressionist force and physical action. These elements in Hughes' work evoke both the process and energy of Lee Krasner and Joan Mitchell, while at the same time, echoing the tension first explored in the paintings of Wassily Kandinsky, the father of modern abstraction.

In *Inside Outside*, the vista seems to reveal itself from an intimate perspective, framed in the work's foreground with what could ostensibly be classified as an enclosure of brambly branches, rendered in equally sharp brushstrokes of earth, vibrant teal and green tints. The viewer seems to observe the painting through our "hideout" behind the foliage—much like the painting's title implies. Hughes often frames her landscapes to endow them with this very accessible viewpoint: "I want anyone to be able to enter in them," she declared. Locks further elaborates, "Hughes wants us to feel these spaces as she does, to spend time in them and understand a little about the psychic struggles that have produced them."<sup>ii</sup>



David Hockney, *Mulholland Drive: The Road to the Studio*, 1980. Los Angeles County Museum of Art, Image: Richard Schmidt, Artwork: © David Hockney

Indeed, working directly from her imagination, avoiding all physical reference points and premature planning, has afforded Hughes a new-found freedom in her work which is indisputable in her landscapes in general, and the current work in particular. Her virtuosity is in lending not only psychological accessibility but also a distinctly contemporary and fresh feel to a long-standing, art-historical tradition of landscape paintings: "Landscapes opened a whole new world for me, one that was awesome and exciting [...] There's something very open-ended about the idea of a landscape that appeals to me too. All landscapes are constantly changing, whether it's the time of day or the temperature or the weather patterns and things growing and dying. The constant state of change created so much possibility."<sup>iii</sup>

<sup>i</sup> Mia Locks, "Working Tension: On Shara Hughes's Landscapes," *Shara Hughes / Landscapes*, New York, 2019, p. 11.

<sup>ii</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 10.

<sup>iii</sup> Shara Hughes quoted in Katie White, "Art World," *Artnet News*, August 17, 2020, [online](#).

**Provenance**

Galerie Eva Presenhuber, Zurich

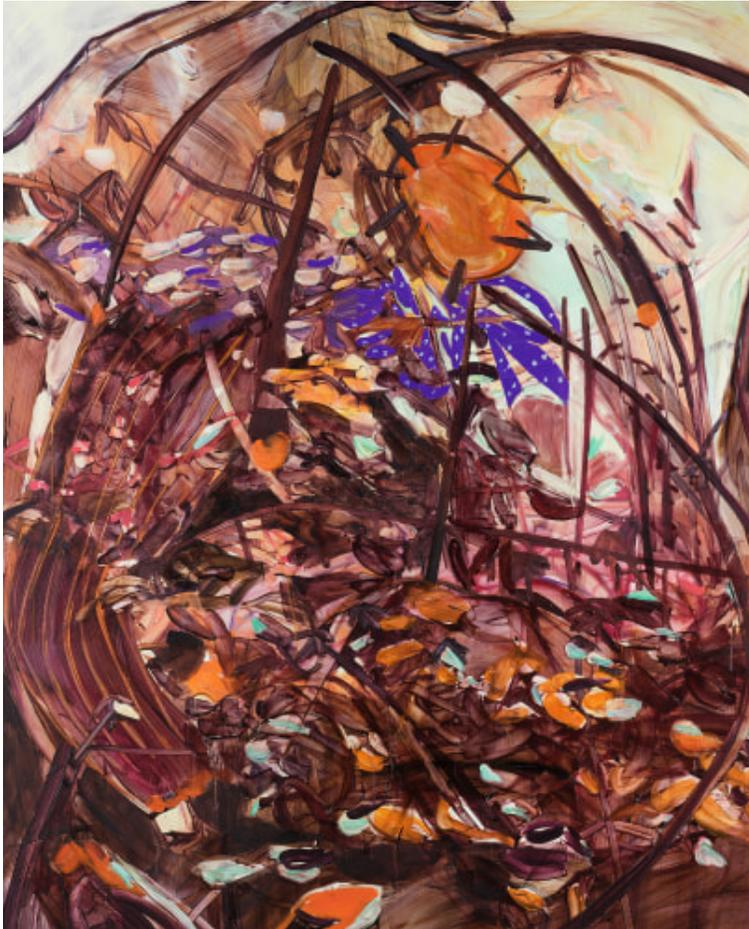
Acquired from the above by the present owner

**Literature**

Sara Hughes, *Sara Hughes: Landscapes*, New York, 2019, p. 15 (illustrated, p. 14)

## 20th Century & Contemporary Art Evening Sale

New York Auction / 17 November 2021 / 7pm EST



PROPERTY FROM AN IMPORTANT NEW YORK  
COLLECTION

2

### Jadé Fadojutimi

*My Umbrella Has A Nourishing Disguise*

signed, signed with the artist's initials and dated "Jadé  
Fadojutimi JF September '18" on the reverse

oil on canvas

79 1/4 x 63 1/4 in. (201.3 x 160.7 cm)

Painted in 2018.

**Estimate**

\$150,000 — 200,000

[Go to Lot](#)



*"The easiest way to talk about myself and my life is through color." —Jadé Fadojutimi*

Painted in 2018, Jadé Fadojutimi's *My Umbrella Has A Nourishing Disguise* is a stunning example of the young artist's vibrant, free-flowing canvases. Typical of her best works, loose sweeping brushstrokes overtake the composition in a cacophony of dark reds, oranges, violets, and blues. Fadojutimi has displayed her mastery in marrying the figurative with the abstract. At first glance, the composition is anchored by a glowing orb—as the viewer becomes immersed in the awe-inspiring scale of the work, the scene becomes more abstract, transitioning into a lush foreground flanked by vertical, grass-like brushstrokes of intertwining brown, violet, and orange. Discussing the cross-section of abstraction and figuration in her paintings, the artist expressed, "My paintings derive their shapes, colors and patterns from clothing, anime, video games, soundtracks, childhood obsessions, memories, drawings, traumas, experiences and objects I have collected along the way. They are woven together into emotive environments that breed characters and forms."<sup>i</sup>

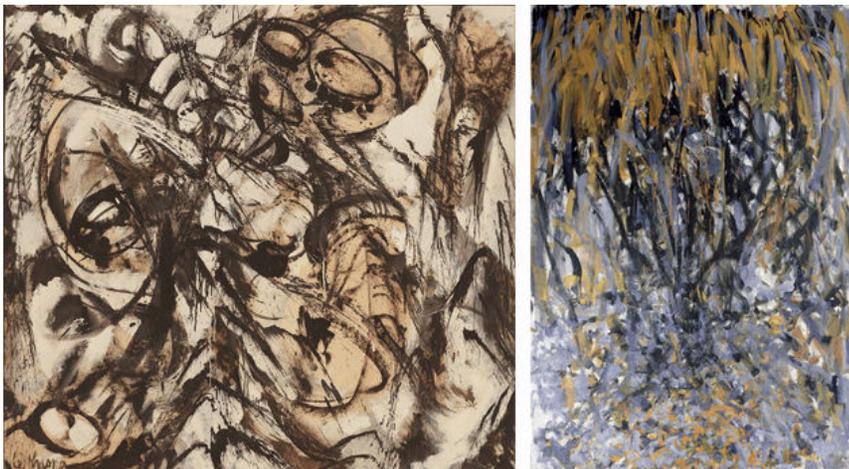


Jadé Fadojutimi, *I Present Your Royal Highness*, 2018. Tate, London, Image: © Tate, London / Art Resource, NY, Artwork: © Jadé Fadojutimi

*"I think of my art as a diary of my life, and my studio as a diary of my childhood." —Jadé Fadojutimi*

Inspired by a back catalogue of visual, aural, and memorable experiences, Fadojutimi not only orchestrates technically stimulating compositions, but creations that are deeply personal. Working late into the night at her London studio, the artist's painting sessions are often accompanied by the intense soundtracks of Japanese anime shows. Incorporating rhythmic gestures into her work, Fadojutimi's practice captures the performative act of painting, drawing inspiration from the

dramatic, swinging canvases of her predecessor, Lee Krasner. Speaking of her subjective state during the process of creation, the artist explained, "That's when my mind and energy are at their highest. It's also when I'm most contemplative. Working when I am most energized translates materially into my canvases. I found my painting language by listening to and embracing who I am, so understanding the excitement of working at night is a part of that conversation with myself."<sup>ii</sup>



[left] Lee Krasner, *The Guardian*, 1960. Whitney Museum of American Art, Image: © Whitney Museum of American Art / Licensed by Scala / Art Resource, NY, Artwork: © 2021 Pollock-Krasner Foundation / Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York [right] Joan Mitchell, *Tilleul*, 1978. Musée d'Arts, Nantes, France (on deposit from the Centre Pompidou), Image: © CNAC/MNAM, Dist. RMN-Grand Palais / Art Resource, NY, Artwork: © Estate of Joan Mitchell

*"When I'm making a painting, unexplained emotions come out. Language acts as a barrier between the work and the person viewing it. Even if I tried to describe the paintings, I wouldn't be able to do them justice. They do so much on their own."*  
—Jadé Fadojutimi



Jadé Fadojutimi with the present work, 2018. Image: Instragam, © Jadé Fadojutimi

### Collector's Digest

- A graduate of the Slade School and Royal College of Art, London, Fadojutimi's work is included in major institutional collections around the globe including Tate, London, Institute of Contemporary Art, Miami, Walker Art Centre, and the Baltimore Museum of Art. Recently, the Musée d'Art Moderne de Paris acquired a work by the artist for the museum's permanent collection.

## Jadé Fadojutimi

---

- Increasingly gaining critical international traction, Fadojutimi is slated for multiple upcoming exhibitions, including her American institutional debut at the [Miami Institute for Contemporary Art](#) this November, followed by shows at the Hepworth Wakefield and the Fondazione Sandretto Re Rebaudengo, Turin in 2022.
- Recently in October 2021, Phillips set the world auction record for the artist with [Myths of Pleasure](#), which soared above 14 times the work's low estimate.



*Myths of Pleasure*, 2017 Achieved £1,172,000.

<sup>i</sup> Jadé Fadojutimi, quoted in David Trigg, “I bathe in the conversations between colour, texture, line, form, composition, rhythm, marks and disturbances,” *Studio International*, April 26, 2021, [online](#).

<sup>ii</sup> Ibid.

---

### Provenance

Gisela Capitain, Cologne

Private Collection, Europe

Acquired from the above by the present owner

## 20th Century & Contemporary Art Evening Sale

New York Auction / 17 November 2021 / 7pm EST



PROPERTY FROM AN IMPORTANT POLISH  
COLLECTION

3

### **Ewa Juszkiewicz**

*Girl in Blue*

signed and dated "Ewa Juszkiewicz 2013" on the  
stretcher; further signed, titled and dated "Ewa  
Juszkiewicz 2013 "Girl in blue"" on the reverse  
oil on canvas

78 3/4 x 63 in. (200 x 160 cm)

Painted in 2013.

**Estimate**

\$80,000 — 120,000

[Go to Lot](#)



*"In my works, I incessantly draw from the past and take up a debate with tradition. I analyze the way that women have been presented in painting, and I have been especially interested in the cultural and social stereotypes for presenting women prevalent in art history." —Ewa Juszkiewicz*

Painted in 2013, *Girl in Blue* is a monumental example of Ewa Juszkiewicz's acclaimed portraits which have catapulted her onto the global art scene. Executed the same year as the artist's graduation from the Academy of Fine Arts, Krakow, the present work is an early example of the artist's mature body of work that challenges traditional conventions of portraiture through erasure. Drawing on centuries of European painting for inspiration—ranging from the Renaissance and Old Masters to the 19<sup>th</sup> century—Juszkiewicz meticulously renders her portraits with exacting precision yet replaces her sitters' heads with foreign, and often grotesque, objects, thus destabilizing the conventions of her source material. Amidst the artist's highly acclaimed oeuvre, *Girl in Blue* holds a rich exhibition history, having featured in the 41st Painting Biennale, Bielsko-Biala in 2013, followed by *Artists from Krakow: The Generation 1980-1990* at the Museum of Contemporary Art, Krakow from 2015 to 2016, among others.



Johannes Cornelisz Verspronck, *Portrait of a Girl Dressed in Blue*, 1641. Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam, Image: Rijksmuseum, Purchased with the support of the Vereniging Rembrandt, Amsterdam

*Girl in Blue* presents a near exact rendering of Johannes Cornelisz Verspronck's *Portrait of a Girl Dressed in Blue*, 1641, Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam. Here, Juszkiewicz disrupts her own skillful emulation by brazenly replacing the female sitter's head with an oversized fungo. Through this subversion, she situates herself amongst a lineage of 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> century artists who have explored the history of effacement—from Magritte's Surrealist portraits, to Francis Bacon's fantastical popes, to Nathaniel Mary Quinn's more recent hybrid, fractured renderings.



Giuseppe Arcimboldo, *Autumn*, 1573. Musée du Louvre, Paris, Image: © RMN-Grand Palais / Art Resource, NY

Juskiewicz, however, is specifically interested in history's portrayal of the female sitter and the ways in which past cultural imperatives persist. *Girl in Blue* has no identity, no age, no name. While her pose and dress indicate a certain level of affluence, her face-lessness prompts discomfort and unease. Her obliterated facial features challenge the male viewer and misogynist notions of ownership around female identity. In discussing her fascination with European portraiture, the artist explains: "I noticed that many of them present women according to a particular formula or convention. For example, in 18th- and 19th-century European painting, women were very often portrayed in a uniform way. Their poses, gestures, and facial expressions were very similar and showed no deep emotion or individuality. As a result, I developed a strong need to reference those

portraits, and to establish a dialogue with them. I was driven by a desire to revitalize history, or rather to create my own story on the basis of it."<sup>i</sup>



Otto Marseus van Schrieck, *Still Life with Mushrooms, Lizard and Insects*, 17<sup>th</sup> century. Musée des Beaux-Arts de Rouen, Normandy

Though often considered a portraitist, Juskiewicz is just as committed to the tradition of still life. Often replacing her figure's head with vanitas imagery, Juskiewicz comments on the transience of beauty which works in conjunction with the lack of identity bestowed on her sitters. In the present work, Juskiewicz renders a phantastic fungus—possibly poisonous—to suggest the fragility of life and challenge conventional stereotypes of woman as belonging to nature. Her mushroom-head shatters traditional canons of beauty, and in turn conjures a dreamlike narrative that only she inhabits, free of the male gaze.

<sup>i</sup> Claire Selvin, "Painter Ewa Juskiewicz Wants to Shatter Conservative Ideas About Beauty,"

ARTnews, November 25, 2020, [online](#).

---

**Provenance**

lokal\_30, Warsaw

Acquired from the above by the present owner in 2013

**Exhibited**

Szczecin, Galeria Zona Sztuki Aktualnej, *Urwanie głowy, Juskiewicz/Kokosiński*, February 2013

Bielsko-Biała, Galeria Bielska, *The 41st Painting Biennale "Bielska Jesień 2013"*, November 9 –

December 29, 2013, p. 11 (illustrated)

Krakow, Museum of Contemporary Art, *Artists from Krakow: The Generation 1980–1990*, October

16, 2015 – March 27, 2016, p. 110 (illustrated; installation view illustrated, p. 16)

Vilnius, Museum of Applied Art and Design, *The International Exhibition of Contemporary Painting of the 16th Vilnius Painting Triennial 'Nomadic Images'*, November 25 – December 31, 2016

**Literature**

Kurt Beers, *100 Painters of Tomorrow*, New York, 2014, p. 141 (illustrated)

*Ewa Juskiewicz: The Descent Beckons*, exh. cat., Galeria Bielska, Bielsko-Biała, 2015, n.p. (illustrated)

## 20th Century & Contemporary Art Evening Sale

New York Auction / 17 November 2021 / 7pm EST



4

### **Kwesi Botchway**

#### *Green Sofa*

signed and dated "K. Botchway 20" lower left; further signed and dated "K. Botchway" on the figure's right proper ankle; signed, titled and dated "Kwesi Botchway Green Sofa (2020)" on the reverse  
acrylic on canvas  
60 1/4 x 55 in. (153 x 139.7 cm)  
Painted in 2020.

#### **Estimate**

\$30,000 — 50,000

[Go to Lot](#)



*"I see color as the presence of everything and the absence of nothing. Without color there is no life." —Kwesi Botchway*

Marking Kwesi Botchway's auction debut, *Green Sofa* is an outstanding example of the rising artist's critically acclaimed practice. Showcasing Botchway's signature employment of color, *Green Sofa* captures his unique painterly vocabulary that places him amongst the vital contemporary figurative painters who seek to reframe Black narratives within the art historical canon. In 2020, the present work featured in the artist's celebrated solo show, *Dark Purple is Everything Black*, at Gallery 1957 in Accra, Ghana.



Francisco Goya, *The Clothed Maja*, 1807-1808. Museo del Prado, Madrid, Image: © Museo Nacional del Prado / Art Resource, NY

*"Botchway forms a new visual language whereby a layering of brushstrokes represents a multiplicity of characters, lifestyles, and perspectives. His new spin on the impressionist movement meditates upon light that is dark, revealing a spectrum of color, energy, and character." —Katherine Finerty*

Born in Nima, a suburb of Accra, Botchway studied at the Ghanatta College of Art and Design with contemporaries and close friends Amoako Bofo and Otis Kwame Kye Quaicoe. Currently continuing his studies at the Academy of Visual Arts in Frankfurt, Botchway has virtuosically refined his style in the last decade. Departing from the more photo-realistic character of his earlier figurative works, his more recent work combines his longstanding love for 19th century French Impressionism with African contemporary realism through his self-coined style of "Afro-

Impressionism"—further described by the artist as "impressionism from the Black perspective."<sup>i</sup>



Édouard Manet, *The Reading*, 1868. Musée d'Orsay, Paris, Image: © RMN-Grand Palais / Art Resource, NY

The visual force of Botchway's figurations lies in the power of color, evoking the influence of Kerry James Marshall on his work as well as conjuring Amy Sherald's practice of grayscaling the complexion of her figures. In Botchway's visual language, the hallmark use of purple to render skin and orange for the eyes is anything but arbitrary. Recalling a rich African cultural history of precious murex purple production, "purple means power," as Katherine Finerty explained.<sup>ii</sup> "Purple is an ancient color, a color mostly associated with royals and rulers. That was the kind of space in which I wanted to elevate blackness—a place of spirituality, beauty and royalty," Botchway elucidates.<sup>iii</sup> "Their hot eyes...come with a force of intensity and untold stories, witnessed and experienced, which I want my viewers to have a feel of and get connected to."<sup>iv</sup>

*"I always want my figures to be vibrant, full of confidence and happiness because that's how I want to see Black people." —Kwesi Botchway*

A critical element in Botchway's oeuvre, the fashion of his figures is an important complement to their dispositions. On canvas, he visually fuses his subjects' actual clothing with those sourced from his imagination or from Instagram. "Fashion is like a language, and at the end of the day, when we dress ourselves, we want to feel good," he explained. The matching colors of the figure's clothes and furniture is a device similarly seen in his groundbreaking triple self-portrait *Metamorphose in July*, on which he explains, "I am signifying the instinctive way we change with time, whether we are ready or not. One's ability to remain true to their core no matter their changing nature."<sup>vi</sup>



<sup>i</sup> Kwesi Botchway, quoted in Stephanie Sporn, "For Ghanaian Portraitist Kwesi Botchway, Fashion and Power Go Hand in Hand," *Galerie*, November 13, 2020.

<sup>ii</sup> Kwesi Botchway, quoted in Katherine Finerty, *Kwesi Botchway: Dark Purple is Everything Black*, Gallery 1957, 2020, press release.

<sup>iii</sup> Kwesi Botchway, quoted in "Artist Talk—*Dark Purple is Everything Black*: Kwesi & Katherine in Conversation," Gallery 1957, June 25, 2021, IGTV.

<sup>iv</sup> Kwesi Botchway, quoted in Katherine Finerty, *Kwesi Botchway: Dark Purple is Everything Black*, Gallery 1957, 2020, press release.

<sup>v</sup> Kwesi Botchway, quoted in Stephanie Sporn, "For Ghanaian Portraitist Kwesi Botchway, Fashion and Power Go Hand in Hand," *Galerie*, November 13, 2020.

<sup>vi</sup> Kwesi Botchway, quoted in Holly Black, "Kwesi Botchway: 'I Wanted Viewers to Appreciate All Different Parts of Me,'" *Elephant*, no. 45, May 7, 2021, [online](#).

#### Provenance

Gallery 1957, Accra

Private Collection

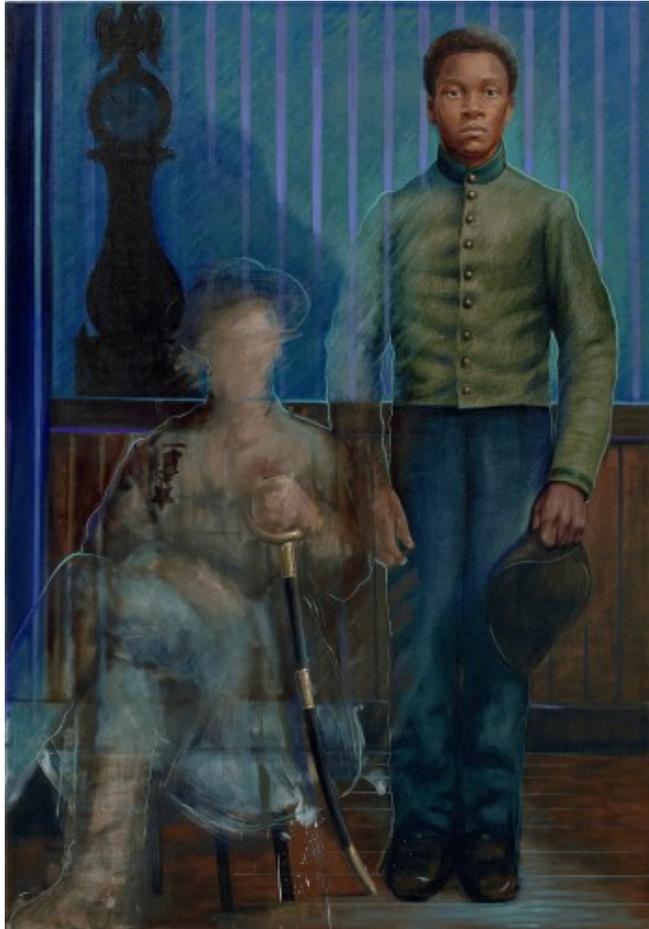
Acquired from the above by the present owner

#### Exhibited

Accra, Gallery 1957, *Kwesi Botchway, Dark Purple Is Everything Black*, May 19 – June 9, 2020

## 20th Century & Contemporary Art Evening Sale

New York Auction / 17 November 2021 / 7pm EST



PROPERTY FROM AN IMPORTANT EUROPEAN COLLECTION, WITH A PORTION OF THE PROCEEDS TO BENEFIT AN ARTIST'S RESIDENCY PROGRAM

5

### Titus Kaphar

*Fade With Time*

signed and dated "Kaphar 13" on the reverse

oil on canvas

87 5/8 x 61 1/8 in. (222.6 x 155.3 cm)

Painted in 2013.

Estimate

\$400,000 — 600,000

[Go to Lot](#)



*"Painting is a visual language where everything in the painting is meaningful, is important. It's coded." —Titus Kaphar*

Painted in 2013, *Fade With Time* is a spectacular embodiment of Titus Kaphar's acclaimed oeuvre that re-examines the history of Black representation in the historical narrative. Showcasing the artist's signature whitewash technique featured in his 2017 Ted Talk (see below), the present work looks to a 19th century photograph of John Wallace Comer—a Confederate lieutenant of the 57<sup>th</sup> Alabama Infantry and brother of future Alabama governor B. B. Comer—and his body servant Burrell. Inverting the protagonist through his leitmotif of presence and absence, Kaphar renders Comer a ghostly figure through slashing strokes over his countenance, whilst bestowing Burrell with a dignified posture and expression exuding gravitas. Teetering between invisibility and visibility, erasure and exposure, *Fade With Time* manifests Kaphar's remarkable painterly virtuosity in reimagining hidden truths to amend overshadowed histories.



John Wallace Comer, C.S.A. (Confederate States of America), with his servant, Burrell, 1860-1869. Alabama Department of Archives and History, Montgomery

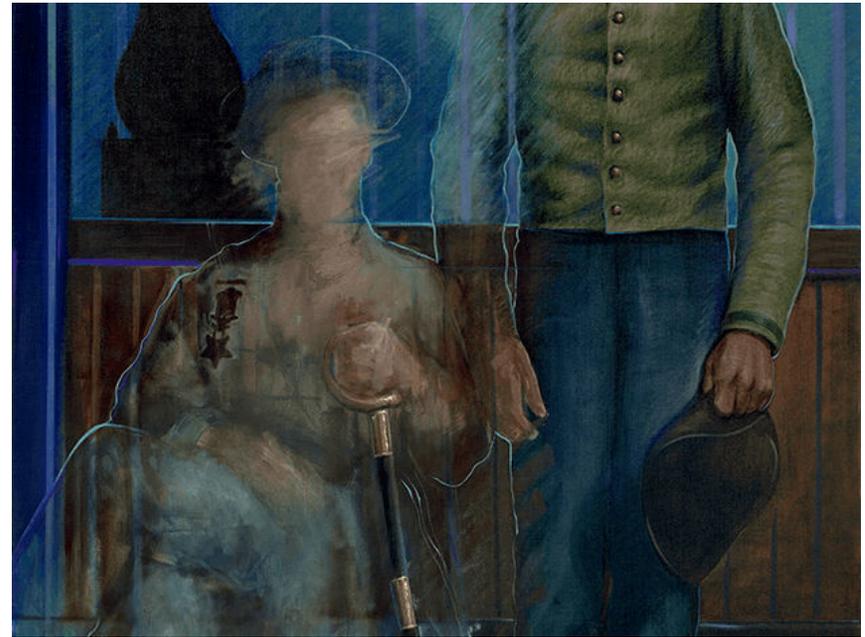
During the Civil War, Black Confederate soldiers were often slaves brought into battle by members of slaveholding families enlisted in the Confederate Army. One of 61 slaves working on the Comer family plantation and just 16 years old, Burrell saved Comer's life when he became injured during the Battle of Atlanta in 1864, carrying the wounded officer five miles to safety. Though Comer commended Burrell's bravery, he maintained throughout the war that Burrell was not a true soldier due to the color of his skin. The photograph reflects not a comrade in arms but a master-servant relationship seen throughout the canonical tradition of portraiture. Whilst Comer confidently sits in uniform gripping his sword, Burrell is awkwardly posed with his hat in hand, wearing attire denoting his sub-status within the infantry regiment.



William Hogarth, *Captain Lord George Graham, (1715-47), in his Cabin, 1742-1744*. National Maritime Museum, Greenwich, Great Britain, Image: Album / Art Resource, NY

*"If we are not honest about our past, then we cannot have a clear direction towards our future." —Titus Kaphar*

Throughout his celebrated practice, Kaphar employs deconstructive gestures such as shredding, cutting, and tarring to reconstruct new narratives through visual and conceptual force. Imbuing meaning into materiality, the artist mixes white pigment with linseed oil for his whitewash compositions. "The important thing to understand about whitewashing and painting and—in the way that I do it—is it's kind of temporary," Kaphar elucidated. "The materials that I put inside of the paint, it becomes more translucent over time. As I'm whitewashing these figures, they're not permanently removed. I'm trying to shift the viewer's gaze for a moment."<sup>1</sup>



In *Fade With Time*, Kaphar at once upends traditional modes of Black representation in historical portraiture and alludes to the dialectical forces that shaped America's legacy. The whitewash not only shifts our gaze to the redeemed Black figure, but also to the highly rendered sword presented in striking contrast to the effaced subject—a poignant reminder of history's lingering impact. Depicting the finely rendered Black protagonist partially faded with his meekly delineated White counterpart, the composition could be read as Burrell's erasure through Comer's spectral presence, or Burrell's duly respected presence through Comer's erasure—presenting a striking palimpsest of a past that cannot be erased, but can be amended.

### Cut from the Archives

Video: <https://youtu.be/DDaldVHUedI>

Titus Kaphar

---

### Property from an Important European Collection, with a Portion of the Proceeds to Benefit an Artist's Residency Program

The present work arrives at auction in support of a unique philanthropic program that is dedicated to advancing the development of rising and mid-career artists through expanding networks and opportunities to promote cultural and artistic exchange.

<sup>i</sup> Titus Kaphar, quoted in Maria Garcia and Zoë Mitchell, "Contemporary Artist Titus Kaphar On How Art Can Address Justice," *WBUR NPR Radio Boston*, August 20, 2018, transcript.

---

#### Provenance

Jack Shainman Gallery, New York

Acquired from the above by the present owner

## 20th Century & Contemporary Art Evening Sale

New York Auction / 17 November 2021 / 7pm EST



6

### David Hammons

#### *Puzzling Times*

signed and dated "Hammons 76" lower right  
pigment and ink on paper and glass collage, in artist's  
frame

33 3/4 x 27 7/8 in. (85.7 x 70.8 cm)

Executed in 1976.

#### Estimate

\$1,000,000 — 1,500,000

[Go to Lot](#)



*"Outrageously magical things happen when you mess around with a symbol."  
—David Hammons*

Belonging to David Hammons' highly acclaimed early series of body prints, *Puzzling Times* embodies the seeds of the artist's renowned practice that harnesses the power of symbols to communicate notions of identity, myth, and Blackness in contemporary America. Oscillating between drawing and performance, painting and politics, Hammons' body prints fuse the traditional monotype technique originating from the 17<sup>th</sup> century with a modern Yves Klein-esque approach channeled through his singular sensibility, employing his own body into his mark making. Here, the artist presents a ghostly face and fingerprints within the shape of a puzzle piece that floats amidst the colors of the American flag. The ostensibly hollow eyes tenderly depict two outstretched arms reaching for one another under a collaged piece of glass that signals to his pivotal transition to sculptural assemblage in the mid-1970s. Executed in 1976, *Puzzling Times* is a paradigm of the body prints that would ultimately launch his career into critical acclaim. Arriving to auction for the first time since its acquisition as a gift by the artist, the work featured in the artist's important 1976 solo show, *David Hammons: Dreadlock Series*, at Just Above Midtown Gallery (JAM), New York.



Hammons with his work at the exhibition *Three Graphic Artists: Charles White, David Hammons, Timothy Washington*, Los Angeles County Museum of Art, 1971. Image: © 2021 Museum Associates / LACMA. Licensed by Art Resource, NY

At once physically corporeal and fleeting, *Puzzling Times*, like Hammons' other body prints, was realized by greasing his own body, then pressing it against the paper and subsequently dusting the impression with powdered pigment resulting in its shimmering quality. Sticking to the greased areas, the pigment reveals in astounding detail the textures of the artist's beard, lips, and unique fingerprints. Here, he also incorporates what appears to be a cutout of a puzzle piece rather than the actual object itself as suggested by its abnormal enlargement. Tracing back to the Italian artist Giovanni Benedetto Castiglione (1609-1664), the unique monoprint in art history saw a revival in the 19<sup>th</sup> century with artists such as Degas, Whistler, Gauguin, Toulouse-Lautrec, and in the

mid-20th century, Yves Klein in his well-known *Anthropometries* series of imprinting inked female bodies.

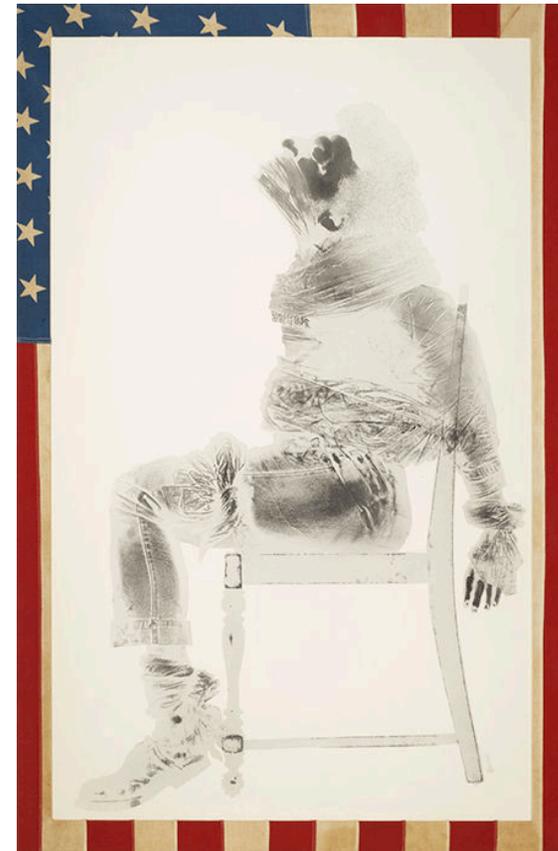
*"I feel that my art relates to my total environment—my being a black, political, and social human being. Although I am involved with communicating with others, I believe that my art itself is really my statement. For me it has to be." —David Hammons, 1970*



Jasper Johns, *Study for Skin I*, 1962. Private Collection, Artwork: © 2021 Jasper Johns / Licensed by VAGA at Artists Rights Society (ARS), NY

Hammons' process, while certainly looking to that of the avant-garde artist, expands upon the longstanding technique by infusing powerfully charged symbols that quite literally materialize body politics. In the present work, Hammons masterfully employs the puzzle piece as a framing device to suggest that the figure is imprisoned on the other side of the pictorial plane, whilst the artist's signature ghostly, X-ray-like rendering evokes the figure's hands pressing onto the glass. Here, Hammons brilliantly manifests this two-dimensional allusion with the three-dimensional collaged glass whose sharp edges and curves recall that of a blade—at once intimating at a history of Black bodies as specimen for medical experiments and of violence.

*"I be into memory, more than the avant-garde." —David Hammons*



David Hammons, *Injustice Case*, 1970. Los Angeles County Museum of Art, Image: © 2021 Museum Associates / LACMA. Licensed by Art Resource, NY, Artwork: © David Hammons

Though the combined reference of the American flag and puzzle piece may perhaps allude to the modern "principle-policy puzzle"—a political notion encompassing the paradox of American racial attitudes and support, particularly regarding the Black community—the present work ultimately reflects the beguiling ambiguity with which Hammons composes his creations through indexical layers of meaning. In the words of Alex Greenberger, "Hammons's art aspires toward unknowability. It is elusive, tricky, and often downright confounding—something akin to a puzzle without any edge pieces, or a riddle that has no answer."<sup>i</sup>

<sup>i</sup> Alex Greenberger, "Why David Hammons' Elusive Art Continues to Intrigue, Mystify, and

**David Hammons**

---

Provoke," *Art in America*, May 25, 2021.

---

**Provenance**

Gifted by the artist to the present owner

**Exhibited**

New York, Just Above Midtown Gallery, Inc., *David Hammons: Dreadlock Series*, April 6-26, 1976

## 20th Century & Contemporary Art Evening Sale

New York Auction / 17 November 2021 / 7pm EST



SURFING USA: A SELECTION OF WORKS BY  
RAYMOND PETTIBON

7

### Raymond Pettibon

*No Title (Let him come...)*

signed and dated "Raymond Pettibon 2011" on the  
reverse

pen, ink, gouache and acrylic on paper

51 3/4 x 97 in. (131.4 x 246.4 cm)

Executed in 2011.

**Estimate**

\$1,500,000 — 2,000,000

[Go to Lot](#)



*"There's the wave itself, which is more a part of the sublime, what we'd call nature...As the wave gets bigger it becomes more about man against nature. One doesn't conquer either one. Man with nature, I guess. Small waves and big waves are different experiences." —Raymond Pettibon*



Installation view of *Raymond Pettibon: A Pen of All Work*, New Museum, New York, February 8 - April 9, 2017. Artwork: © Raymond Pettibon, Courtesy the artist and David Zwirner

Spanning eight feet in length, Raymond Pettibon's *No Title (Let him come...)*, 2011, is a definitive example of the artist's most well-known *Surfer* series. Drawing from a vast range of influences, from global history to baseball, American politics to literature and comics, film noir to surfing, Pettibon's works examine the values of American culture. Showcasing his signature interplay between image and text, the present work also features his virtuosic graphic handling. Here, a surfer faces a majestic wave rendered in electrifying streaks of blues, greens, yellows, purples and black. A galvanic sky fills up the composition through his swirling gestural brushstroke, oscillating between impastoed and flatter application to suggest atmosphere. At once inspiring awe and terror, the scene conjures the sublime of nature and man's seeming conquest, freezing in time what may be an inevitable fate or a miraculous feat.

*"It had been his odd fortune to blow upon the deep waters, to make them surge and break in waves of strange eloquence..." —Henry James*



Cy Twombly, *Hero and Leandro [Part I]: [A Painting in Four Parts]*, 1984. Private Collection, Artwork: © Cy Twombly Foundation

## The Scribe and the Draughtsman

A self-taught artist, Pettibon found inspiration in the drawings by artists including Francisco Goya, William Blake, Honoré Daumier, Edward Hopper, and John Sloan in forming his own unique style. His distinctive artistic vernacular of coalescing pen and ink figuration with hand-inscribed text perhaps looks to Blake as a strong historic mentor, particularly in the poetic nature of his thought-provoking verbiage that accompanies his imagery. In *No Title (Let him come...)*, the artist tucks in script in the lower left of the composition and another in the seafoam on the brink of collapse, their humble existence betraying their encompassing gravity. By incorporating his Henry James-esque words, Pettibon displays the hand of a draughtsman crossed with a scribe's knack for language, striding between lyrical wit and irony, historical reflection and contemporary consumer culture.

*"I like art where you can see the struggle in making the work." —Raymond Pettibon*



From short quips to countless strokes, painterly-like sky to graphic sea, spontaneous splotches and drips to calculated mark-making, the present work draws the viewer into scanning the entire composition for its strikingly variable rendering. The body of the rising wave suggests the glimmering reflection of the bright rays of the sun upon it, only by Pettibon's deft touches of white over the psychedelic array of colors. Upon a closer look, here he has also paid meticulous attention to his minuscule surfer, as in the detailed rendering of his torso, the sunshine off the surfboard, and even the play of light and shadow on the figure's body.

### Sourcing the Sublime

"Waves. To me, it's natural," Pettibon replied when asked about his favorite theme to draw. "It's imagery that, for a lot of people around here anyway, is pornography...Each time I don't know how it's going to look, like it's an ordeal or a challenge."<sup>i</sup> On the subject of placing surfers amidst these giant swells, he explained, "I grew up near the beach. Violence at the shoreline can be worse than street violence sometimes. Local surfers are despised and hated by most other surfers throughout the world. There are good days, but if the waves aren't coming, you're sitting on the sand and praying for surf all year. Then you go and poach other people's breaks."<sup>ii</sup>



[left] Milton Avery, *Lone Rock and Surf*, 1945. Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, Image: © Whitney Museum of American Art / Licensed by Scala / Art Resource, NY, Artwork: © 2021 Milton Avery Trust / Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York [right] Katsushika Hokusai, *The Great Wave at Kanagawa* (from a *Series of Thirty-six Views of Mount Fuji*), circa 1930-1832. Metropolitan Museum of Art, Image: © The Metropolitan Museum of Art. Image source: Art Resource, NY

Capturing the artist's inclination towards the subject matter, *No Title (Let him come...)* also evokes Edmund Burke's inquiring vision about nature's sublime. "Whatever is fitted in any sort to excite the ideas of pain, and danger, that is to say, whatever is in any sort terrible, or is conversant about terrible objects, or operates in a manner analogous to terror, is a source of the sublime; that is, it is productive of the strongest emotion which the mind is capable of feeling," Burke expressed. "When danger or pain press too nearly, they are incapable of giving any delight, and [yet] with certain modifications, they may be, and they are delightful, as we every day experience."<sup>iii</sup>



<sup>i</sup> Raymond Pettibon, quoted in Nicholas Gazin, "Raymond Pettibon," *Vice Magazine*, October 31, 2011.

<sup>ii</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>iii</sup> Edmund Burke, *A Philosophical Enquiry into the Origin of Our Ideas of the Sublime and Beautiful*, London, 1812, pp. 58-59.

---

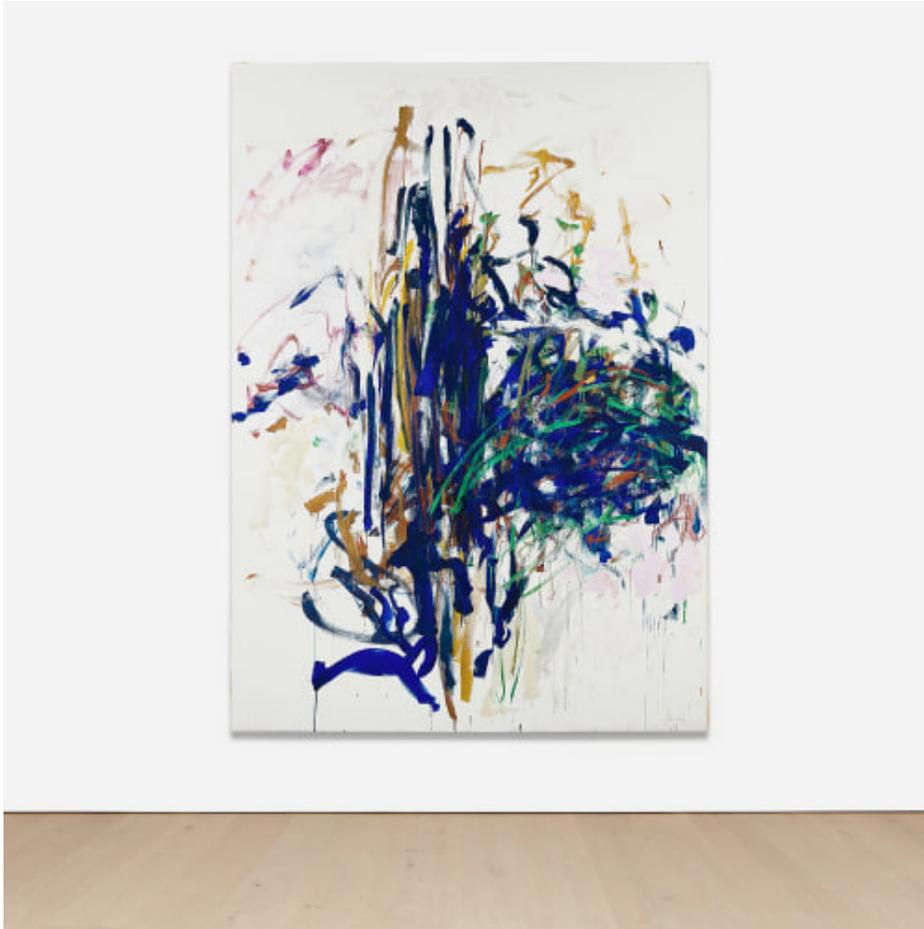
#### Provenance

Regen Projects, Los Angeles

Acquired from the above by the present owner

## 20th Century & Contemporary Art Evening Sale

New York Auction / 17 November 2021 / 7pm EST



PROPERTY OF AN IMPORTANT PRIVATE COLLECTOR

8

### Joan Mitchell

*Untitled*

signed "Joan Mitchell" lower right  
oil on canvas  
110 x 78 3/4 in. (279.4 x 200 cm)  
Painted in 1992.

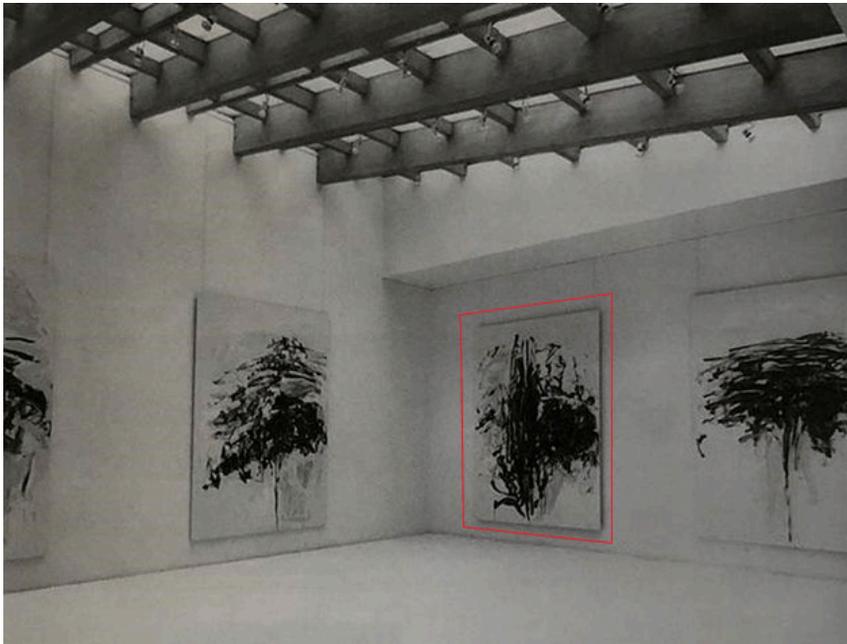
Estimate

\$4,000,000 — 6,000,000

[Go to Lot](#)



*"Feeling, existing, living, I think it's all the same, except for quality. Existing is survival; it does not necessarily mean feeling... Feeling is something more: it's feeling your existence. It's not just survival. Painting is a means of feeling living." —Joan Mitchell*



The present work installed at *Joan Mitchell*, Galerie Jean Fournier, Paris, June 3 – July 14, 1992

Painted in the final year of Joan Mitchell's celebrated career, *Untitled* is a ravishing embodiment of the remarkable vitality of the artist's late paintings that ultimately encapsulate the entire course of her career. From bold vertical streaks to dancing ribbons of pigment, darkly luminous swaths to delicate wispy color, the present work showcases Mitchell's mature sensibility of coalescing the disparate influences through her life that shaped her own singular painterly language with unprecedented liberation. Just months before her death in October 1992, the present work was exhibited in one of Mitchell's last solo shows during her lifetime at the Galerie Jean Fournier in Paris from June to July that year.



Claude Monet, *Water Lilies*, 1916-1919. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, Image: © The Metropolitan Museum of Art. Image source: Art Resource, NY

Though the expressionist style of New York School spearheads such as Willem de Kooning and Franz Kline shaped Mitchell's gestural vocabulary, her lifelong admiration for the French Impressionists—particularly Vincent van Gogh, Claude Monet, and Paul Cézanne—would burst forth onto the canvases of her final decade with extraordinary dynamism. Channeling those artists' apprehension of abstraction more than ever before, Mitchell conjured exuberant landscapes and flowers, evocative atmospheres and states of mind through visual explosions of color.

*"The paintings that Joan Mitchell created in the last decade of her life reveal an artist who showed no restraint... her fondness for a palette of blue, green, orange, black, and white, together with her personal vocabulary of choppy vertical smears, washes of pastel hues, slashed aggressive strokes, loops of joyful color...all of her favorite colors and a combination of the styles of gesture she had developed during the previous thirty years." —Richard D. Marshall*



Vincent van Gogh, *The Garden of the Hospital at Saint-Rémy*, 1889. Folkwang Museum, Essen, Germany, Image: HIP / Art Resource, NY

Redolent of the darkly luminous hues often seen throughout van Gogh's late landscapes and Monet's uninhibited, near-abstract water lilies by the end of his life, the present composition also recalls Henri Matisse's Fauvist use of color in his landscapes, such as *Landscape at Collioure*, 1905. "All I wanted to do was paint," Mitchell recalled. "I was so and still I am in such adulation of great painters...I wanted to put on paint like Matisse."<sup>i</sup> Like a similar example residing at the Centre Pompidou in Paris, the present work further features a striking reverberation with the dynamically rhythmic compositions of Wassily Kandinsky, whose work inspired Mitchell since her early years particularly in line, gesture, and form.



[left] Wassily Kandinsky, *Composition in Red and Black*, 1920. State Museum of Art, Tashkent, Uzbekistan, Image: Scala / Art Resource, NY, Artwork: © 2021 Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York / ADAGP, Paris [right] Franz Kline, *Blueberry Eyes*, 1959-1960. Smithsonian American Museum of Art, Washington, D.C., Image: Smithsonian American Art Museum, Washington, DC / Art Resource, NY, Artwork: © 2021 The Franz Kline Estate / Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York

In *Untitled*, the sweeping, rich blue vertical slashes at center alert to the elongated tree forms she had explored through the early 1990s, with the spherical clusters of horizontal brushstrokes at right recalling her bundles of sunflowers. In her last paintings of 1992, as Sarah Roberts observed, "Mitchell pared down sunflower and tree figures and placed them eloquently in fields of white canvas. No longer memories of views or captured feelings of the natural world in her grandeur, they are declarations of identity...With the sparsest of means, these paintings crystallize her central concerns at the end of her life. They are about her...beauty, and death, but convey far more. Singular and uncategorizable, they are neither abstraction nor representation, but beyond both."<sup>ii</sup>



Joan Mitchell, *Untitled*, 1992. Centre Pompidou, Paris (on deposit to Musée de Brou, Bourg-en-Bresse), Image: © CNAC/MNAM, Dist. RMN-Grand Palais / Art Resource, NY, Artwork: © Estate of Joan Mitchell

The present work masterfully demonstrates the deep influence of pastel on Mitchell's painterly practice and its forceful manifestations on her final canvases. "For a time I didn't work and then I did a lot of pastels which in a way freed me. Some of them inspired me to do a different, I don't know if it is called subject matter or whatever you call it to paint pictures."<sup>iii</sup> Drawn to the seductive color, textures, and immediacy of the medium, Mitchell translated the bold chromatic brilliance and flexible mark-making she found with pastel into her last paintings, employing a wider range of colors than in any period of her oeuvre before. As the boldly saturated colors of her pastel box made their way into paint, so did her compositions on paper make their way onto the canvas, as a

firework of calligraphic lines appears to burst from the center of an unassuming white background.



Mitchell's virtuosic, vigorous handling, along with her fearlessness with color as exemplified in *Untitled*, reflects her vital drive to ambitiously paint above all despite her declining health through a kind of passionate elegy. "The intimations of mortality are, however, bright and full of particulars," John Ashbery expressed, "and lead to the truly magisterial work of her last years, in which all the levels of achievement seen so far are captured, celebrated and expanded, in pictures of enormous freedom and authority."<sup>iv</sup> In this explosive valedictory, Mitchell revels in the visual expression of her words, "I am alive, we are alive, we are not away of what is coming next."<sup>v</sup>



Joan Mitchell in the garden at La Tour, Vétheuil, 1991. Image: David Turnley/Corbis/VCG via Getty Images

## Stanley Whitney on Joan Mitchell

Stanley Whitney reflects on the artist's remarkable career on the occasion of the concurrent major retrospective on Joan Mitchell currently at the San Francisco Museum of Art, September 4, 2021 – January 17, 2022 (traveling to the Baltimore Museum of Art, March 6 – August 14, 2022 and to Fondation Louis Vuitton, Paris in Fall 2022).

Video: [https://youtu.be/f\\_bxpmwYdqg](https://youtu.be/f_bxpmwYdqg)

## Collector's Digest

[San Francisco Museum of Art](#); [Baltimore Museum of Art](#); [Paris, Fondation Louis Vuitton](#), *Joan Mitchell Retrospective*, September 4, 2021 – Fall 2022

- The present work arrives to auction amidst the comprehensive, global retrospective of Joan Mitchell's work, signaling the reconsideration of the artist's oeuvre along with the pantheon of

leading female Abstract Expressionists whose contributions have been revisited in recent years.

- A rare-to-market opportunity, *Untitled* is only one of four paintings from the last year of Joan Mitchell's life to ever arrive at auction thus far.

<sup>i</sup> Joan Mitchell, quoted in Yves Michaud, "Conversations with Joan Mitchell, January 12, 1986," in *Joan Mitchell: New Paintings*, exh. cat., Xavier Fourcade, New York, 1986, n.p.

<sup>ii</sup> Sarah Roberts, "Painting," in *Joan Mitchell*, exh. cat., San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, 2020, p. 309.

<sup>iii</sup> Joan Mitchell, transcript of an interview with Yves Michaud, n.d. [August 7, 1989], with Mitchell's edits, quoted in Sarah Roberts, "Painting," in *Joan Mitchell*, exh. cat., San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, 2020, p. 304.

<sup>iv</sup> John Ashbery, *Joan Mitchell 1992*, New York, 1993, n.p.

<sup>v</sup> Joan Mitchell, quoted in Patricia Albers, *Joan Mitchell: Lady Painter*, New York, 2011, p. 184.

## Provenance

Estate of the Artist

Robert Miller Gallery, New York (acquired in 1993)

Acquired from the above by the present owner

## Exhibited

Paris, Galerie Jean Fournier, *Joan Mitchell*, June 3 – July 14, 1992

Valencia, IVAM Centre Julio González, *Joan Mitchell*, September 11 – December 14, 1997, p. 95 (illustrated, p. 93)

Musée d'Art Moderne de la Ville de Paris, *Deadline*, October 16, 2009 – January 10, 2010, no. 71, p. 199 (illustrated, p. 103)

## Literature

Catherine Flohic, "Art des Années 90/Art in the 90's: Joan Mitchell," *Ninety Magazine*, no. 10, 1993, p. 63 (illustrated)

*La couleur toujours recommencée: Hommage à Jean Fournier, marchand à Paris (1922–2006)*, exh. cat., Musée Fabre, Montpellier, 2007, p. 194 (installation view Galerie Jean Fournier, Paris, 1992, illustrated)

*Galerie Jean Fournier*, exh. cat., Galerie Jean Fournier, Paris, 2016, p. 11 (installation view Galerie Jean Fournier, Paris, 1992, illustrated)

## 20th Century & Contemporary Art Evening Sale

New York Auction / 17 November 2021 / 7pm EST



PROPERTY FROM THE COLLECTION OF THURSTON  
AND SHARON TWIGG-SMITH, HONOLULU

9

### **Georgia O'Keeffe**

*Crab's Claw Ginger Hawaii*

signed, titled and dated "Crabs Claw Ginger / Hawaii  
1939 / Georgia O'Keeffe" on the reverse

oil on canvas

19 x 16 in. (48.3 x 40.6 cm)

Painted in 1939.

**Estimate**

\$4,000,000 — 6,000,000

[Go to Lot](#)



*"Many things are so beautiful that they don't seem real. My idea of the world—nature—things that grow...has not been beautiful enough." —Georgia O'Keeffe to Alfred Stieglitz, February – March 1939*



Harold Stein, *Georgia O'Keeffe on Leho'ula Beach, near 'Aleamai, Hāna, Maui, 1939*. Image: © Estate of Harold Stein

On January 30, 1939, Georgia O'Keeffe embarked on a nine-week sojourn to Hawaii, a transformative experience that inspired some of the most visually alluring paintings of her career. Marking a pivotal moment in the legendary artist's singular practice, *Crab's Claw Ginger Hawaii* is among the most iconic works of the 22 paintings she created based on her time in the Aloha State.

Of these, 14 reside in museum collections, including the Georgia O'Keeffe Museum, Honolulu Museum of Art, Brooklyn Museum, the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, Memphis Brooks Museum of Art, and the Smithsonian American Art Museum. A striking painting by a pioneering figure of American Modernism making its auction debut, *Crab's Claw Ginger Hawaii* captures O'Keeffe's adventurous spirit and passion for the natural world, expressed through her distinctive visual language.

### O'Keeffe's Visions of Hawaii in Museum Collections



Georgia O'Keeffe, *Hibiscus with Plumeria, 1939*. Smithsonian American Art Museum, Washington, D.C., Image: Smithsonian American Art Museum, Washington, DC / Art Resource, NY, Artwork: © 2021 The Georgia O'Keeffe Museum / Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York

## O'Keeffe's Visions of Hawaii in Museum Collections



Georgia O'Keeffe, *Bella Donna*, 1939. Georgia O'Keeffe Museum, Santa Fe (extended loan, private collection), Image: Georgia O'Keeffe Museum, Santa Fe / Art Resource, NY, Artwork: © 2021 Georgia O'Keeffe Museum / Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York

## O'Keeffe's Visions of Hawaii in Museum Collections



Georgia O'Keeffe, *Cup of Silver Ginger*, 1939. Baltimore Museum of Art, Artwork: © 2021 The Georgia O'Keeffe Museum / Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York

## O'Keeffe's Visions of Hawaii in Museum Collections



Georgia O'Keeffe, *Waterfall—End of Road—'Iao Valley*, 1939. Honolulu Museum of Art, Image: Christie's Images, London/Scala Florence, Artwork: © 2021 The Georgia O'Keeffe Museum / Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York

## O'Keeffe's Visions of Hawaii in Museum Collections



Georgia O'Keeffe, *Fishhook From Hawaii - No. 1*, 1939. Brooklyn Museum, New York, Bequest of Georgia O'Keeffe, Artwork: © 2021 The Georgia O'Keeffe Museum / Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York

*"I have such a fantastic flower that some one gave me yesterday—am taking it along—it is sort of dry and flat but lovely red and green and yellow—a variety of ginger..." —Georgia O'Keeffe to Alfred Stieglitz, from Wailuku, Maui, March 28, 1939*

O'Keeffe's trip to Hawaii began as a commission by New York advertising firm N. W. Ayer & Son to produce images for the Hawaiian Pineapple Company, now Dole. Though typically hesitant to take on such commissions, O'Keeffe accepted, drawn to the seductive appeal of the Islands and her passion for travel. *Crab's Claw Ginger Hawaii* was one of the two works ultimately selected for the print campaign—along with *Pineapple Bud*, Private Collection—which appeared in *Vogue* and the *Saturday Evening Post*, among other outlets. Further testifying to its emblematic stature, the present work most recently featured as the key highlight of the formative New York Botanical Garden exhibition, *Georgia O'Keeffe: Visions of Hawaii*, from 2018 to 2019, published as the catalogue cover as well as in the related article by the [New York Times](#).



[left] The present work featured in *McCall's Magazine*, 1940. Artwork: © Georgia O'Keeffe Museum / Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York [right] René Magritte, *Exciting Perfumes by Mem*, 1946. Artwork: © 2021 C. Herscovici / Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York

For O'Keeffe, what started as a critical assignment in the Hawaiian Islands would become a profound opportunity to channel her love for nature beyond borders in a radically new

environment. From the streams trickling down the ʻĪao Valley in the west of Maui, to sea arches near Hāna in the east; from the richly abundant flora to traditional Hawaiian fishhooks (*makau*), O'Keeffe found exuberant inspiration in the tropical Hawaiian landscape. In her letters to Stieglitz, she frequently described her captivation with the floral life of the Islands, marveling at its beauty. As she once stated, "Wish you could see it—so many of the flowers just simply seem unbelievable..."<sup>i</sup>



Harold Stein, *Georgia O'Keeffe in Hawai'i*, 1939. Image: © Estate of Harold Stein

In the present work, O'Keeffe depicts a lushly colored heliconia, a relative of ginger, set against the expansive Hawaiian sky and distant marine horizon. Unlike her earlier flower compositions, the sky

plays a significant role here. As Jennifer Saville observed of O'Keeffe's Hawaiian pictures, "The configuration of flower, sky, horizon, and sea differ in each, but the component parts remain the same; seemingly symbolic of Hawaii, they encapsulate the spirit of the islands with their exotic vegetation and endless space."<sup>ii</sup>



[left] René Magritte, *The Third Dimension (La troisième dimension)*, 1942. Sammlung Moderne Kunst, Pinakothek der Moderne, Bayerische Staatsgemaltesammlungen, Munich, Image: bpk Bildagentur / Pinakothek der Moderne / Art Resource, NY, Artwork: © 2021 C. Herscovici / Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York [right] Constantin Brâncuși, *Bird in Space*, 1923. Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, Image: © The Metropolitan Museum of Art. Image source: Art Resource, NY, Artwork: © 2021 Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York

*Crab's Claw Ginger Hawaii* is especially distinguished by its expressive manifestation of O'Keeffe's Surrealist sensibility, rarely seen this distinctly in her oeuvre. The work's surreal character at once prefigures and conjures René Magritte's *La troisième dimension* of 1942, as well as his own commissioned advertisement, *Exciting Perfumes by Mem*, 1946. Stripping away any enveloping foliage, she bestows the heliconia with a monumental presence against the sea and sky. A single elongated leaf anchored at the left counterbalances the flower's diagonal thrust, infusing the subject with life and a sense of movement. Atypical of her floral works, which generally maintain a more static presence, this remarkably dynamic composition brings to mind the forceful energy of Brâncuși's *Bird in Space*.



[left] Emily Mae Smith, *Alien Shores*, 2018. Private Collection, Artwork: Courtesy of the artist and Petzel, New York [right] Loie Hollowell, *Linked Lingam in Red and Blue*, 2015. Private Collection, Artwork: © Loie Hollowell

Further lending to the work's dreamlike quality, O'Keeffe abstracts the surface of the flower's bracts, rendered smooth with the striking employment of bold, luminous color. The radicality of this composition presages much of the contemporary art impulses of today, as seen in the works of a new generation of cutting-edge female artists, including Emily Mae Smith and Loie Hollowell.



[left] Georgia O'Keeffe, *Pelvis with the Distance*, 1943. Indianapolis Museum of Art, Artwork: © Georgia O'Keeffe Museum / Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York [right] Georgia O'Keeffe, *Untitled (Mt. Fuji)*, 1960. The Georgia O'Keeffe Museum, Santa Fe, Image: Georgia O'Keeffe Museum, Santa Fe / Art Resource, NY, Artwork: © Georgia O'Keeffe Museum / Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York

Throughout her prolific career, O'Keeffe drew from her memory and imagination to conceive paintings that capture "the wideness and wonder of the world as I live in it."<sup>iii</sup> Beginning in New York in the 1920s; to New Mexico in 1929 through her lifetime; to the Hawaiian Islands in 1939; and later to Peru and Japan in 1959, O'Keeffe continuously mined the natural world to create some of the most iconic works of the 20<sup>th</sup> century that resonate through the present. The artist's larger-than-life spirit, distinguished painterly vernacular, and lyrical vision of Hawaii manifest themselves most spectacularly in *Crab's Claw Ginger Hawaii*. "I often think of that trip at Yosemite as one of the best things I have done – but Hawaii was another," she wrote upon her departure from the Islands.<sup>iV</sup> "Out there was sort of a dream land."<sup>v</sup>



Georgia O'Keeffe, *Sky Above Clouds IV*, 1965. Art Institute of Chicago, Image: The Art Institute of Chicago / Art Resource, NY, Artwork: © Georgia O'Keeffe Museum / Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York

## In O'Keeffe's Words

### GEORGIA O'KEEFFE

#### EXHIBITION OF OILS AND PASTELS

FEBRUARY 3 — MARCH 17, 1940.

#### AN AMERICAN PLACE

509 MADISON AVENUE, NEW YORK CITY

Weekdays: 10 a.m. — 6 p.m., Sundays: 3 — 6 p.m.

If my painting is what I have to give back to the world for what the world gives to me, I may say that these paintings are what I have to give at present for what three months in Hawaii gave to me.

Some of them were painted in Hawaii, some were painted here in New York from drawings or memories or things brought home.

What I have been able to put into form seems infinitesimal compared with the variety of experience.

One sees new things rapidly everywhere when everything seems new and different. It has to become a part of one's world, a part of what one has to speak with — one paints it slowly. One is busy with seeing and doing new things — one wants to do everything. To formulate the new experience into something one has to say takes time.

Maybe the new place enlarges ones world a little. Maybe one takes one's own world along and cannot see anything else.

GEORGIA O'KEEFFE

Georgia O'Keeffe's artist statement upon the opening of *Georgia O'Keeffe: Exhibition of Oils and Pastels, An American Place*, New York, February 3 - March 17, 1940

## Property from the Collection of Thurston and Sharon Twigg-Smith, Honolulu

The important history of *Crab's Claw Ginger Hawaii* is paired perfectly in this case with the story of its owners, Sharon Twigg-Smith and her late husband, Thurston Twigg-Smith, members of a prominent, fifth-generation Hawaiian family known for their philanthropy and contributions to the

arts across institutional and cultural bounds. Mr. Twigg-Smith, frequently called “Twigg,” was a larger than life figure whose legendary impact on the state of Hawaii was matched perhaps only by his genuine love for art and the community. After a decorated military career, including the storming of Normandy during World War II, he returned to his home state and propelled the Honolulu Advertiser into Hawaii's leading newspaper. Coalescing his endeavors in the arts with his business acumen, Twigg notably transformed The Contemporary Museum, Honolulu from a corporate gallery into a public museum, now known as the Honolulu Museum of Art Spalding House. Among the many other institutions they supported are the Hawaii Theatre Center, Historic Hawaii Foundation, Punahou School, and Yale University Art Gallery, where they gifted masterpieces such as Richard Diebenkorn's *Ocean Park #24* and Wayne Thiebaud's *Drink Syrups* as well as other major works of modern and contemporary art.



<sup>i</sup> Georgia O'Keeffe to Alfred Stieglitz, Honolulu, February 16-18, 1939.

<sup>ii</sup> Jennifer Saville, *Georgia O'Keeffe: Paintings of Hawai'i*, exh. cat., Honolulu Academy of Arts, 1990, p. 31.

<sup>iii</sup> Georgia O'Keeffe, quoted in Elizabeth H. Turner, *Georgia O'Keeffe: The Poetry of Things*, Washington, D.C., 1999, p. vi.

<sup>iv</sup> Georgia O'Keeffe to Ansel Adams, Honolulu, April 14, 1939.

<sup>v</sup> Georgia O'Keeffe to Alfred Stieglitz, en route from Los Angeles to San Francisco, April 21, 1939.

#### Provenance

The Dole Pineapple Company, New York (commissioned from the artist in 1939)  
(with Harold Diamond, New York, 1976)

Mr. and Mrs. N. Rosenwald, New York, by 1976  
(with Donald Morris Gallery, Birmingham, 1976)

Private Collection, Toledo, 1976  
(with Gerald Peters Gallery, Santa Fe, 1987)

Thurston Twigg-Smith, Sun Valley and Honolulu (acquired from the above, 1987)  
Sharon Twigg-Smith (by descent from the above, 2016)

Gift from the above to the present owner

#### Exhibited

New York, An American Place, *Georgia O'Keeffe: Exhibition of Oils and Pastels*, February 3 - March 17, 1940, no. 6 (titled as *Halakonia—Crabs Claw Ginger*)

New York, Whitney Museum of American Art, *Business Buys American Art*, March 17 - April 24, 1960, no. 48, p. 32 (illustrated; titled as *Heliconia—Crabs Claw Ginger*)

Phoenix Art Museum; Tokyo, The Seibu Museum of Art; Otsu, Seibu Hall; Aspen Art Museum, *Georgia O'Keeffe: Selected Paintings*, April 15, 1988 - February 12, 1989, no. 27, pp. 66, 104 (illustrated, p. 67; titled as *Halakonia—Crabs Claw Ginger*)

Honolulu Academy of Arts, *Georgia O'Keeffe: Paintings of Hawai'i*, March 22 - May 6, 1990, no. 8, pp. 17, 31-32, 70 (illustrated, p. 34; titled as *Heliconia—Crabs Claw Ginger*; Dole Pineapple Advertisement illustrated, fig. 6, p. 18)

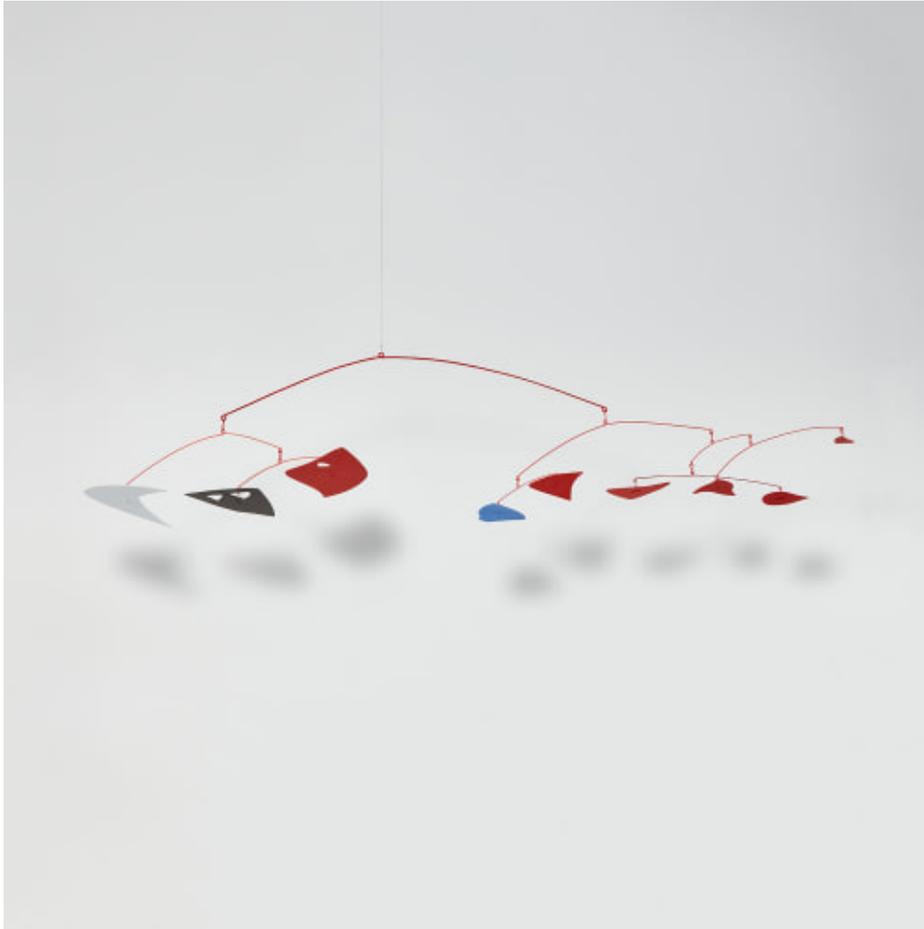
The New York Botanical Garden; Memphis Brooks Museum of Art, *Georgia O'Keeffe: Visions of Hawai'i*, May 19, 2018 - February 24, 2019, no. 19, pp. 19, 20, 128, 130 (illustrated, p. 131 and on the frontispiece; titled as *Heliconia, Crabs Claw Ginger*; Dole Pineapple Juice advertisement illustrated, fig. 8, p. 20)

## Literature

- "Advertising Art Lures Brush of Miss O'Keeffe," *New York Herald Tribune*, January 31, 1940, p. 10
- "Pineapple for Papaya," *Time*, February 12, 1940, p. 9
- "Georgia O'Keeffe Finally Painted That Pineapple," *Honolulu Star-Bulletin*, February 22, 1940, p. 9
- Elizabeth McCausland, "Exhibitions in New York," *Parnassus*, no. 3, March 1940, p. 42
- "Hospitable Hawaii cannot send you its abundance of flowers...," *The Saturday Evening Post*, April 13, 1940, p. 115 (Dole Pineapple Juice advertisement illustrated)
- McCall's*, vol. LXVII, no. 8, May 1940, p. 82 (Dole Pineapple Juice advertisement illustrated)
- "Hospitable Hawaii cannot send you its abundance of flowers...," *Vogue*, February 1, 1941, p. 58 (Dole Pineapple Juice advertisement illustrated)
- Art Directors Club of New York, *Twentieth Annual of Advertising Art*, New York, 1941, p. 59 (illustrated; Dole Pineapple Juice advertisement illustrated, p. 58)
- F.A. Mercer, "The Twentieth Annual of Advertising Art," *Art and Industry*, no. 192, June 1942, p. 164 (illustrated)
- Russell Lynes, "Suitable for Framing," *Harper's Magazine*, no. 1149, February 1946, p. 163
- John D. Morse, "Americans Abroad," *Magazine of Art*, no. 1, January 1947, p. 25 (illustrated; titled as *Bird of Paradise*)
- Russell Lynes, *The Tastemakers*, New York, 1955, p. 294 (titled as *Hawaiian mock-bird-of-paradise flower*)
- "Island Firms Honored," *Honolulu Star-Bulletin*, April 17, 1960, p. 8 (illustrated; titled as *Heliconia*)
- Ronn Ronck, "How Georgia O'Keeffe conquered pineapples," *The Honolulu Advertiser*, October 22, 1981, pp. D1, D3
- Sue Davidson Lowe, *Stieglitz: A Memoir/Biography*, New York, 1983, p. 356
- Karl K. Ichida, "Beauty and the Businessman: Corporate Support for the Visual Arts in Hawaii," *Eastwest Fine Arts Supplement and Gallery Guide*, Winter 1984, p. 36
- F. Bradley Lynch, "Ayer gets a taste of O'Keeffe," *Advertising Age*, no. 25, April 7, 1986, p. 60 (Dole Pineapple Advertisement illustrated)
- Laurie Lisle, *Portrait of an Artist: A Biography of Georgia O'Keeffe*, Albuquerque, 1986, pp. 243-244
- Roxana Robinson, *Georgia O'Keeffe: A Life*, New York, 1989, p. 427
- Barbara Buhler Lynes, *Georgia O'Keeffe: Catalogue Raisonné*, vol. II, New Haven, 1999, no. 963, p. 608 (illustrated)
- William L. Hamilton, "O'Keeffe's Paradise, Lost and Found," *The New York Times*, May 25, 2018, section C, p. 13 (illustrated)

## 20th Century & Contemporary Art Evening Sale

New York Auction / 17 November 2021 / 7pm EST



PROPERTY OF A DISTINGUISHED AMERICAN COLLECTOR

10

### Alexander Calder

#### *White Moon*

sheet metal, wire, and paint

24 1/2 x 112 x 19 1/2 in. (62.2 x 284.5 x 49.5 cm)

Executed in India in 1955.

This work is registered in the archives of the Calder Foundation, New York, under application number A10124.

#### Estimate

\$4,000,000 — 6,000,000

[Go to Lot](#)



*"How can art be realized?...Out of volumes, motion, spaces bounded by the great space, the universe." —Alexander Calder*



Alexander and Louisa Calder in India, 1955. Image: Photo courtesy of Calder Foundation, New York / Art Resource, New York, Artwork: © 2021 Calder Foundation, New York / Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York

Encapsulating an extraordinary story of Alexander Calder's global travels, *White Moon* is a striking example of the artist's lifelong endeavors in kinetic abstractions and captivation with nature. Conceived during a pivotal moment in Calder's career, the present work belongs to a rare body of nine sculptures the artist created during his trip to India between January and February 1955. Upon an invitation from the renowned architect and designer Gira Sarabhai, Calder sojourned for three

weeks at her family's estate in Ahmedabad, where he produced one of the most fascinating bodies of work of his oeuvre that remained in the Sarabhai family's private collection for nearly half a century. In this dynamic composition, a white crescent flutters amidst a constellation of blue, black and red elements as the mobile dances in infinite combinations before the viewer's eyes.

*"In 1954, I received a letter from a young Indian woman who wrote me mentioning Jean Hélon, my good friend. She was Gira Sarabhai, youngest of eight children of a large wealthy family in Ahmedabad, which is somewhere halfway between Bombay and Delhi. She offered Louisa and me a trip to India, if I'd consent to make some objects for her when there. I immediately replied yes." —Alexander Calder*

Coming from a family of important Jain industrialists and steadfast patrons of the arts, Gira and her brother Gautam had frequently welcomed leaders of the European and American avant-garde to their home, including Isamu Noguchi, John Cage, Le Corbusier, and later Robert Rauschenberg, Charles and Ray Eames, and Richard Neutra—among others. Soon after purchasing her first Calder mobile at the Maeght Gallery in Paris, Gira extended an invitation to Calder, which would commence their lifelong friendship. For Calder, the inspiration of the new environment of Ahmedabad, as well as the economic means of materials and time, reinvigorated him with a fresh burst of artistic imagination channeled through spontaneous creativity. This impulse was reflected in his rare instance of titling of the sculptures including the present work just before they were unveiled at a private exhibition at the Bhulabhai Memorial Institute, Mumbai in March 1955, alongside the screening of Herbert Matter's 1950 film, *Works of Calder*.

Video: [https://youtu.be/Qrox5s\\_nFgc](https://youtu.be/Qrox5s_nFgc)

### A Mobile Artist

*"In one hand a pair of pliers... toujours en vedette. His tools are always by his side, ready like a mechanic poised to begin work. And his workplace represents the whole world..." —Paul Westheim*

In his response to Gira's request, Calder noted "I will bring my pliers—but no other tool."<sup>1</sup> This statement encapsulates the artist's habit of distilling his practice down to the wire, so to speak, through his habit of working in makeshift studios. Combining work and travel, Calder's nomadic approach is seen as early as 1920s during his time in Paris, namely his improvised performances of *Cirque Calder* and his spontaneous wire portraits. By the 1950s, Calder applied this sensibility to his brief residencies abroad—from Beirut in 1954 and Ahmedabad in 1955, to Caracas shortly after—becoming ever more in tune with his art. In the words of Oliver Wick, "Ingenious flexibility

with improvised working situations and adaptive artistic methods made Calder become 'mobile' himself."<sup>ii</sup>

## Calder's Universe

*"[Calder's] mobiles are at once lyrical inventions, technical, almost mathematical combinations and the tangible symbol of Nature." —Jean-Paul Sartre*

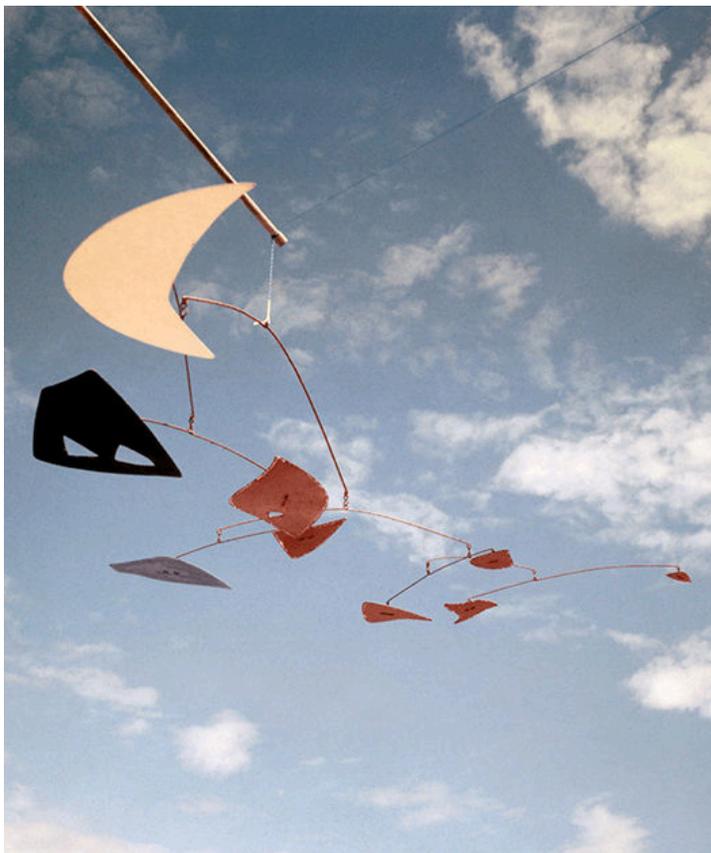


Joan Miró, *Personnages dans la nuit guidés par les traces phosphorescentes des escargots* from the series *Constellations*, 1941-1959. Musée National d'Art Moderne, Centre Georges Pompidou, Paris, Image: © CNAC/MNAM, Dist. RMN-Grand Palais / Art Resource, NY, Artwork: © 2021 Successió Miró / Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York / ADAGP, Paris

In the early 1930s, Marcel Duchamp iconically coined the term 'mobile' when he saw Calder's first motorized sculptures at the artist's studio in Paris. At the time, Calder was closely affiliated with

the Parisian avant-garde milieu, bearing witness to some of the most radical creative developments in European Modernism, and invented his singular artistic language that revolutionized three-dimensional art in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Drawing from his intuitive understanding of mathematics and the laws of physics, Calder refined his process by discarding mechanization and allowing nature to be the source of motion, resulting in the poetic simplicity of Calder's kinetic abstractions that belie the complexity of their conception. In India, Calder created his sculptures with a lighter type of metal, which allowed the sculptures to move all the more lyrically as manifested in *White Moon*.

"To me," Calder wrote, "whatever sphere, or other form, I use in these constructions does not necessarily mean a body of that size, shape or color, but may mean a more minute system of bodies, an atmospheric condition, or even a void. I.E. the idea that one can compose any things of which he can conceive."<sup>v</sup> In subject, form, and movement, *White Moon* perfectly captures the heart of Calder's visionary practice.



The present work installed at the Villa Sarabhai in Ahmedabad, 1955. Artwork: © 2021 Calder Foundation, New York / Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York

## Collector's Digest

### Concurrent & Upcoming Institutional Shows:

[Museum of Modern Art, New York, \*Alexander Calder: Modern from the Start\*, March 14 – January 15, 2022](#)

[The Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, \*Calder-Picasso\*, October 31, 2021 – January 30, 2022](#)

[Kunsthall, Rotterdam, \*Calder Now\*, November 21, 2021 – May 29, 2022](#)

i Alexander Calder to Gira Sarabhai, letter dated September 9, 195, repr. in *Calder in India*, exh. cat., London, 2012, p. 100.

ii Oliver Wick, "Alexander Calder: A Passage to India," in *Calder in India*, London, 2012, p. 27.

iii Alexander Calder, quoted in Jean Lipman, *Calder's Universe*, exh. cat., Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, 1977, p. 17.

iv Alexander Calder in conversation with Jean Davidson, in Alexander Calder, *Calder: An Autobiography with Pictures*, New York, 1966, pp. 54-55.

v Alexander Calder, "À Propos of Measuring a Mobile," manuscript, October 7, 1943, [online](#).

### Provenance

Gira Sarabhai, Ahmedabad (gifted by the artist in 1955)

Private Collection (acquired from the above)

Christie's, New York, May 10, 2016, lot 14B

Acquired at the above sale by the present owner

### Exhibited

London, Ordovas Gallery, *Calder in India*, May 31 – August 3, 2012, p. 80 (illustrated, pp. 81, 93; installation view illustrated, p. 87)

### Literature

Shanay Jhaveri, ed., *Western Artists and India: Creative Inspirations in Art and Design*, London, 2013, no. 1, p. 42 (illustrated)

## 20th Century & Contemporary Art Evening Sale

New York Auction / 17 November 2021 / 7pm EST



PROPERTY FROM AN IMPORTANT AMERICAN  
COLLECTION

11

### **Cecily Brown**

*Untitled*

signed and dated "Cecily Brown 2007" on the reverse  
oil on canvas

89 x 85 1/8 in. (226.1 x 216.2 cm)

Painted in 2007.

Estimate

\$3,500,000 — 4,500,000

[Go to Lot](#)



*"I have always wanted to make paintings that are impossible to walk past, paintings that grab and hold your attention. The more you look at them, the more satisfying they become for the viewer. The more time you give to the painting, the more you get back." —Cecily Brown*

Painted in 2007, Cecily Brown's *Untitled* is a striking example of the artist's highly acclaimed practice that oscillates between abstraction and figuration, past and present, paint and flesh. Engulfing the viewer into a sumptuous field of fervid gestural brushstrokes, the present work expresses Brown's sensibility of channeling the Old and Modern Masters of the art historical canon under her painterly hand to form a singular visual language that is entirely her own. Here, the lavish hues of blue and purple, the earthy and sensuous fleshy tones, all come together in an orgiastic riot of tantalizing allusions, epitomizing the artist's words: "The paint is transformed into image, and hopefully paint and image transform themselves into a third and new thing...I want to catch something in the act of becoming something else."<sup>i</sup>



[left] Paolo Veronese, *Martyrdom of St. George*, 16th century. San Giorgio in Braida, Verona, Image: Scala / Art Resource, NY [right] Willem de Kooning, *The North Atlantic Light*, 1977. Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam, Image: Art Resource, NY, Artwork: © 2021 The Willem de Kooning Foundation / Artists Right Society (ARS), New York

*"When I'm looking at paintings from the past, they always seem to be in the present to me; they resonate. I've never felt a sense of distance from the past that some people*

*seem to. I find it impossible and actually uninteresting to be concerned only with one's own time." —Cecily Brown*

Perfectly capturing Willem de Kooning's mantra that "flesh was the reason oil paint was invented," Brown's practice ultimately channels a host of influences, from the Renaissance and Baroque to Impressionism, Proto-Cubism, and Abstract Expressionism. "Brown's paintings can speak to us because enough of her shorthand is also ours," James Lawrence observed. "We also get the glimpses of history as they flow in and out, whether through direct recognition of an image or through indistinct echoes of something familiar."<sup>ii</sup> In *Untitled*, Brown conjures among others a kind of modern *Garden of Earthly Delights* crossed with de Kooning's vigorous strokes, the lustrous palette of Veronese and Rubens with the charged movement of Delacroix's *Death of Sardanapalus*, fragmented hints at the bathers of Degas and Cézanne—transforming visions of the past into a contemporary kaleidoscope of painterly revels.



[left] Hieronymus Bosch, *The Garden of Earthly Delights* (triptych center panel), 1490-1500. Museo del Prado, Madrid, Image: Erich Lessing / Art Resource, NY [right] Eugène Delacroix, *Death of Sardanapalus* (sketch), 1826-1827, Musée du Louvre, Paris, Image: agefotostock / Alamy Stock Photo

*"I need the body as a kind of vehicle to talk about being alive, to understand the world in a way...I need the paint to have a direction and some substance and the substance that appeals to me is the body." —Cecily Brown*

On her predilection for alluding to the human body, Brown explained, "I'm more interested in sublimation. I love the way Francis Bacon talked about the grin without the cat, the sensation without the boredom of its conveyance...I've always wanted to be able to convey figurative imagery in a kind of shorthand, to get it across in as direct a way as possible. I want there to be a human

presence without having to depict it in full."<sup>iii</sup> Brown found her delight in achieving this aim with oil paint, describing the medium as “sensual [because] it moves, it catches the light, it's great for skin and flesh and heft and meat. I wanted to make something that you couldn't tear your eyes away from. I like the fact that because my earlier work was so known for having erotic contents, I actually need to give very little now and it's seen as erotic or hinting at erotic.”<sup>iv</sup>



[left] Cecily Brown, *Trouble in Paradise*, 1999. Tate, London, Image: © Tate, London / Art Resource, NY, Artwork: © 2021 Cecily Brown [right] Cecily Brown, *Figures in a Landscape #2*, 2002. The Broad, Los Angeles, Artwork: © 2021 Cecily Brown

Ultimately self-identifying as a figurative painter, Brown works at the cusp of representation and abstraction, driving her works within the liminal space between identification and visuality, paint and substance. “I’m far more interested in a moment where figuration breaks down,” she elucidated. “I usually describe it as breaking down rather than abstract because it really is this back and forth. Some works...have far clearer graphic imagery and others really don’t. It’s always been important to me to have both, and some works walk the tight rope and have both within a painting.”<sup>v</sup> *Untitled* is a lavish manifestation of this fused, pendular relationship that also extends to the artist’s own dialogue with her creations as she views the medium of paint as a source in itself. “I take all my cues from the paint, so it’s a total back and forth between my will and the painting directing what to do next.”<sup>vi</sup>



[left] Pablo Picasso, *Standing Nude*, 1908. Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, Image: © The Metropolitan Museum of Art. Image source: Art Resource, NY, Artwork: © 2021 Estate of Pablo Picasso / Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York [right] Paul Cézanne, *Five Bathers*, 1900-1904. Musée d'Orsay, Paris (Anonymous donation subject to usufruct), Image: © RMN-Grand Palais / Art Resource, NY

*"The paintings are like doors flung open suddenly to reveal something shocking. Because they are so energetic they might also be viewed as moments of a movie whose sudden arrest causes the mind's eye to trip over itself in its own voracity, tangling in dense webs of colored light, striving to mark order of intense and disordered sensations."* —Robert Evrén

For Brown, uniting both the figurative and abstract to its fullest visual expressions in a single composition is “like pulling a moment of clarity in the middle of all the chaos.”<sup>vii</sup> Immersing the viewer’s eye and imagination into a visual feast, the artist’s luscious swathes of luminous pigment in *Untitled* at once lure us into frenzied, surreal figments of fantasized realms and present a colorful exuberance of known realities, richly materializing the heart of Brown’s artistic investigations. “I am interested in the unfixed nature of things. I want the work to have a trapped energy so that the paint seems to vibrate in place. I want the viewing of it to approximate the experience of being in the world.”<sup>viii</sup>



#### Literature

Ealan Wingate and Rose Dergan, eds., *Cecily Brown*, New York, 2008, p. 238 (illustrated, p. 239)

<sup>i</sup> Cecily Brown, quoted in Caoimhín Mac Giolla Léith, "Painting Sensations," in *Cecily Brown: Paintings*, exh. cat., Modern Art Oxford, 2005, p. 55.

<sup>ii</sup> James Lawrence, *Cecily Brown*, exh. cat., Gagosian Gallery, New York, 2013, p. 12.

<sup>iii</sup> Cecily Brown, quoted in Gagosian Gallery, *Cecily Brown*, press release, August 25, 2008.

<sup>iv</sup> Cecily Brown, quoted in Derek Peck, "New York Minute: Cecily Brown," *AnOther*, September 14, 2012.

<sup>v</sup> Cecily Brown, quoted in "Cecily Brown Interview: Take No Prisoners," *Louisiana Channel: Louisiana Museum of Modern Art*, November 3, 2015.

<sup>vi</sup> Cecily Brown, quoted in Derek Peck, "New York Minute: Cecily Brown," *AnOther*, September 14, 2012.

<sup>vii</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>viii</sup> Cecily Brown, quoted in Dore Ashton, *Cecily Brown*, New York, 2008, p. 25.

#### Provenance

Gagosian Gallery, New York

Private Collection

Acquired from the above by the present owner

## 20th Century & Contemporary Art Evening Sale

New York Auction / 17 November 2021 / 7pm EST



PROPERTY FROM AN IMPORTANT MIDWESTERN  
COLLECTION

12

### Willem de Kooning

#### *Composition*

signed and dated "de Kooning '58" lower left  
oil and charcoal on paper laid down on board  
29 x 23 1/4 in. (73.7 x 59.1 cm)  
Executed in 1958.

#### Estimate

\$800,000 — 1,200,000

[Go to Lot](#)



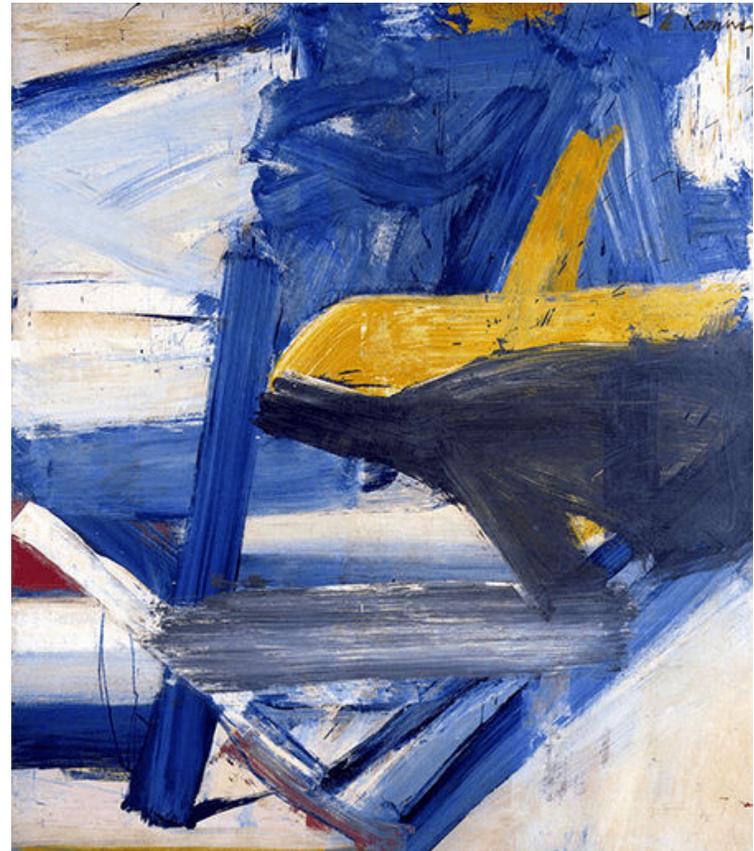
*"Content is a glimpse of something, an encounter, like a flash...I still have it now from some fleeting thing—like when one passes something and it makes an impression." —Willem de Kooning*

Executed in 1958, *Composition* emerges from a pivotal moment in Willem de Kooning's career that marked his critical period of transition towards pure abstraction. Belonging to his highly acclaimed series of *Abstract Parkway Landscapes*, the present work showcases the yellow ochre and cerulean blue pigment that remained central to his palette not just for this series but ultimately throughout his practice, and signals to the lush Rubenesque color that would come to define his later oeuvre. Through his signature bold slashes and gestural swaths, the composition straddles figuration and abstraction, recalling open fields and slivers of sky whilst conjuring the sensuous fleshy tones of the canonical female nude that would together mutually dissolve into one by the following decade.

### Seeing Through a New Lens

*"I feel I am getting more myself in the sense of, I have all my forces...I have a bigger feeling now of freedom. I am more convinced, you know, of picking up the paint and the brush and drumming it out." —Willem de Kooning*

In 1957, de Kooning began to distance himself from the urban jungle as he began to frequently shuttle between New York City and Long Island to spend more time in the countryside. Inspired by the scenic drives of blurred fields, expansive horizons, and intersecting roads passing before his eyes, he embarked on the series comprising *Composition*, resulting in some of the most gesturally expressive and sensorial paintings he had conceived to date. "Most of them are landscapes and highways and sensations of that, outside the city—with the feeling of going to the city or coming from it," de Kooning explained. "I like it in New York City, but I love to go out in a car. I'm crazy about weekend drives, even if I drive in the middle of the week. I'm just crazy about going over the roads and highways..."<sup>1</sup>



Willem de Kooning, *Bolton Landing*, 1957. Private Collection, Artwork: © 2021 The Willem de Kooning Foundation / Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York

*"Actually I've fallen in love with nature. I don't know the names of the trees but I see things in nature very well. I've got a good eye for them, and they look back at me." —Willem de Kooning*

In a radical departure from his figurative *Women* earlier in the decade, de Kooning's *Abstract Parkways* from 1957 to 1961 reflect the profound influence of the pastoral landscape on his painterly sensibility. As his greater attention to light blossomed in his canvases, the feverish proliferation of strokes and planes reduced to broad, sweeping brushwork that abridged his

planular spatial constructions and enlarged his forms, engendering a simplified, more fluid continuity across the composition. Though this evolution in his pictorial approach comfortably situates itself in the general trend of late 1950s Abstract Expressionism, it revolutionized the course of de Kooning's practice through an openness that allowed his subjective meditations to pour onto the canvas through pure chromatic exuberance.



[left] Franz Kline, *Zinc, Yellow, and Grey*, 1958. Private Collection, Artwork: © 2021 The Franz Kline Estate / Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York [right] Mark Rothko, *No. 13 (White, Red on Yellow)*, 1958. Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, Artwork: © 1998 Kate Rothko Prizel & Christopher Rothko / Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York

Contrarily, it is precisely the more controlled thrusts and tighter handling of de Kooning's brush as seen in *Composition* that bestows the legibility—or ambiguity, as it were—of the relationship between color and form. De Kooning's gestural orchestrations of the sumptuous blues, whites, browns, and yellows manifest themselves in a Baroque extravaganza under his heavy-laden brush, the flatter application revealing the remarkable speed of his painterly hand. Here, the immediacy at once reflects his perceptual vision of the natural landscape along with the angular twists and turns of curving roads flashing by. On the other hand, it evokes “paintings, angles and sections from the breasts and elbows of [de Kooning's] *Women*, from the windows that open to their landscape, from their hands that had turned into meadows.”<sup>ii</sup>

## de Kooning's Abstract Parkways in Museum Collections



*Montauk Highway*, 1958. Los Angeles County Museum of Art, Image: © 2021 Museum Associates / LACMA. Licensed by Art Resource, NY, Artwork: © 2021 The Willem de Kooning Foundation / Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York

## de Kooning's Abstract Parkways in Museum Collections



*Untitled*, 1958. Peggy Guggenheim Collection, Venice (Solomon R. Guggenheim Foundation, New York),  
Artwork: © 2021 The Willem de Kooning Foundation / Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York

## de Kooning's Abstract Parkways in Museum Collections



*Lisbeth's Painting*, 1958. Virginia Museum of Fine Arts, Richmond, Artwork: © 2021 The Willem de Kooning Foundation / Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York

## de Kooning's Abstract Parkway in Museum Collections



*Detour*, 1958. Sammlung Moderne Kunst, Pinakothek der Moderne, Bayerische Staatsgemaldesammlungen, Munich, Artwork: © 2021 The Willem de Kooning Foundation / Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York

## de Kooning's Abstract Parkway in Museum Collections



*Merritt Parkway*, 1959. Detroit Institute of Arts, Artwork: © 2021 The Willem de Kooning Foundation / Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York

*David Sylvester: "The pictures done since the Women, are they all landscapes? They are not, in any case, non-objective; or are they in some cases?" Willem de Kooning: "No—they're emotions."*

Encapsulating the artist's famous mantra that "flesh is the reason why oil painting was invented," the supple suggestion of the female body would completely liquify into the palette of the Long Island landscape in de Kooning's canvases after his formal settlement in Spring the following decade. On the road to the artist's eventual and lifelong move to the idyllic environs of East Hampton, *Composition* captures de Kooning's preoccupations to express his raw fascination with his new environment through the language of painting, as embodied in the words of Clifford Odets upon the work's exhibition at the Paul Kantor Gallery, Beverly Hills in 1961. "Each picture has in it the simultaneity and multiplicity of psychological life itself...here a heart, there a face, a woman's breasts, an egg, a window or a wall, the trivial articles and shapes of everyday life *and* their colors. All of these things are seen, not static, but in ceaseless motion; interpreting, our view constantly changing."<sup>iii</sup>

<sup>i</sup> Willem de Kooning, quoted in David Sylvester, "Content is a Glimpse," recorded March 1960, [online](#).

<sup>ii</sup> Thomas B. Hess, quoted in *de Kooning: A Retrospective*, exh. cat., Museum of Modern Art, New York, 2011, p. 318.

<sup>iii</sup> Clifford Odets, "Willem de Kooning, The Painter," in *Willem de Kooning*, exh. cat., Paul Kantor Gallery, Beverly Hills, 1961, n.p.

#### Provenance

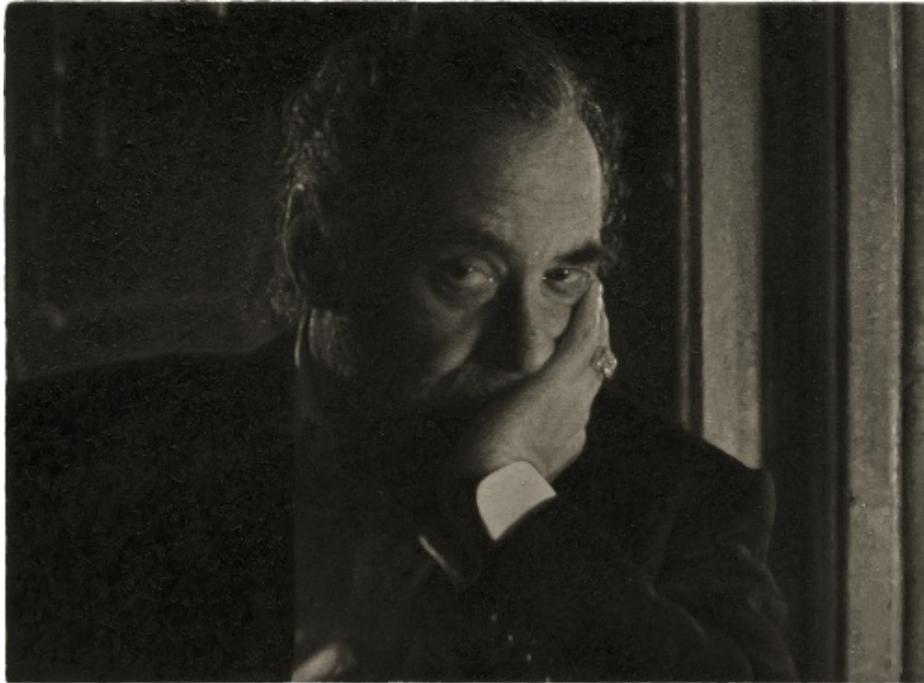
Ethel and Robert Scull, New York  
 Paul Kantor Gallery, Beverly Hills  
 Luis Mestre Fine Arts, New York  
 Private Collection (acquired from the above)  
 Christie's, New York, November 10, 2009, lot 34  
 Acquired at the above sale by the present owner

#### Exhibited

Beverly Hills, Paul Kantor Gallery, *Willem de Kooning*, April 3-29, 1961, n.p. (illustrated)

## 20th Century & Contemporary Art Evening Sale

New York Auction / 17 November 2021 / 7pm EST



PROPERTY FROM A EUROPEAN COLLECTION

13

### Rudolf Stingel

*Untitled*

signed and dated "Stingel 2007" on the reverse

oil on linen

15 x 20 1/2 in. (38.1 x 52.1 cm)

Painted in 2007.

**Estimate**

\$1,800,000 — 2,500,000

[Go to Lot](#)



*"The subject is not the artist himself, but the bipolar state of the subject of painting. To look at these self-portraits as a departure from Stingel's earlier work is a mistake. This new work is one of the many parallel paths of his continuation of the autobiography of painting." —Francesco Bonami*

Painted in 2007, Rudolf Stingel's *Untitled* belongs to his highly acclaimed series of photorealistic self-portraits that reflect the artist's explorations on the possibilities of painting. From reinventing floors and walls as picture planes, to recasting antiquated wallpaper as painted surfaces, Stingel's investigations and self-reflexive practice evolved in 2005, when he began to incorporate photorealistic portraiture into his practice. Often using his own likeness, Stingel positions these portraits at the interstices of painting and photography, moving between original and reproduction, subject and creator, reality and illusion. Based on a photograph taken around the time of the artist's 50th birthday, *Untitled* comprises a significant chapter in a narrative autobiography of existential disquiet.



Gerhard Richter, *Selbstportrait (Self-Portrait)*, 1996. Museum of Modern Art, New York, Image and Artwork: © 2021 Gerhard Richter (0220)

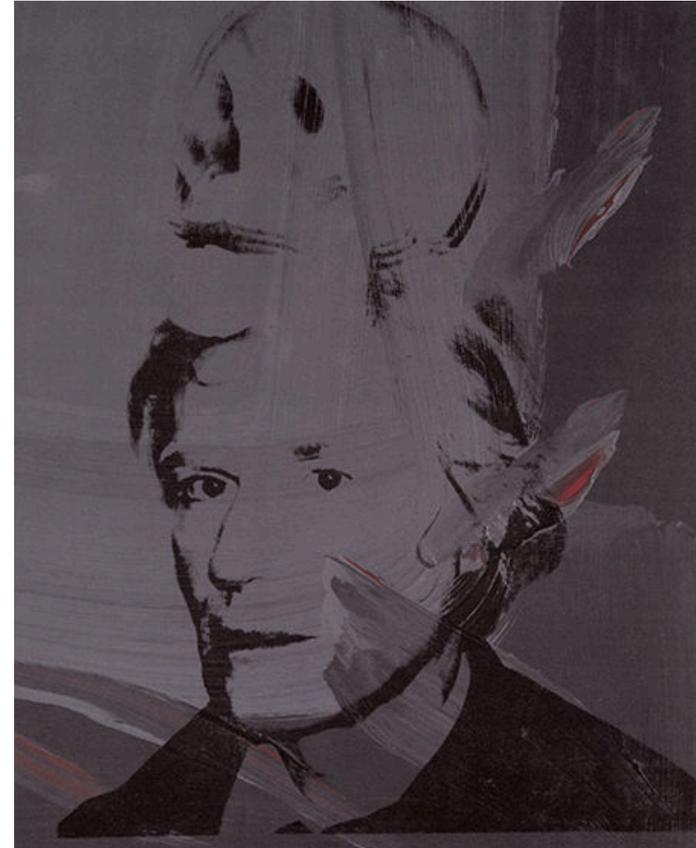
Stingel's photo-based portraiture has occupied an important place in his conceptually loaded painterly practice since its beginnings. Conceived at the height of the artist's career, the series comprises paintings based on various photographs by Sam Samore and Roland Bolego that portray Stingel both brooding over and celebrating his half-century birthday in a nondescript luxury hotel room. Offering a poignant vignette of the ambivalent ruminations that often accompany this significant milestone of life, the present work depicts the artist looking directly at the camera with his hand resting on his cheek. Despite his sharp attire embodying sophistication and worldly accomplishment, his heavy eyes and deep gaze exude a sense of melancholy, reflection, and realization as he crosses the threshold of midlife, perhaps staring into a past of

memories or a future inching closer to mortality.



Rudolf Stingel, *Untitled*, 2005-2006. Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, Artwork: © Rudolf Stingel. Courtesy the artist and Paula Cooper Gallery, New York

In *Untitled*, Stingel's transposition of the photograph onto the canvas is at once faithful and transformative. The granularity of the photographic still is transposed under the artist's painterly hand through dabs of impasto in varying grayscale tones. He renders the distinguished tussles of his silvery hair and his salt-and-pepper beard through touches of white pigment, which he also employs with remarkable veracity to denote light against shadow in every detail, including his glistening eyes and the sparkling ring. Here, the artist offers us a seemingly reliable glimpse of the photograph, whilst intervening our perceptual grasp with the notable painterly qualities of the composition that alert to its artificiality—leaving the viewer's encounter of the original image just out of reach in a painterly haze.



Andy Warhol, *Self-Portrait with Skull*, 1978. Artwork: © 2021 The Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts, Inc. / Licensed by ARS, NY

*"[Stingel] is equally part of a tradition of European... painters who have continued to explore the possibilities of painting in a way that is neither nostalgic nor reactionary. Stingel adds to this tradition in that all of his work speaks about the passage of time, moving from the photographic to the cinematic."*—Gary Carrion Murayari

Stingel's mediation establishes a visual and conceptual distance between the viewer and his source image, a fundamental element of his practice. In addition to detaching the work from its source, this separation is further aggravated by the artist's use of a borrowed, rather than self-taken,

photograph for the painting, thereby destabilizing the authenticity of authorship that ostensibly characterizes self-portraiture. “The element of painting that Stingel keeps most estranged from the viewer is the presence and the value of the artist as a unique individual...Stingel only allows his own [labor] into the work in an indexical manner,” Gary Carrion-Murayari articulated. “[His] use of photography as the basis for these works removes the possibility of insight into the artist’s psyche.”<sup>i</sup>



Film still of Marcello Mastroianni in Federico Fellini’s *8 ½*, 1963

The authorial elusiveness of Stingel’s practice as demonstrated in *Untitled* further rises to the surface in relation to autobiography. Despite its seemingly autobiographical presentation, the scene in the original photograph itself is entirely staged. The artist’s heavy-handed depiction of midlife contemplation and angst is a kind of histrionic enactment as Stingel—like Federico Fellini in his seminal film *8 ½*—depicts himself in the oxymoron of an invented autobiography, offering the viewer with an imagined experience of reality. Playing himself in the story of his life, Stingel creates a “fictional documentary,” in Francesco Bonami’s words, that inhabits the liminal spaces between the real, the true, and the fictional.<sup>ii</sup>

<sup>i</sup> Gary Carrion-Murayari, “Untitled,” in *Rudolf Stingel*, exh. cat., Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago, 2007, p. 112.

<sup>ii</sup> Francesco Bonami, “Paintings of Painting for Paintings: The Kaiology and Kronology of Rudolf Stingel,” *The Painting Factory*, May 26, 2016.

#### Provenance

The artist

Paula Cooper Gallery, New York

Private Collection (acquired from the above in 2015)

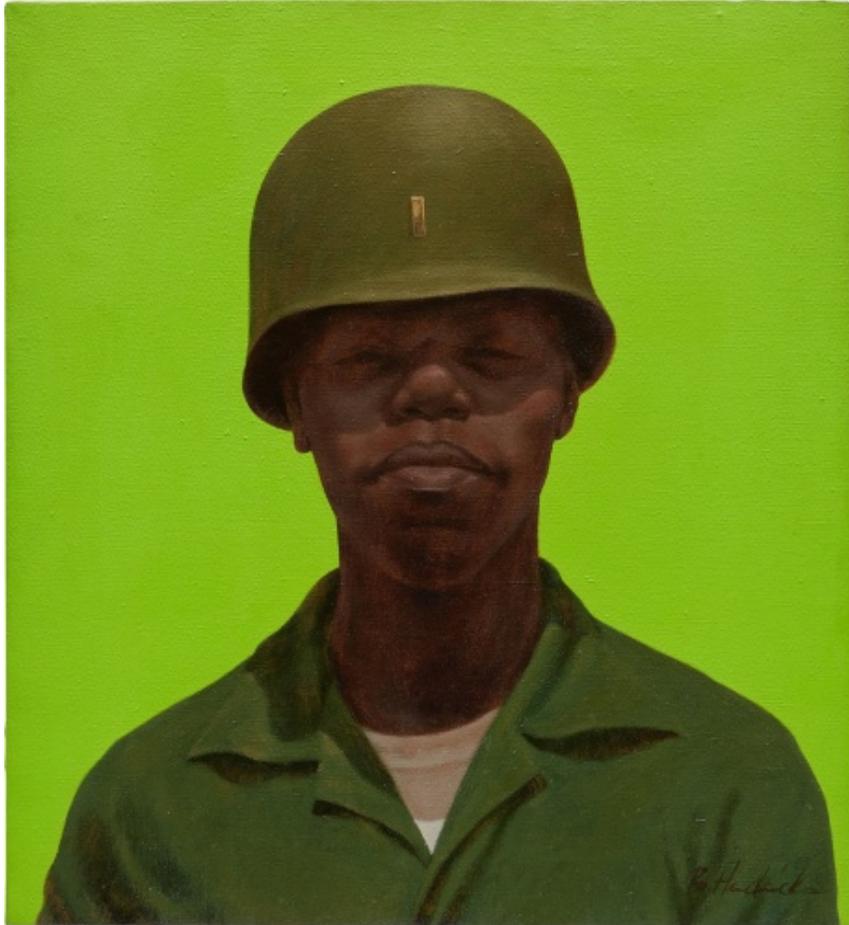
Acquired from the above by the present owner

#### Exhibited

Riehen, Fondation Beyeler, *Rudolf Stingel*, May 26 - October 6, 2019, p. 7 (illustrated)

## 20th Century & Contemporary Art Evening Sale

New York Auction / 17 November 2021 / 7pm EST



PROPERTY FROM A DISTINGUISHED NEW ENGLAND  
COLLECTION BEING SOLD TO BENEFIT THE PURSUIT  
OF ANTI-RACISM

14

### **Barkley L. Hendricks**

*FTA*

signed "B. Hendricks" lower right  
oil on canvas, in artist's frame  
27 1/2 x 25 in. (69.9 x 63.5 cm)  
Painted in 1968.

**Estimate**

\$4,000,000 — 6,000,000

[Go to Lot](#)



*"I had a painting from when I was in the Army. I took a little camera and I shot some things. One of the pieces that I did was of a fellow recruit that I had a bit of fun with in terms of sarcasm with his image. He was a Private. And I did a painting with a Lieutenant's bar on his helmet. I called the painting FTA, 1968, which stands for 'Fuck the Army.' When we were marching we'd chant that: 'FTA all the way!'"*  
—Barkley L. Hendricks

Executed in 1968, Barkley L. Hendricks's *FTA* is a stunning early example of his celebrated singular portrait aesthetic that would go on to define his output in the 1970s. A vibrant green monochromatic ground acts as the backdrop for his bust portrait of a U.S. Army soldier dressed in a military green, Vietnam-era uniform. Hendricks positions his figure as a Lieutenant, denoted by the bar on his helmet—however this was a position few African American soldiers held in the U.S. Army at the time, representing only 2% of officer corps despite 11% of total troops in Vietnam. "FTA" was a common troop expression subverting the army's slogan of "Fun, Travel and Adventure". In 1971, it became the title of an anti-Vietnam War road show designed as a counterpoint to Bob Hope's pro-war USO tour. Held in the same collection for over 50 years, the work was purchased by the owners from Kenmore Galleries, Philadelphia when Hendricks was having a show there as a young Pennsylvania Arts Academy student on his way to Yale for further study.

*"One ever feels his two-ness—an American, a Negro; two souls, two thoughts, two unreconciled strivings, two warring ideals in one dark body, whose dogged strength alone keeps it from being torn asunder." —W.E.B. DuBois*



David Hammons, *Black First, America Second*, 1970. Artwork: © 2021 David Hammons

Hendricks's portraits are often read as inherently political—especially when discussed in context with the rise of the Black Panther Party in the late 1960s and early 1970s. "My paintings were about people that were part of my life," Hendricks expressed. "If they were political, it's because they were a reflection of the culture we were drowning in."<sup>1</sup> Coming to artistic maturity at the height of the Civil Rights movement, the Black Panthers inception and Vietnam War protests, Hendricks was one of a generation of African American artists defining what it meant to be Black and an artist in post-war America including Chouinard Art Institute alum David Hammons (1966-1968). Vietnam was the first major conflict where African American soldiers were fully integrated into the military and the first conflict after the civil rights movement of the 1950s and early 1960s.



U.S. soldiers on a search-and-destroy patrol in Phuoc Tuy province, South Vietnam, June 1966. Image: CPA Media Pte Ltd / Alamy Stock Photo

As Mark Godfrey and Zoé Whitley note of the socio-political climate at the time *FTA* was conceived, that there was a struggle to “emphatically assert that however much individuals had to fight for acknowledgment and recognition within their own country, they are undeniably, indelibly part of that nation. There is no America without African Americans.”<sup>ii</sup> And while, *FTA* makes not overt assertions on Hendricks’s position on the war, as Ken Johnson notes of viewing this painting, “You can’t help but think about Vietnam and the disproportionate number of African-Americans who fought and died there. It makes no explicit statement about the war; nor does it overtly comment on the racial strife at that time. But because the young soldier has his eyes meditatively closed in the shadow of his helmet’s brim, and because the painting allows the viewer mental space to reflect on its implications, it has a haunting resonance.”<sup>iii</sup>



[left] Barkley L. Hendricks, *Star Spangled Chitlins*, 1961. Bowdoin College Museum of Art, Artwork: © 2021 Barkley L. Hendricks [right] Barkley L. Hendricks, *Untitled*, 1967-1968. Private Collection, Artwork: © 2021 Barkley L. Hendricks

*"Photography has always been an important adjunct. I went to Yale and took a class in American photography. I spent more time with the photographers at Yale than with the painters." —Barkley L. Hendricks*

The inspiration for many of Hendricks’s compositions are people from his life and it was his own photography that served as antecedent for his art. Speaking of his attraction to photography upon arriving at Yale, Hendricks noted, “The painters weren’t figurative; most of them were abstract. They were pour painters. They were nice guys, but it wasn’t anything that interested me. The photographers offered a direction that I didn’t know a lot about...”<sup>iv</sup> Indeed, the sitter of the present work was Hendricks’s fellow recruit in the New Jersey National Guard, which he joined in 1964 during what Hendricks has called “the corruptness of the Vietnam War.” During the same period, Hendricks painted *Star Spangled Chitlins*, a work conspicuously bereft of a sitter. The chair is empty, a crumpled American flag cascades to the floor, the title referring to a stew made from pig offal historically eaten by slaves.



Agnolo Bronzino, *Cosimo de' Medici in Armour*, circa 1545. Museo Thyssen-Bornemisza, Madrid, Image: Museo Nacional Thyssen-Bornemisza / Scala / Art Resource, NY

While Hendricks was an undergraduate at the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts in 1966, he embarked on a modern-day Grand Tour and travelled around Europe, visiting museums across the United Kingdom, Spain, Italy, and the Netherlands immersing himself in the Western canon. He was particularly struck by the court portraits of Diego Velázquez and Anthony van Dyck; in fact, Hendricks felt compelled to copy the latter's *Portrait of Agostino Pallavicini*, 1621, J. Paul Getty Museum, Los Angeles, which he saw when it was on loan to the National Gallery in London. Upon gathering the materials to begin imitating the work, however, he reflected on how he had encountered virtually no Black subjects on his trip and that—in essence—Blackness was a lacuna in Western art history. He realized that by appropriating Renaissance imagery and depicting his

friends and peers, he could create an art that was his alone.

<sup>i</sup> Barkley L. Hendricks, quoted in Laila Pedro, "Art In Conversation," *The Brooklyn Rail*, April 2016.

<sup>ii</sup> Mark Godfrey and Zoé Whitley, *Soul of a Nation*, exh. cat., Tate Modern, London, 2017, p. 14.

<sup>iii</sup> Ken Johnson, "Slick and Styling: Provocative Poses," *The New York Times*, December 5, 2008.

<sup>iv</sup> Barkley L. Hendricks, quoted in Laila Pedro, "Art In Conversation," *The Brooklyn Rail*, April 2016.

#### Provenance

Kenmore Galleries, Philadelphia

Acquired from the above by the present owner circa 1970

#### Exhibited

Durham, Nasher Museum of Art, Duke University; New York, Studio Museum in Harlem; Philadelphia, Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts; Houston, Contemporary Arts Museum, *Barkley L. Hendricks: Birth of the Cool*, February 7, 2008 – April 18, 2010, no. 4, p. 130 (illustrated, p. 92)

Brunswick, Markell Gallery, Bowdoin College Museum of Art, *Barkley Hendricks: "Let's Make Some History"*, July 20 – October 29, 2017

Massachusetts, MassArt Art Museum, *Legacy of the Cool: A Tribute to Barkley L. Hendricks*, January 17 – March 3, 2018

#### Literature

Laila Pedro, "Art in Conversation: Barkley L. Hendricks with Laila Pedro," *The Brooklyn Rail*, April 2016, online

Antwaun Sargent, "Rarely Seen Barkley Hendricks Paintings Show Early Talent as Portraitist of 'Black Cool'," *Artsy*, August 16, 2017, online (illustrated)

## 20th Century & Contemporary Art Evening Sale

New York Auction / 17 November 2021 / 7pm EST



PROPERTY OF A PRIVATE EAST COAST COLLECTOR

15

### Amy Sherald

#### *Welfare Queen*

signed and dated "Amy Sherald Amy Sherald 2012" on the reverse

oil on canvas

54 x 43 1/8 in. (137.2 x 109.5 cm)

Painted in 2012.

#### Estimate

\$1,200,000 — 1,800,000

[Go to Lot](#)



## An Ascendancy of Grace: Amy Sherald's Welfare Queen

Imani Perry  
Hughes-Rogers Professor  
Princeton University

*"Still; quiet; with a smile, ever so slight, at the eyes so that Life will flow into and not by you. And you can gather, as it passes, the essences, the overtones, the tints, the shadows; draw understanding to yourself." —Marita Bonner, "On Being Young, A Woman, and Colored"*

What first drew my attention was the figure. A Black woman, with layers of blue beneath her skin, poised, elegant, bearing a crown. She is an embodiment of Black Southern defiant dignity. Our mothers and grandmothers, the women who cooked and cleaned and labored in fields, were treated as inferior, yet they still bore themselves with endless grace and modeled it for us. Before I knew much about the artist, Amy Sherald, I knew the intimate story she was telling.



I'd heard of her, however, through friends. Sherald had painted someone I knew. I'd heard she attended an art school with which I was very familiar through family. She had a reputation for excellence, but my encounter with her work was more than simple admiration. It was complete captivation. I felt I had to have a piece by her, and I wanted this one in particular. That said, I was hardly in a position to begin collecting art. My budget was tight, my responsibilities to others were high. But I shyly approached Sherald about purchasing the piece over time. Her generosity was heart-warming and frankly life changing. It was the first significant piece of art I ever owned.

I learned the title of the piece was *Welfare Queen*. It was a term that circulated quite frequently in the 1980s. Back then it was used to conjure up images of Black women who were seen as lazy, feeding off the state, bearing children irresponsibly, and just generally acting as a burden on society. Political speeches, news reports, and everyday chatter talked about the problem of

“Welfare Queens.”



Linda Taylor, 1944. Washington State Archives, Washington, D.C.

There was a woman, Linda Taylor, whose unusual story of collecting welfare checks in multiple states became a public warning. And despite the fact that Black women were excluded from the welfare state benefits for the first decades of the program, public assistance had come to be negatively associated with Black women. It haunted us. How could this be our image in the public, Black women who we knew almost universally worked endlessly to make something out of nothing?

*We saw our mothers and grandmothers toil and serve. But the world apparently didn't.*

Thank goodness for Black women's literature of that period. It told a much different story than what we heard in public. I devoured books by women such as Toni Morrison, Alice Walker, Toni Cade Bambara, and Paule Marshall. And I mention that here because the feeling of looking at this “Welfare Queen” painting, many years later, was akin to opening up the world of those books for

me. Inside those pages, the fullness of character and creativity among Black women, including poor Black women, was revealed. Likewise, this painting is masterful in revealing so much inside the layers. This “welfare queen” is a beauty queen, adorned in white gloves, bejeweled, bearing a sash that announces her regality. Look to the background, for example. It is a red tapestry, a marvelous contrast and context to the elegant figure with her blue-black skin and golden crown. Her face is placid, yet the brushstrokes remind you that still waters run deep. Her skin matters. In American society, dark skinned women are deemed less beautiful and less valuable. And yet, just as Sherald turned the welfare queen stereotype on its head with a dignified depiction, she has transformed the popular negative meanings applied to deep dark skin. It is not flat nor is it unattractive. Here, it is enchanting.



What at first glance appears to be a simple composition, has a remarkable complexity. Through the days and through the seasons, as the light shifted, and our lives changed, this painting was an endless discovery: new patterns, distinct brushstrokes, a realization of how the nuance of the figure's body strikes differently based on where you are standing. *Welfare Queen* was the centerpiece of our home as my sons came of age. We looked at it when feeling joy and when we were in tears. It anchored our own pursuit of dignity and grace when life was most challenging. I wasn't surprised in the least when first lady Obama selected Amy Sherald as her portraitist. The intelligence of Sherald's work is magnificent, as is its beauty. I must admit, it is difficult to part with *Welfare Queen*. It was my companion through writing four books, and a direct inspiration for my next: *South to America: A Journey Below the Mason Dixon to Understand the Soul of a Nation*. I literally faced it as I typed through many nights.

But now, it is my hope that the next owner will share my sense of duty in acting as a good steward of the painting. I sincerely believe that it ought to be in the possession of someone who has both

the means and sensibility to ensure that it will be protected in the long term, and available when appropriate to the public. I did not grow up in a home with original artwork, but I had the good fortune of having parents who took me to museums constantly. I loved the magic of discovery that happened in museums. When looking at *Welfare Queen*, I have often imagined what it would have been like to be 8 years old standing before it. I know it would have made my heart swell and tears spring to my eyes, because it still does so today.

October 2021

---

#### Provenance

Acquired directly from the artist by the present owner

#### Exhibited

Baltimore, Galerie Myrtis, *Revealing the African Presence in Renaissance Europe: The Contemporary Response*, September 27, 2012 – January 19, 2013

Charlottesville, Second Street Gallery, *Amy Sherald. Off the Chain: American Art Unfettered*, May 1-30, 2015

#### Literature

Joan Cox, "Amy Sherald, In Depth," *Bmoreart.com*, November 29, 2012, online

Sarah Cascone, "The Obamas Choose Kehinde Wiley and Amy Sherald to Paint Their Official Portraits for the Smithsonian," *Artnet News*, October 13, 2017, online (illustrated)

Sarah Cascone, "'There Is So Much You Go Through Just Trying to Make It': Amy Sherald on How She Went From Obscurity to a Museum Survey (and the White House)," *Artnet News*, June 20, 2018, online (illustrated)

Victoria Camblin, "Amy Sherald: Pictures of American Life," *Art Papers*, August 6, 2018, online (illustrated)

## 20th Century & Contemporary Art Evening Sale

New York Auction / 17 November 2021 / 7pm EST



PROPERTY FROM A DISTINGUISHED AMERICAN  
COLLECTION

16 ♦

### Francis Bacon

*Pope with Owls*

oil on canvas  
57 1/4 x 43 in. (145.4 x 109.2 cm)  
Painted circa 1958.

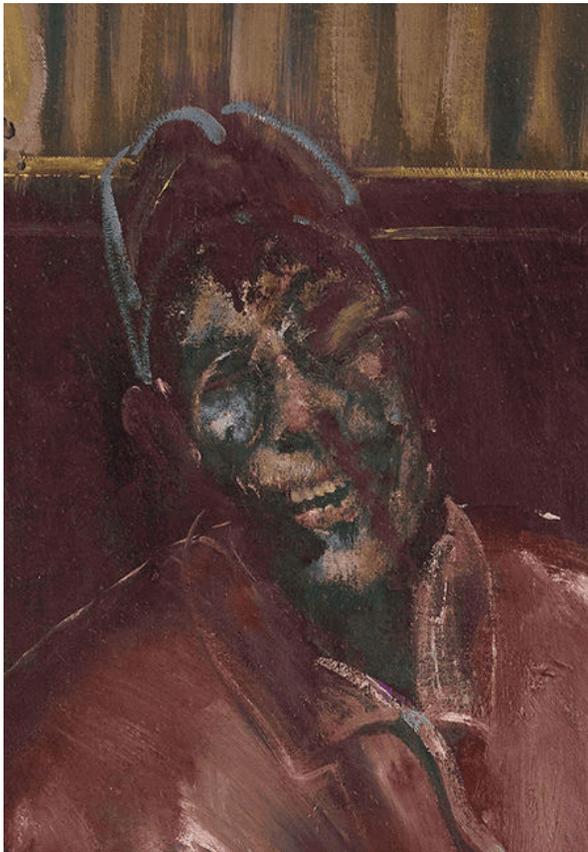
Estimate

\$35,000,000 — 45,000,000

[Go to Lot](#)



Forming part of Francis Bacon's celebrated papal portrait series which spanned over two decades, 'Pope with Owls', circa 1958 is positioned at a critical juncture in the evolution of the artist's interrogations into one of the most recognizable subjects in his oeuvre. The work takes as its reference the canonical portrait of Pope Innocent X by Velázquez, an image which acted as a touchstone for the artist's explorations into the rendering of flesh and psychological deconstruction between 1949 and 1971. The Papal paintings have gained art historical significance not only for Bacon's masterful execution but also for their subversion of the old master source; in so doing, Bacon succeeded in increasing the iconoclastic potency of his own version and elevated himself to the position of inheritor of a distinguished tradition. The work arrives for the first time at auction having been held in the same prestigious private collection for nearly four decades.



Much of Bacon's best work is characterized by the evidence he leaves of the very physical act of his

painterly process. Bacon conveys the viscosity of flesh through the immediate gestures of his loaded brush. Discrete blotches of yellow, blue, white, and lilac coalesce to form a haunting mien in grit and grimace. Drags of pigment tussle with staccatoed impasto passages culminating in a dissolution of anatomy suffused with referentiality.



The circle over the right eye undoubtedly echoes the screaming nurse from the Odessa Steps sequence in Eisenstein's *The Battleship Potemkin*—a motif that Bacon had grafted onto his "Popes" since 1949. However, it is the large loop denoting an ear and the grimaced teeth that most closely recall the photographs of Bacon's lover at the time, Peter Lacey. Indeed, the greenish-yellow smudge across the other eye socket and the smear of dark purple from the nose reverb with the personal violence of that ill-fated relationship.

### "One of the Greatest Paintings in the World"

*"I think it is one of the greatest portraits that have ever been made, and I became obsessed by it. I buy book after book with this illustration in it of the Velazquez Pope, because it just haunts me, and it opens up all sorts of feelings and areas of—I was going to say – imagination, even, in me...it's the magnificent color of it."* —Francis Bacon



Sheet from unidentified book with color plate of Velázquez's *Portrait of Pope Innocent X*, (1650).  
Artwork: © 2021 Estate of Francis Bacon/Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York/DACS, London

Bacon always avoided giving a precise explanation as to what it was that had obsessed him about Velázquez's *Pope*, but its reproduction (he avoided seeing the work in Rome lest it have a negative impact on his understanding of the work) stimulated decades of creative output. Acting as the ideal foundation to conflate his diverse range of sources, from cinema and photography, to henchman and lovers, it is no surprise that Bacon hung photographs of Goebbels and Himmler alongside his Velázquez reproduction on his studio wall.



Hunter Montage of material from Bacon's studio, 7 Cromwell Place, c.1950. Top row: Himmler and Goebbels (*Picture Post*); wounded riders 1936; Velázquez, *Pope Innocent X*; Nadar, *Portrait of Baudelaire*. Middle row: Page 99 from Roger Manvell, *History of British Film 1896-1906*; Grunewald, *Christ Carrying the Cross*; Bulla photograph of Nevsky Prospekt; three images of Jack Bilbo. Bottom row: Rodin, *The Thinker*; Rhinoceros from Marius Maxwell, *Stalking Game with a Camera*. Artwork: © 2021 Estate of Francis Bacon/Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York/DACS, London

Bacon's enduring fascination with this subject began with *Head VI*, 1949 (Arts Council Collection, London) and extended through 40 iterations executed over the subsequent two decades until his finale, *Study for a Red Pope - Second Version*, 1971. There are largely considered to be two inflection points in his interrogation of the subject. The first was the series of eight works entitled *Study for a Portrait*, which the artist executed in the summer of 1953 for his first show in America at Durlacher's in New York as well as his *Study after Velázquez's Portrait of Pope Innocent X*. These

dramatic purple-robed "screaming" figures are set in a schematic and deeply shadowed space that serves to augment the overriding mood of terror and torment. Over the course of the 1950s, his iterations on the subject became increasingly disfigured.

The second came in 1961 when Bacon started to make the capes of his "Popes" scarlet. These "Popes" set in black expansive voids on schematic thrones share none of the crushing sense of torture and anguish of the earlier works. They are instead characterized by their silent disillusionment and impotence—oozing down the canvas rather than rattling against their "shuttered" space cages.

### "It's the Magnificent Color of It"

Extending from the darker papal paintings of the 1950s, 'Pope with Owls' acts as a crucial step in the development of Bacon's engagement with the subject. Not only does 'Pope with Owls' still engender the haunting agony of his "Popes" from his first impulses engaging with the subject matter, but it also moves towards the violently brilliant palette and full-length figure which would go on to define his "Popes" of 1961 through the subsequent decade.

## The Evolution of Bacon's Popes



*Head VI*, 1949. Arts Council Collection, London, Artwork: © 2021 Estate of Francis Bacon/Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York/DACS, London

## The Evolution of Bacon's Popes



*Pope I*, 1951. Aberdeen Art Gallery and Museums Collection, Artwork: © 2021 Estate of Francis Bacon/Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York/DACS, London

## The Evolution of Bacon's Popes



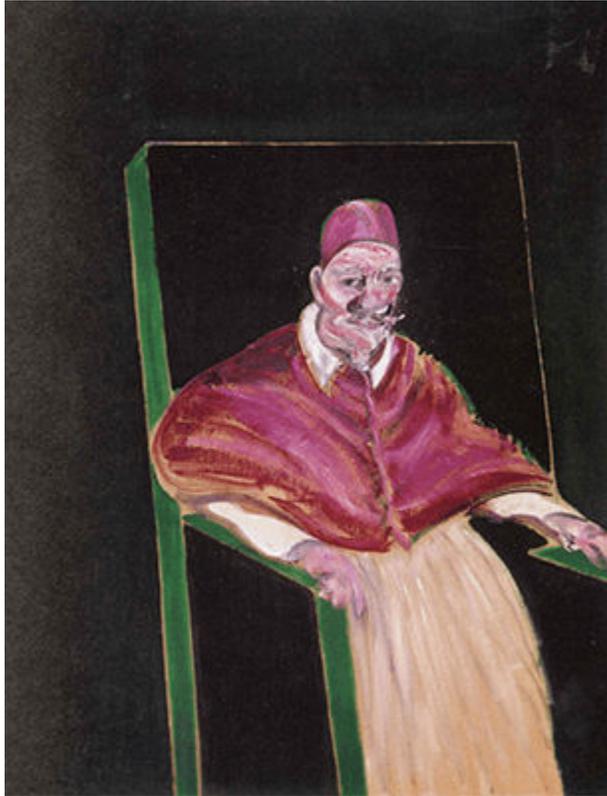
*Study for Portrait V*, 1953. Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D.C., Artwork: © 2021 Estate of Francis Bacon/Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York/DACS, London

## The Evolution of Bacon's Popes



The present work

## The Evolution of Bacon's Popes



*Study for Pope II*, 1961. Musei e Gallerie Pontificie, Musei Vaticani, Rome, Artwork: © 2021 Estate of Francis Bacon/Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York/DACS, London

## The Evolution of Bacon's Popes



*Study of Red Pope*, 1962, *Second Version*, 1971. Private Collection, Artwork: © 2021 Estate of Francis Bacon/Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York/DACS, London

*"I want a record of an image. And with the record of the image, of course, comes a mood, because you can't make an image without it creating a mood." —Francis Bacon*

In 'Pope with Owls', the purple robes of his 1953 Popes begin to anticipate the radical scarlet that characterize his "Popes" of 1961. Having declared himself to be in awe of Velázquez's "magnificent color," it is here in Tangier that Bacon begins to avail himself of a more baroque palette. It has been argued that the impetus to experiment with a more vivid color palette was precipitated by the bright Moroccan light. Here, the deep purples act as a chromatic backdrop to the richer, red undertones that Bacon has built up in successive layers of light and shadow. Following the gestural undulation of the cape's opening, Bacon's media seems to roll off his figure's shoulders in a downward trajectory, pooling in the voluminous arm holes.



Mark Rothko, *Green and Maroon*, 1953. The Phillips Collection, Washington, D.C., Artwork: © 2021 Kate Rothko Prizel & Christopher Rothko / Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York

These gestural lines evolve into the vigorous sweeps of Bacon's dry-bristle brush used to execute the white robes of the papal dress. Their very materiality, descending into a haunting green void, engenders the space to oscillate between tangibility and flatness. This shift from the inky gloom of the 1950s "Popes" anticipates the color which Bacon would use often as a background for much of his best work in the early 1960s.

### Tangier: “A Place Made for Rows”

*"It was during those years [the 1950s], filled with rebuffs and reversals of fortune, but also with extraordinary invention and daring, that Bacon began to explore in depth all his great themes while trying out a number of others that he eventually discarded. It was, in my view, the most fertile single decade of his career. Never again would the Baconian world be so rich and diverse." —Michael Peppiatt*

Bacon's visits to Morocco in the late 1950s marked the beginning of an important turning point in both his art and his life and it is one that can perhaps be seen to some degree reflected in this unique portrait. Bacon began going to Tangier primarily to visit his long-term lover Peter Lacy—a man with whom he had a tumultuous relationship that haunted his output throughout the 1950s. Bacon met Lacy in 1952 at the Colony Room in Soho. A former fighter pilot who served in the Battle of Britain, Lacy was a troubled man prone to vehement bouts of rage, sadistic violence, and prolonged periods of self-hatred. Their mercurial connection provided the artist with one of his most important character studies.

Bacon departed for Tangier in May 1957 for what would prove his longest stay there – fourteen months. At that time Bacon was hoping to settle in Tangier and after a brief attempt at living with Lacy, which Bacon characterized as “disastrous as you can imagine,” he rented a fifth-floor apartment on the avenue d’Espagne, in the “new town” of Tangier which contained a studio and separate room for guests.



Peter Lacy in front of an Unidentified Building, somewhere in the Mediterranean, 1950s. Artwork: © 2021 Estate of Francis Bacon/Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York/DACS, London

Lacy was among the first members of Bacon’s circle to feature in his portraits, initially appearing in *Study of Figure in a Landscape*, 1952 (Phillips Collection, Washington D. C.), inspiring his groundbreaking depictions of coupled male figures and the *Man in Blue* works, as well as Bacon's first portrait triptych of 1953. The artist continued to paint his lover while in Tangier, including *Man at Washbasin* which shows the white glint of teeth in a bestial grit seen here in 'Pope with Owls'.

As the only man Bacon had ever fell “head-over-heels” in love with, the artist was drawn to the paradoxical mixture of brutality and fragility that Lacy embodied. Viewed in this light, the present work’s raised arm may be seen to quiver with the still painful memories of his lover’s violent

tendencies. Indeed, the raised arms could just as easily be read as a signal of anguish and supplication as that of prayer and benediction. Here, the sacred hand is subverted from the act of blessing, transforming into a symbol of pain, violence, and despair. The motion photography of Muybridge was particularly noteworthy in this regard, and the arms here are a key example of this influence from this period.



[left] Pope Pius XII blessing the crowd gathered in St. Peter's Square. Image: Fox Photos/Getty Images  
[right] Eadweard Muybridge, *A hand rises and falls*, 1887. Wellcome Collection, London

### "I've Always Been Haunted by Them"

*"I am working a lot here. I have finished 4 I think. 2 are the best things I have done. I am doing two series one of the Pope with owls quite different from the others and a serial portrait of a person in a room. I am very excited about it." —Francis Bacon to Erica Brausen, Tangier*

During his time in Tangier in 1957, Bacon was exploring imagery of animals—owls, a chimp, a gorilla skull—for his upcoming show at Galerie Rive Droite, Paris. As Michael Peppiatt explains, the key notion that "man is an animal, was explored in numerous paintings throughout the 1950s...having established this disturbing parity between man and animal, Bacon vastly increased the stakes when, in place of the anonymous heads, he first enclosed the screaming features within the paraphernalia of the Pope."<sup>i</sup>

As Bacon espoused to his dealer at the time, Erica Brausen, this manifested in two iterations of

*Popes with Owls*. The presence of the two watchful creatures in the present work, proffers an unsettling mien to the composition, capturing the gaze of the spectator as if to bear witness. *Painting (Pope with Owls)*, 1958 (Musées Royaux des Beaux-Arts, Brussels) is the second work in the series that Bacon brought back with him to London. As Martin Harrison explains of the nocturnal bird's position in Bacon's iconography, "he had linked them (always latterly, in pairs) with Popes as dark antagonists."<sup>ii</sup>



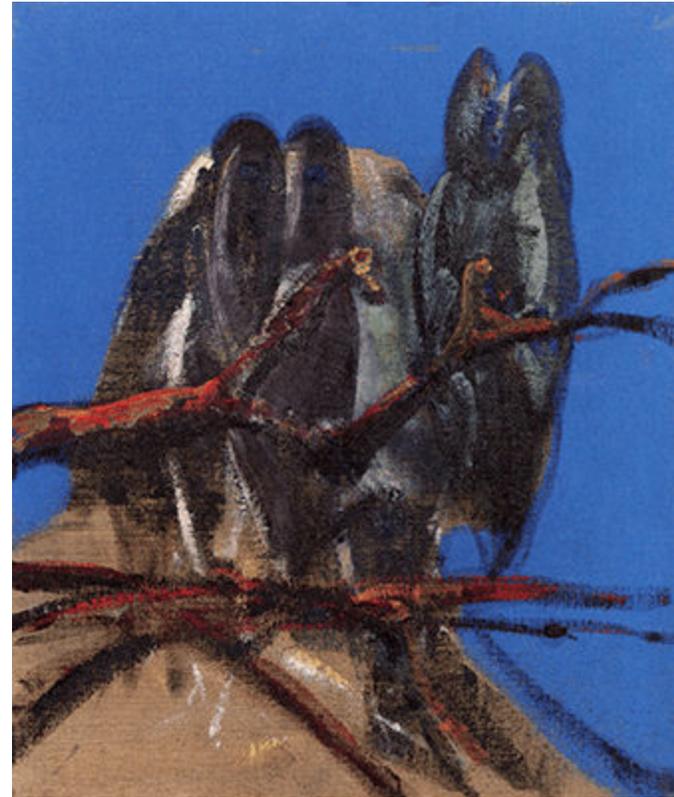
Newly fledged long-eared owls (daylight) in Eric J. Hosking and Cyril W Newberry, *Birds of the night*, 1945

One of Bacon's first mature paintings, *Painting*, 1946, developed out of a study of a bird alighting

on a field. Avian protagonists could be found throughout the 1950s, above all in works such as *Fragment of a Crucifixion*, 1950 (Stedelijk Van Abbemuseum, Eindhoven), in which the central figure appears to have been based on the image of an owl. Two owls have a prominent position on a rectilinear structure in the foreground of the painting of *Pope no. 3*, 1960, and again in *Study for Portrait (with Two Owls)*, 1963 (San Francisco Museum of Modern Art).



*Fragment of a Crucifixion*, 1950. Collection Van Abbemuseum, Eindhoven, Artwork: © 2021 Estate of Francis Bacon/Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York/DACS, London



*Owls*, 1956. Private Collection, Artwork: © 2021 Estate of Francis Bacon/Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York/DACS, London



*Painting (Pope with Owls)*, 1958. Royal Museums of Fine Arts, Belgium, Artwork: © 2021 Estate of Francis Bacon/Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York/DACS, London



*Study for Portrait (with Two Owls)*, 1963. San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, Artwork: © 2021 Estate of Francis Bacon/Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York/DACS, London



*Three Figures and Portrait*, 1975. Tate, London, Artwork: © 2021 Estate of Francis Bacon/Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York/DACS, London

Birds, in particular owls, occupy an important place in Bacon's imagery. Indeed, images of birds and animals form one of the largest groups of subject-matter in the archive of Bacon's studio, which was a reservoir of photographs, books, newspaper clippings, and other ephemera, all splattered with paint and crumpled from frequent handling. Bacon most likely found his source imagery in Eric Hosking's *Birds of the Night* and *Birds in Action*, of which there were several editions in his studio.

While Bacon's output after more than a year in Tangier, and despite his optimistic outlook, did not result in the triumphant London show he and Brausen hoped to put on, the time was incredibly formative in setting the direction of his next decade in painting and 'Pope with Owls' foretells the next evolutionary step Bacon would make in his most canonical works. "The experience of North Africa remained central, however, transforming the artist's sense of color, as if, almost literally, the space of his pictorial imagination had been flooded with violent light and stark contrast," Michael Peppiatt explains, "it also influenced Bacon in less immediately perceptible ways, deepening and confirming his feelings about life and about human beings."<sup>iii</sup>



<sup>i</sup> Michael Peppiatt, *Francis Bacon in the 1950s*, exh. cat., Sainsbury Centre for the Visual Arts, Norwich, 2006, p. 26.

<sup>ii</sup> Martin Harrison, *Francis Bacon: Catalogue Raisonné, 1958-1971*, vol. III, London, 2016, p. 736.

<sup>iii</sup> Michael Peppiatt, *Francis Bacon: Anatomy of an Enigma*, New York, 2009, p. 216.

**Francis Bacon**

---

**Provenance**

Nicolas Brusilowski (acquired directly from the artist in Tangier in 1959)

Private Collection, USA

Lynn Epstein (acquired by April 1976)

Brook Street Gallery, London (acquired by April 1977)

Private Collection, Switzerland

Thomas Ammann Fine Art, Zurich

Acquired from the above by the present owner in 1986

**Exhibited**

Ludwigshafen am Rhein, Wilhelm-Hack Museum, *Apokalypse, Ein Prinzip Hoffnung?*, September 8 – November 17, 1985, no. 141, p. 278 (illustrated, p. 279; titled as *Portrait du pape*)

Seattle Art Museum, *Seattle Collects Paintings: Works from Private Collections*, May 22 – September 7, 1997 (installation view illustrated on the exhibition guide cover; titled as *Portrait of Pope*)

London, Gagosian Gallery, *Francis Bacon: Triptychs*, June 20 – August 4, 2006, pp. 12, 32 (illustrated, p. 13; titled as *Portrait of a Pope*)

**Literature**

Martin Harrison, ed., *Francis Bacon: Catalogue Raisonné: Volume III 1958-1971*, London, 2016, no. 58-09, p. 554 (illustrated, p. 555)

## 20th Century & Contemporary Art Evening Sale

New York Auction / 17 November 2021 / 7pm EST



17

### Luc Tuymans

*Wallpaper*

signed and erroneously dated "L Tuymans 015" on the reverse

oil on canvas

99 5/8 x 70 in. (253 x 177.8 cm)

Painted in 2014.

**Estimate**

\$1,500,000 — 2,000,000

[Go to Lot](#)



*"I wanted to make my paintings look old from the start, which is important because they are about memory." —Luc Tuymans*

Painted in 2014, Luc Tuymans' *Wallpaper* is a striking example of the Belgian artist's distinctive painterly practice that explores the relationship between representation and historical memory. Towering over eight feet in height, the present work depicts the edge of a serene wooden landscape with a large obelisk seen on a hill in the distance. Engendering a gentle backlight aesthetic synonymous with the artist's practice, the soft monochromatic palette casts the subject matter in an eerie light, as if historically frozen in time or a recollection of a fading memory. Among the artist's largest-scaled works to arrive at auction, the present work was a highlight in the highly acclaimed *Luc Tuymans: The Shore* exhibition at David Zwirner, London in 2015.



The present work installed at *Luc Tuymans: The Shore*, David Zwirner, January 30 – April 2, 2015.  
Artwork: © 2021 Luc Tuymans

As suggested by its title, the present work was directly influenced by Tuymans' visit to the luxurious Balmoral Hotel in Edinburgh, where the artist took photographs of the decadent wallpaper embellishing its afternoon tearoom, the Palm Court. An elegant, domed space guarded with ceiling-high palm trees, the walls are adorned by bespoke, hand-painted de Gournay wallpaper depicting the city's exquisite landscape across the interior paneling. Here, Tuymans silos and enlarges the design of one panel, isolating the scene from its locality and challenging the apparent value of ascribing meaning in language, medium, and form by endowing the painting with the very name of its original source.



The Palm Court at The Balmoral Hotel

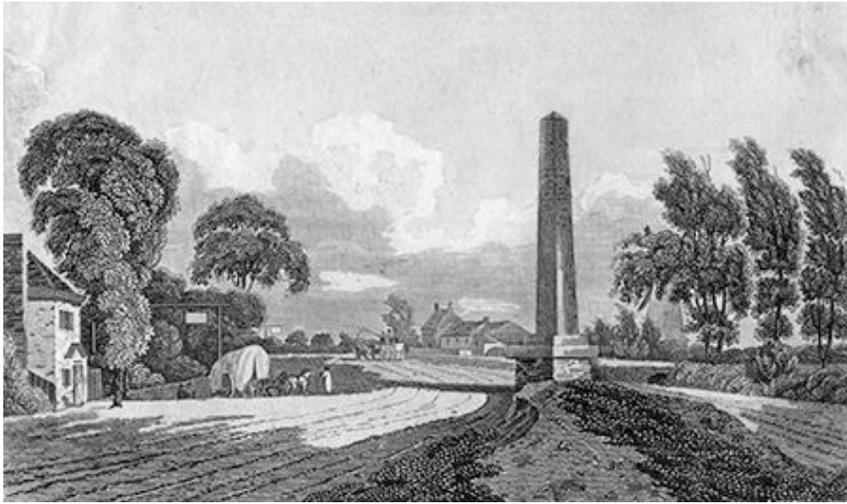
By displacing the image from its glamorous environs, the artist transforms the decorative into the painterly, reality into abstracted representation. In a tour of his David Zwirner show, the artist recalled, “All the paintings sort of stick together in a way, they are then juxtaposed with things where I actually stayed, having been there [Edinburgh] twice, we stayed in the hotel Balmoral, and when they make the tea, in an enormous space – they have this wallpaper!”<sup>i</sup> Frequently based on secondary imagery stemming from sources including magazines, the Internet, Polaroids, and his iPhone camera, his works recall Gerhard Richter’s practice of employing photographs to render hazy figurations. “I work from a reaction upon images that are already represented,” he recently explained, “because I believe nothing is really original. But then I have to make my take on it—and figuration in that sense becomes rather abstract, because everybody can have different connotations.”<sup>ii</sup>



Gerhard Richter, *Bühler Höhe*, 1991. Museum Frieder Burda, Baden-Baden, Artwork: © 2021 Gerhard Richter (0224)

*"[Wallpaper] of course is the epitome of the idyllic state of the gardens and the obelisk, the idea of classicism is in there." —Luc Tuymans*

Tuymans has famously dubbed his paintings “authentic falsifications” since his early career in the 1990s, the oxymoron referring to the role of reproduction in his practice as an essential device. “When I started out,” Tuymans recalled, “I liked to make paintings that looked as if they were done 40 years ago, to create a different sense of time.”<sup>iii</sup> The artist appears to return to this painterly sensibility in *Wallpaper* by transposing the source image through a muted palette, conjuring a captivating surreal atmosphere reminiscent of those seen in historic engravings. In doing so, Tuymans creates a distance between the painting and the perceived image before the viewer that engenders the alluring oscillation between representation and reality, history and memory, past and present, memory and imagination.



Sands, Hadley Highstone, near Barnet, 1805. Image: HIP / Art Resource, NY

<sup>i</sup> Luc Tuymans, quoted in “Luc Tuymans Explores Domesticity, Re-photography, And Scottish Enlightenment,” *Artlyst*, January 31, 2015.

<sup>ii</sup> Luc Tuymans, quoted in Jameson Fitzpatrick, “As Far as Luc Tuymans Is Concerned, Nothing Is Original,” *The New York Times*, October 20, 2020, [online](#).

<sup>iii</sup> Luc Tuymans, quoted in Jurriaan Benschop, “Painting Mute,” *DAMN*<sup>o</sup>, no. 49, March 2015.

#### Literature

*Luc Tuymans: Birds of a Feather*, exh. cat., Talbot Rice Gallery, The University of Edinburgh, Antwerp, 2015, p. 108 (illustrated, p. 57)

Jackie Wullschlager, “Luc Tuymans: Dark Visions and Enlightenment,” *Financial Times*, January 2, 2015

Natalia Rachlin, “Luc Tuymans Unveils New Paintings at a London Show,” *Architectural Digest*, January 30, 2015, online (illustrated)

Emily Spicer, “Luc Tuymans: The Shore,” *Studio International*, February 21, 2015, online (illustrated)

Jurriaan Benschop, “Painting Mute,” *Damn Magazine*, March 6, 2015, online (illustrated)

Belinda Seppings, “Luc Tuymans: The Shore,” *This is Tomorrow*, March 11, 2015, online

Eva Meyer-Hermann, ed., *Luc Tuymans: Catalogue Raisonné of Paintings, Volume 3: 2007-2018*, New York, 2019, no. LTP 504, pp. 250, 402 (illustrated, p. 251)

#### Provenance

David Zwirner, New York

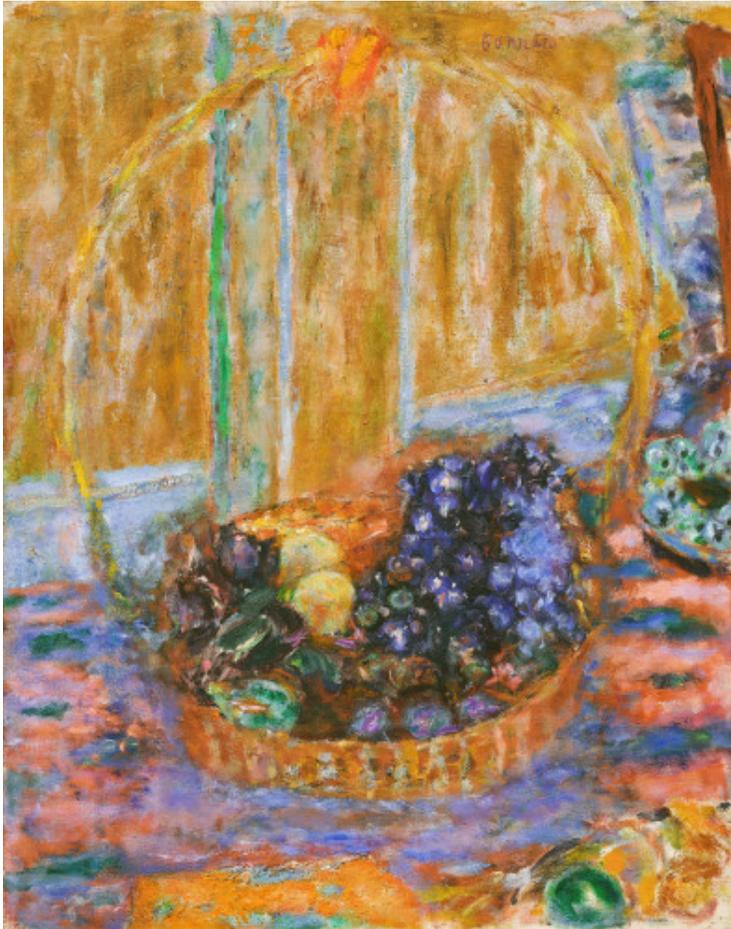
Acquired from the above by the present owner

#### Exhibited

London, David Zwirner, *Luc Tuymans: The Shore*, January 30 – April 2, 2015

## 20th Century & Contemporary Art Evening Sale

New York Auction / 17 November 2021 / 7pm EST



PROPERTY FROM A DISTINGUISHED PRIVATE  
COLLECTION

18 ♦

### **Pierre Bonnard**

*Panier de fruit*

signed "Bonnard" upper right  
oil on canvas

23 3/4 x 18 3/4 in. (60.3 x 47.6 cm)

Painted circa 1946.

Estimate

\$2,000,000 — 3,000,000

[Go to Lot](#)



"I am still cohabiting with your mysterious and alluring canvas." —Henri Matisse to Pierre Bonnard, May 7, 1946

Mardi 7/5 46

Cher Bonnard,  
 Je suis sensible au mot genti  
 que j'écrit de vous et très fier  
 que ce tableau soit un témoignage.  
 Je retrouve 3 repères à Giotto  
 de Padoue que je me souviens.  
 Giotto est pour moi le sommet  
 de mes désirs - mais la route qui  
 mène ~~à~~ vers un équivalent,  
 à notre époque et trop imparfaite -  
 toute pour une seule vie: cependant  
 les choses sont intéressantes.  
 Beau temps & beau travail

Amat'je

J'ai toujours cohabité avec cette  
 table si mystérieuse et si attirante.

Letter from Henri Matisse to Pierre Bonnard, May 7, 1946

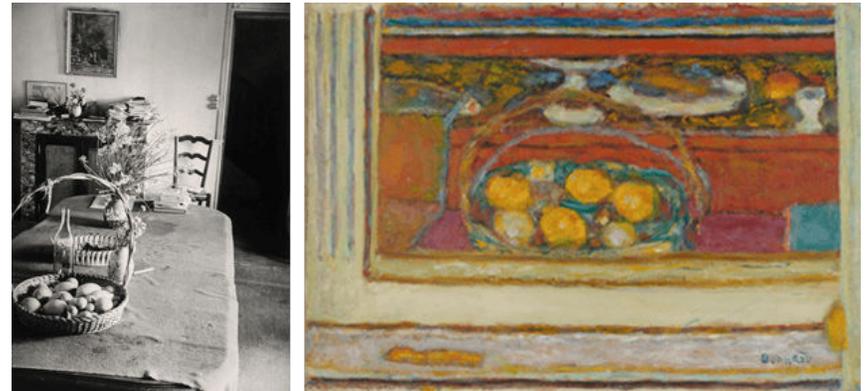
*Panier de fruit* is an outstanding example of Pierre Bonnard's late still lifes that not only holds a storied provenance, but also encapsulates the ultimate technical endeavors of the artist's career. In 1946, Henri Matisse lent Bonnard two paintings he had just made—*Asia*, Kimbell Art Museum, Fort Worth, and *Woman in White*, Des Moines Art Center—and, in return, Bonnard lent him *Panier de fruit*. Matisse was clearly enchanted by the present work, expressing his captivation with the painting in a postscript of his letter to Bonnard later that May. Subsequently owned by the

Reader's Digest Association for half a century, one of the world's premier corporate art collections of its time, *Panier de fruit* featured in the artist's major survey, *Bonnard and His Environment*, at the Museum of Modern Art, New York in 1964.

### Enduring Inspiration in Le Bosquet

"I have all my subjects at hand. I go visit them. I take notes. And before I start to paint, I meditate, daydream. It is the things close at hand that give an idea of the universe as the human eye sees it..." —Pierre Bonnard

A splendid manifestation of Bonnard's words, *Panier de fruit* reimagines a basket of fruit in the artist's dining room, just downstairs from his modest studio at Le Bosquet—his long-time home in Le Cannet overlooking the Mediterranean in the south of France—where he would find his most enduring and profound source of inspiration. "The downstairs dining room...provide[d] the constructs for some of his finest interiors and still lifes," Dita Amory observed. "It was not in the studio that he found his source of inspiration. That was left to the rooms of Le Bosquet...In the familiar, Bonnard discovered infinite possibilities."<sup>i</sup>



[left] Brassai (Gyula Halaász), *Pierre Bonnard's dining room at Le Bosquet*, 1946. Image: © RMN-Grand Palais / Michèle Bellot, Artwork: © Estate Brassai-RMN Grand Palais [right] Pierre Bonnard, *Basket of Fruit Reflected in a Mirror*, circa 1944-1946. The Museum of Modern Art, New York, Image: © The Museum of Modern Art, New York/Licensed by SCALA / Art Resource, NY, Artwork: © 2021 Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York / ADAGP, Paris

His grand-nephew Michel Terrasse recalled, "On the dining room table covered in red felt stood

baskets with tall handles of plaited osier or raffia—somewhere to put the peonies and mimosa, the oranges, lemons and persimmons gathered, with the figs, from the garden.”<sup>ii</sup> One of Bonnard’s signature leitmotifs, the luscious bounty of fruits is gathered in a shallow wicker basket that is recognizable from photographs of the artist’s dining room and some of the best works of his final years, including *Basket of Fruit Reflected in a Mirror*, circa 1944–46, currently residing at the Museum of Modern Art, New York.

### The Legacy of Bonnard's Late Paintings



Peter Doig, *Pink Snow*, 1991. Museum of Modern Art, New York, Artwork: © 2021 Peter Doig/Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York

Infusing ordinary objects with a majestic presence, *Panier de fruit* situates itself within the longstanding tradition of still life, evoking Chardin and preceding Morandi with the expression of elevating the seemingly mundane to the spiritual. Like these artists, “Bonnard was acutely aware of the capacity of large geometric forms to become vessels: to contain or hold in space even the most complex objects or arrangements of objects,” Amory elucidated.<sup>iii</sup> David Sylvester further elaborated on this effect, noting: “Each plate or dish or basket is an ellipse, a self-contained form, a form that is, so to speak, wrapped up in itself....And this emphasis on their self-containment is reinforced by the fact that the brushstrokes of the tablecloth at the periphery of some of the ellipses also follow their form, making a sort of aura around them.”<sup>iv</sup>

*"Somehow [Bonnard] is painting the space that is behind the eyes. It's as if you were lying in bed trying hard to remember what something looked like. And Bonnard managed to paint that strange state. It is not a photographic space at all. It is a memory space, but one which is based on reality."* —Peter Doig



Pierre Bonnard, *Still Life (Table with Bowl of Fruit)*, 1939. Museum of Modern Art, New York, Image: © The Museum of Modern Art/Licensed by SCALA / Art Resource, NY, Artwork: © 2021 Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York / ADAGP, Paris

Coalescing various levels of perspective into one image, the present work demonstrates Bonnard's fascination with visual perception. Often constructing his compositions around bold verticals and diagonals, the artist frequently explored unexpected formal innovations through complex spatial manipulations, often compressing the pictorial space for the eye to scan the painterly surface and discover discrete details through the act of looking. Like Cézanne and later Picasso, Bonnard tilts the tabletop towards the viewer, condensing the visual space between the wainscoting and table edge with a sharp diagonal plane whilst suggesting additional glimpses of the table's contents into the compositional framework. "The more one looks at Bonnard's late paintings...the more they

seem like evocations of a dream state, or in any case of a kind of reverie," Jack Flam explained. "The way his paintings slow down our process of viewing, the perspectival and structural contradictions they contain, even the difficulty we have in identifying certain objects, suggest another level of consciousness, a mental world that imposes its own structure of time and memory upon the objects of everyday life."<sup>v</sup>

*"The finest of his late pictures throb with intensity. He secured a magical transformation of the real world so that the interior of his studio or his garden at Le Cannet assume an infectious radiance. His rich orchestration of color records a world which was on the verge of disappearing at the end of his life." —Denys Sutton*



**Pierre Bonnard**

Mark Rothko, *White Center (Yellow, Pink and Lavender on Rose)*, 1950. Private Collection, Artwork: © 1998 Kate Rothko Prizel & Christopher Rothko / Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York

Admired by such diverse artists from Milton Avery to Mark Rothko, Patrick Heron to Peter Doig, Bonnard found color as the ultimate means of experiencing the world and “it was through color, not line, that pictures took hold in his imagination.”<sup>vi</sup> In the artist’s words, “Color has a logic as severe as form...To retouch an accent makes it discordant with the neighboring tone; they must then be reharmonized; but the second tone now seems to clash with its neighbor; they must be reharmonized. And, from one to the next, they all jostle each other.”<sup>vii</sup> Ever expanding upon his initial revelations of color as a *japoniste* Nabi, his late works unveil an unleashed freedom, allowing his interiors to radiate luminosity. As *Panier de fruit* testifies, he increasingly incorporated the glimmering effects of the natural light streaming through the large window by the walls of his studio into his canvases, fusing the interior with the exterior, containment and liberation.

<sup>i</sup> Dita Amory, “Pierre Bonnard (1867–1947): The Late Interiors,” *Heilbrunn Timeline of Art History*, Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, November 2010.

<sup>ii</sup> Michel Terrasse, *Pierre Bonnard et Le Cannel*, Paris, 1987, p. 14.

<sup>iii</sup> Dita Amory, “The Presence of Objects: Still Life in Bonnard’s Late Paintings,” in *Pierre Bonnard: The Late Still Lifes and Interiors*, exh. cat., Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, 2009, p. 7.

<sup>iv</sup> David Sylvester, *About Modern Art: Critical Essays, 1948–96*, London, 1996, p. 107.

<sup>v</sup> Jack Flam, “Bonnard in the History of Twentieth-Century Art,” in *Pierre Bonnard: The Late Still Lifes and Interiors*, exh. cat., Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, 2009, p. 54.

<sup>vi</sup> Dita Amory, “The Presence of Objects: Still Life in Bonnard’s Late Paintings,” in *ibid.*, p. 22.

<sup>vii</sup> Pierre Bonnard, quoted in André Fermigier, *Pierre Bonnard*, New York, 1984, p. 38.

**Provenance**

Henri Matisse (acquired directly from the artist)

Pierre Matisse Gallery, New York (acquired from the above in 1946)

The Reader’s Digest, Pleasantville (acquired from the above in 1948)

The Reader’s Digest Collection, Sotheby’s, New York, November 16, 1998, lot 33

Private Collection (acquired at the above sale)

Thence by descent to the present owner

**Exhibited**

New York, M. Knoedler & Co., Inc., *Reader’s Digest Collection*, May 15 - June 8, 1963, p. 20 (illustrated, p. 21)

New York, The Museum of Modern Art; The Art Institute of Chicago; Los Angeles County Museum of Art, *Bonnard and His Environment*, October 7, 1964 - May 30, 1965, no. 82, p. 109 (illustrated, p. 105)

Tokyo, Palaceside Building, *Forty Paintings from The Reader’s Digest Collection*, October 6-30, 1966, no. 1, p. 6 (illustrated, p. 10)

New York, Wildenstein & Co.; Saint Paul, Macalester College; Rochester, Meadow Brook Hall; Stuttgart, Valentin Gallery; London, Wildenstein Gallery; Milan, Palazzo Reale; Paris, Musée Marmottan, *Selections from The Reader’s Digest Collection*, September 10, 1985 - April 6, 1986, pp. 8, 81 (illustrated, p. 9)

Auckland City Art Gallery, *The Reader’s Digest Collection: Manet to Picasso*, March 23 - May 7, 1989, pp. 12, 93 (illustrated, p. 13)

**Literature**

Jean and Henry Dauberville, *Bonnard: Catalogue Raisonné de l’oeuvre Peint 1940-1947*, vol. 4, Paris, 1974, no. 1679, p. 97 (illustrated)

Michel Terrasse, *Pierre Bonnard et Le Cannel*, Paris, 1987, p. 71 (illustrated; titled as *Corbeille de fruits*)

Jean Clair, *Bonnard/Matisse: Letters Between Friends*, New York, 1991, p. 130 (illustrated, p. 132)

*Pierre Bonnard: The Late Interiors*, exh. cat., The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, 2009, p. 22

## 20th Century & Contemporary Art Evening Sale

New York Auction / 17 November 2021 / 7pm EST



PROPERTY FROM A PRIVATE COLLECTION, NEW YORK

19

### Honor Titus

*Linden Blvd Jazz Radio*

signed "Honor" lower right  
oil on canvas

86 1/2 x 70 5/8 in. (219.7 x 179.4 cm)

Painted in 2019.

Estimate

\$30,000 — 50,000

[Go to Lot](#)



*"I often think, 'What's the objective?' For me, it's to capture this life, to leave something behind. It's almost a poem on canvas; it's a tangible, visual poem. It's something that just encapsulates life." —Honor Titus*

An ode to the romance and paradoxical isolation of a large American metropolis, Honor Titus' *Linden Blvd Jazz Radio* is one of the artist's more haunting and evocative works. Painted in 2019, when Titus—a native of Brooklyn, New York—was living in Los Angeles, the present work radiates with a pulsating sense of nostalgia. Through a carefully cropped view of an 1899 Brooklyn French Renaissance Revival façade, the painting draws the viewer into a curious vignette, intentionally bringing the focus to the lone human protagonist on the top floor that exudes an exquisite rendering of bewildering quiet in the atmosphere.



Edward Hopper, *Early Sunday Morning*, 1930. Whitney Museum of Art, New York, Image: © Whitney Museum of American Art / Licensed by Scala / Art Resource, NY, Artwork: © 2021 Heirs of Josephine Hopper / Licensed by VAGA at Artists Rights Society (ARS), NY

Honor Titus grew up immersed in the cultural arts scene in New York during the late 1990s and early 2000s. Son of rapper Andres "Dres" Titus of the famed duo Black Sheep, his childhood and teenage years were spent around poets and artists: "I remember seeing Patti Smith give a talk at St. Mark's Church. Richard Hell, too. Coming up in the 2000s, it was one of those New York moments where everything felt possible. There was a kind of punk renaissance with Beat undertones."<sup>1</sup> In 2008, Titus formed the punk-rock band *Cerebral Ballzy*—and while the band achieved impressive accolades and eventually signed to the iconic Cult Records (the record label of

*The Strokes* lead vocalist, Julian Casablancas), their commercial success was still modest. It was then that he began his foray into his painterly practice as the studio assistant to Raymond Pettibon, who ignited a spark and passion for painting in Titus. As the artist expressed, "With Raymond, painting was about the simplicity, solace and the comfort the act provided."<sup>ii</sup>

*"Painting for me is kind of journalistic. I would reference something that I'd been thinking about a lot or I would paint a girl that I was thinking about or something like that." —Honor Titus*

From that point onward, Titus' practice would develop into its unique artistic language and culminate into works such as *Linden Blvd Jazz Radio*. The artist eventually moved to Los Angeles where his work caught the attention of artist Henry Taylor, who would become a mentor and the first to exhibit Honor Titus' work in his space. Whilst drawing inspiration from the French post-impressionist group Les Nabis—whose members such as Édouard Vuillard, Félix Vallotton, and Pierre Bonnard strove to abandon the conventions of accurate perspective and representation in painting—Titus instead placed emphasis on flatness of lines, colors, and decorative elements. While the philosophical influences of Vuillard and his peers are visible in *Linden Blvd Jazz Radio*'s flat dark crimson planes and the intricately detailed, baroque moldings around the building's windows, there is yet an eeriness and mystery to the work, that is entirely of Titus' own device.



Faith Ringgold, *Street Story Quilt*, 1985. Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, Image: © The

**Honor Titus**

---

Metropolitan Museum of Art. Image source: Art Resource, NY, Artwork: © 2021 Faith Ringgold / Artists Rights Society (ARS), NY

Evocative of American painter Edward Hopper's depiction of eerie urban vistas, Titus masterfully chooses elements in his composition: the lone figure at the top left window, echoed by the solitary glowing streetlamp, set in direct diagonal to the right. A dazzling triumph of Titus' technical prowess, *Linden Blvd Jazz Radio* is a testimony of the artist's uncanny ability to conjure, not only distinct narratives in his work, but a sensational surrealist air that masterfully presents a poignant reflection on the human experience.

<sup>i</sup> Honor Titus, quoted in Arty Nelson, "Meet Honor Titus, the Punk Survivor With the Sold-Out Art Shows," *GQ Magazine*, March 3, 2021, [online](#).

<sup>ii</sup> Ibid.

---

**Provenance**

Half Gallery, New York

Acquired from the above by the present owner

**Exhibited**

Los Angeles, Penske Projects, *The Garden: New Work by Greg Ito and Honor Titus*, June 27 – July 27, 2019

## 20th Century & Contemporary Art Evening Sale

New York Auction / 17 November 2021 / 7pm EST



PROPERTY FROM A NEW YORK PRIVATE  
COLLECTION

20

**Matthew Wong**

*Time After Time*

signed, titled and dated "TIME AFTER TIME 王二零一  
八" on the reverse

oil on canvas

48 x 36 in. (121.9 x 91.4 cm)

Painted in 2018.

**Estimate**

\$800,000 — 1,200,000

[Go to Lot](#)



*"My work can be seen as an existential meditation on the act of painting, painting as a marker of time." —Matthew Wong*

Painted in 2018, *Time After Time* is a stunning example of Matthew Wong's interior scenes. Taking its place within the legacy of interior paintings by the Post-Impressionists and Fauvists, the present work demonstrates the artist's unique sensibility to the genre. Showcasing some of Wong's most prominent motifs—the table with a bowl of fruit, the flowering tree in a dreamlike, Milton Avery-esque landscape—into a single composition, the work invites viewers directly into the pictorial space, where a door opens to a glimmering room with a pendulum clock. Coalescing interior and exterior, past and present, *Time After Time* captures the technical and conceptual themes of Wong's mature works that have bolstered him into widespread critical acclaim.



Henri Matisse, *Red Interior with Still Life on a Blue Table*, 1947. Kunstsammlung Nordrhein-Westfalen, Duesseldorf, Germany, Image: Archives Matisse, all rights reserved, Artwork: © Succession H. Matisse / Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York

Redolent of Henri Matisse's red interior scenes including *Red Interior with Still Life on a Blue Table* and *The Dessert: Harmony in Red*, the present composition also conjures the auspicious symbolism of the color red prevalent in Chinese culture. Channeling the host of influences seen throughout Wong's oeuvre, *Time After Time* also reveals an important juncture in his stylistic development over the course of his all-too-brief but prolific career. As Roberta Smith observed of Wong's final series of *Blue* paintings, "There is less busyness and more areas of solid color, especially in the paintings of interiors. Pointillist textures have become airier or ceded to scaled-up expanses of short, boxy daubs of color, widely used to warp near and far."<sup>i</sup> Embodying the shift between the

artist's early oeuvre of chromatically vibrant landscapes with opulent brushstrokes and his last paintings, *Time After Time* captures the tighter handling of Wong's mature works and intimate interior scenes he explored through until his death.



*"The interior is not just the universe but also the étui of the private individual. To dwell means to leave traces."* —Walter Benjamin

A prominent subject in Symbolism and Expressionism, the private interior was a visual device for artists such as Edvard Munch to express the interiority of the mind through a physical space. Wong's mesmerizing interior scenes continue this exploration, "working at the intersection of inner psychology and exterior expression," Lauren DiGiulio explains. "This collapsing of interior and exterior space is reflected in Wong's painterly style, in which patterns sit on the surface of domestic interiors."<sup>ii</sup> Here, the clock room's shimmering, Georges Seurat-esque backdrop at once evokes a hypnotic dream and landscape, while the window simultaneously presents a world outdoors and appears as a frame for a painting indoors—a repeating motif in his interiors that "allow Wong to subtly build his own world within the space of his painting."<sup>iii</sup>



Edvard Munch, *Self-Portrait Between the Clock and the Bed*, 1940-1942. Munch Museum, Oslo, Image: HIP / Art Resource, NY, Artwork: © 2021 The Munch Museum / The Munch-Ellingsen Group / Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York

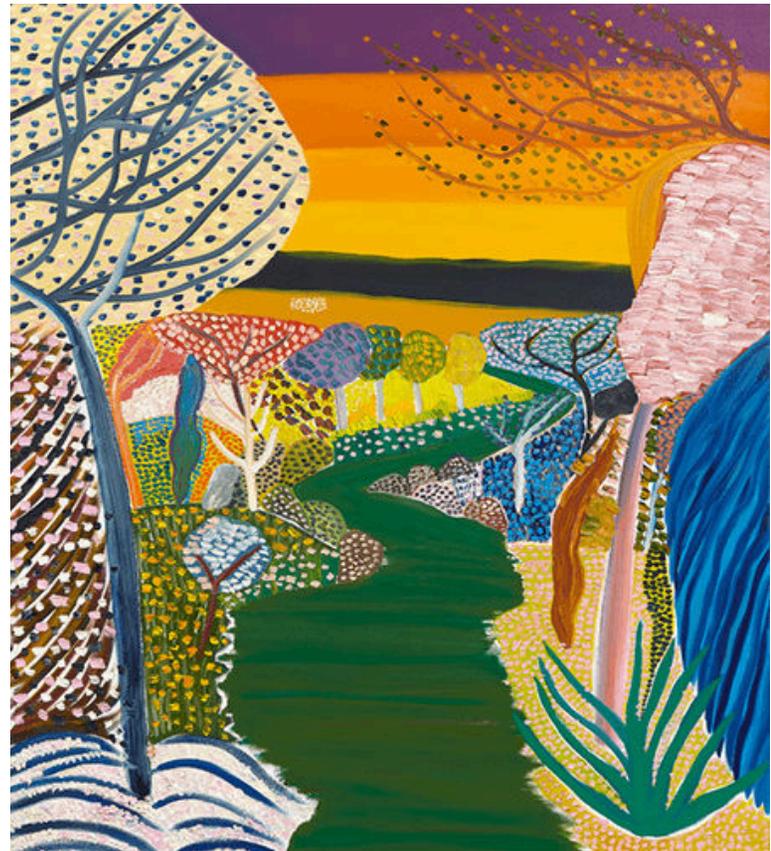
Conceived just a year before Wong's untimely death, *Time After Time* further incorporates a striking dialogue with Munch, a master Wong so revered. A visual reference to the work's title, the pendulum clock is reminiscent of *Self-Portrait Between the Clock and the Bed*, the Norwegian artist's late masterpiece from the final years of his life. Perhaps representing the inevitable passing of time, as in Munch's titular self-portrait, the present work ultimately encapsulates the artist's words, "I'd like to think of my art practice as an open-ended dialogue between myself and other painters, both living and dead...[I'm] figuring out where I can fit into the greater dialogue between artists throughout time."<sup>iv</sup>

## Collector's Digest

### Concurrent Institutional Show

[Art Gallery of Ontario, \*Matthew Wong: Blue View\*, August 13, 2021 – April 18, 2022](#)

- Wong's works reside in notable public collections, including the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, Museum of Modern Art, New York, Dallas Museum of Art, Estée Lauder Collection, New York, and the Aishti Foundation, Beirut. Continuing the momentum around the artist's acclaim, the Art Gallery of Ontario is currently hosting the first museum exhibition dedicated to the painter, followed by the forthcoming retrospective, *Matthew Wong*, at the Dallas Museum of Art in 2022.
- Phillips achieved the artist's world record last December, when Wong's [River at Dusk](#) soared over \$4,000,000.



*River at Dusk*, 2018 Achieved \$4,871,441 in 2020.

<sup>i</sup> Roberta Smith, "A Final Rhapsody in Blue from Matthew Wong," *The New York Times*, December 27, 2019, [online](#).

<sup>ii</sup> Lauren DiGiulio, "See You on the Other Side: Matthew Wong's Vistas of the Mind," *Momus*, April 1, 2021, [online](#).

<sup>iii</sup> Ibid.

<sup>iv</sup> Matthew Wong, quoted in Elaine Wong, "They Are Artists: Matthew Wong," *Altermodernists*, October 29, 2014.

Provenance

KARMA, New York

Acquired from the above by the present owner

## 20th Century & Contemporary Art Evening Sale

New York Auction / 17 November 2021 / 7pm EST



21

### Avery Singer

*European Ego Ideal*

acrylic on canvas  
100 x 120 in. (254 x 304.8 cm)  
Painted in 2014.

**Estimate**  
\$1,500,000 — 2,500,000

[Go to Lot](#)



*"I see the figuration as being semi-narrative. It's kind of satirizing nostalgic tropes of how artists conduct their lives and careers." —Avery Singer*

Spanning a monumental 10 feet in length, *European Ego Ideal* is an extraordinary example of Avery Singer's singular pictorial vernacular that straddles the digital and the painterly, past and present, representation and reality. One of the pioneering artists of her generation, Singer fuses the aesthetics of Cubism, Surrealism, and Constructivism with her cutting-edge sensibility of referencing the digital age, resulting in enigmatic compositions that are at once richly influenced by her artistic predecessors and forward-thinking with futuristic drive. Painted in 2014, the present work belongs to the early pivotal works that launched her career: black-and-white, filmic scenes from the life of an artist, the figures rendered as blocky computer graphic characters. Here, the present work depicts five alluring vignettes of individual figures emerging from a pitch-black background with cinematic theatricality. After featuring in the artist's acclaimed solo show at the Kunsthalle Zürich from 2014-2015, *European Ego Ideal* was presented at the 13th Lyon Biennial and subsequently at Singer's first major institutional exhibition in Europe, *Avery Singer: Scenes*, at the Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam in 2016.



The present work installed at *Avery Singer: Scenes*, Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam, April 23 - October 2, 2016. © Avery Singer

*"So when an abstraction becomes convincing, what are we convinced by? I suppose it is the analogy of association that lends its power..." —Sven Loven on Avery Singer*

*European Ego Ideal* showcases the artist's engagement with Picasso that recurs through this earlier period of her oeuvre, as seen in her *The Studio Visit* and *Performance Artists* of 2012, as well as *Happening* and *Director* of 2014. Here, she conjures some of the Cubist master's most famous subjects—his musicians, embodied in the flutist at the top right and guitarist at center, as well as his nudes in the figure at the bottom left. Transforming them into robot-like figures bordering on futurist manga characters and staging them in dramatic light, Singer combines the power of hyperbole and illusionism that engenders the seductive quality of her work. As Sven Loven observes, "We welcome hyperbole as an affront to darkness. Power in hyperbole. Power in histrionics. Power in theater, on a stage where the actors are unreal, but the vision is clear; where the effect is fantastical, but the tableau convincingly lucid. Like a maquette given life, like a step into the uncanny valley, into a world of deceit not yet made wholly deceptive... Through the lies of illusionism, the deceit of simulacra (depth of field, picture-in-picture, soft focus), [Avery's] images seek to assure us of the validity of our own confusion in the face of cacophony. It is in this assurance that we can find comfort and peace, a ground to stand on. And perhaps this feeling may prove to be the height of seduction."<sup>i</sup>

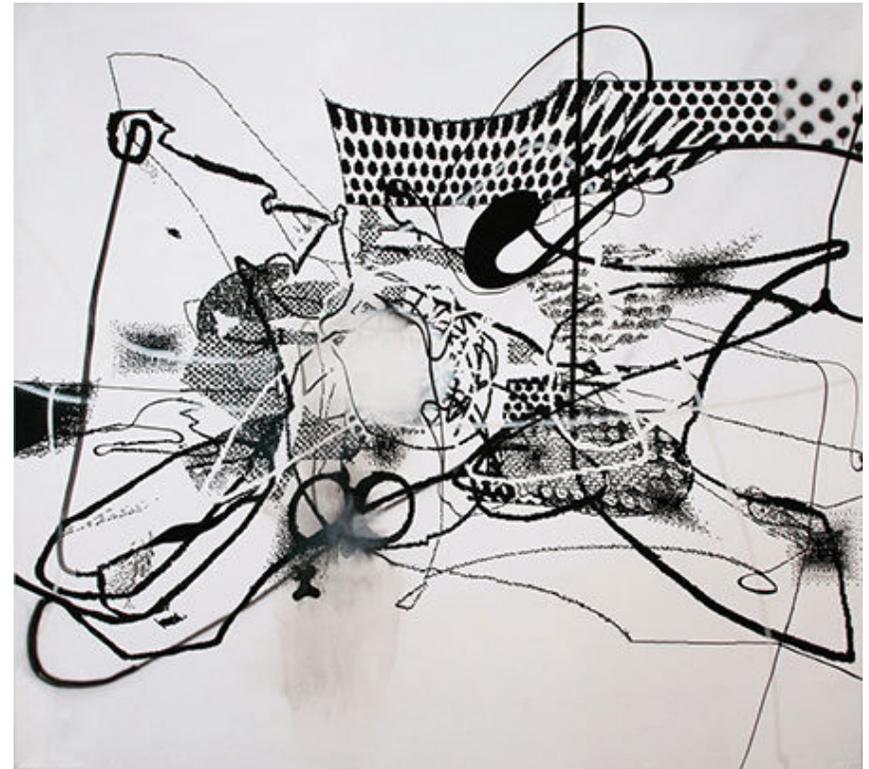


[left] Pablo Picasso, *Three Musicians*, 1921. Museum of Modern Art, New York, Image: © The Museum of Modern Art/Licensed by SCALA / Art Resource, NY, Artwork: © 2021 Estate of Pablo Picasso/Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York [right] Pablo Picasso, *Three Women*, 1907-1908. Hermitage, St. Petersburg, Image: Scala / Art Resource, NY, Artwork: © 2021 Estate of Pablo Picasso/Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York

*"The colorless palette gives the flattened surfaces a false patina, a mistaken sense of datedness that diverts attention away from the fact that they are produced using recent modeling software and source from online research. Though her works...are more-or-less traditionally painted onto two-dimensional surfaces to create the illusion of space and depth, they are largely misnomers—paintings that are as*

*sculptural, filmic, architectural, and performative as they are graphic or painterly.*  
—Aram Moshayedi

Teetering between abstraction and figuration, the present work epitomizes Singer's commitment to the modernist credo of distinguishing art from nature through a contemporary lens by utilizing technology as the mode of intervention. Having developed a unique technical process, she employs three-dimensional modeling software to produce an underdrawing and paints the image onto the canvas with an airbrush. The signature use of black and white in her earlier works stems both from her childhood experiences and reinvigorated inspiration. During her youth, her father was a projectionist at the Museum of Modern Art, New York, where she would frequently join him as he screened black-and-white films in the museum basement. "As a kid I would visit him there on weekends so I would have more time with him. I spent a huge part of my childhood in the basement of MoMA in the projection booth," the artist recalled. However, it was upon Singer's visit to Albert Oehlen's black-and-white *Computer Paintings* show at Skarstedt, New York as an art student in 2009 that this sensibility materialized in her painterly practice. "I had not been interested in contemporary painting until I saw that show. And I realized, oh, this medium is actually really powerful, if you use it right."<sup>ii</sup>



Albert Oehlen, *Untitled*, 2004. Private Collection, Artwork: © 2021 Albert Oehlen

*"Art is the subject of this work, but also the strategy: it brings figures inside...to make a scene. This idea of making a scene, in both a compositional and emotional sense, is vital. Avery takes advantage of these interiors to create stages for something deeper and more psychological. This way, a painting of bohemian life is also a picture of a shadow."*—Carmen Winant

In *European Ego Ideal*, Avery presents a masterful orchestration of light and shadow through her well-known technique of using masking tape for the linear highlights and employing rubber to render the curves of the circular outlines. "Avery watched the black and white pictures go by and perhaps more important was imprinted by their large frames, false depth, fragmentary narratives, intentional and often heavy-handed staging, lighting, and blocking. The beam of light—her father's head—the scenes and the shadows of those scenes onto the wall," Carmen Winant

explained. “The films Avery watched growing up were surrounded above and below by modernist painting and sculpture (her namesake is one such American modern artist). The resulting paintings, however much influenced by the properties of projection in all of its forms, cannot be separated from their own intense, frustrated, and sometimes even masturbatory history. They subject, in both image and title, the rituals that surround and produce art: visual studies, studio classrooms, art patrons, performances, and party scenes appear in various incarnations.<sup>iii</sup> With its reference to Picasso and its title, the present work wonderfully encapsulates Singer’s words: “My art practice is like a vacant hotel for all the ghosts of modernism to occupy.”<sup>iv</sup>



<sup>i</sup> Sven Loven, *Avery Singer: Pictures Punish Words*, exh. cat., Kunsthalle Zürich, 2015, pp. 49, 51.

<sup>ii</sup> Avery Singer, quoted in Jason Rosenfeld, “Avery Singer with Jason Rosenfeld,” *The Brooklyn Rail*, September 2021, [online](#).

<sup>iii</sup> Carmen Winant, *Avery Singer: Pictures Punish Words*, exh. cat., Kunsthalle Zürich, 2015, pp. 56-57, 60.

<sup>iv</sup> Avery Singer, quoted in Aram Moshayedi, *ibid.*, p. 55.

#### Provenance

Kraupa-Tuskany Zeidler, Berlin

Private Collection

Acquired from the above by the present owner

#### Exhibited

Kunsthalle Zürich; Turin, Fondazione Sandretto Re Rebaudengo, *Avery Singer: Pictures Punish Words*, November 22, 2014 – April 12, 2015, p. 10 (illustrated, p. 11)

Lyon, *The 13th Lyon Biennial: La Vie Moderne*, September 10, 2015 – January 3, 2016

Amsterdam, Stedelijk Museum, *Avery Singer: Scenes*, April 23 – October 2, 2016

## 20th Century & Contemporary Art Evening Sale

New York Auction / 17 November 2021 / 7pm EST



22

### Mark Tansey

#### *Garden*

signed "Tansey" lower right; signed, titled and dated

"Tansey "GARDEN" MAY 2006" on the reverse

oil on canvas

48 x 36 in. (121.9 x 91.4 cm)

Painted in 2006.

#### Estimate

\$700,000 — 1,000,000

[Go to Lot](#)



*"What I'm doing is saying, 'What can't a painting show?' And then doing it."  
—Mark Tansey*

At once surreal and deceptively familiar, *Garden* reveals Mark Tansey's celebrated conceptual approach to painting. A quintessential example of Tansey's instantly recognizable painterly idiom, the work presents what at first glance appears to be a banal suburban scene: a woman, casually clad in a shift t-shirt dress and baseball cap, eats an apple while watering the tree. It is upon closer inspection, however, that the viewer becomes aware of the inconsistencies that proliferate the composition. The figure appears to be watering the tree's trunk rather than its roots, a ladder set against the tree trunk seems to extend into the sky ad infinitum, and over-sized apples seem to tower menacingly, and through a trick of optics seem to push out beyond the confines of the picture plane. Drawing the viewer into the depths of its ink-blue background, a sustained reading of the canvas surface rewards the eye with a host of painterly techniques. The artist traverses the gamut of painterly styles from the photographically naturalistic style that has become eponymous with his oeuvre used to render the apples, to the more abstracted representation of the leaves and grass. It is through the artist's restricted color palette that his deft manipulation of his chosen medium truly takes center stage.



Cornelis Cornelisz. van Haarlem, *Adam and Eve in Paradise*, 1625. Musée des Beaux-Arts, Quimper, France, Image: © RMN-Grand Palais / Art Resource, NY

Executed in 2006, *Garden* was first shown publicly at Tansey's solo exhibition at Gagolian Gallery in London in 2009, where it stood in dialogue with *Apple Tree*, 2009, the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston. Seen together, these related paintings present otherworldly dreamscapes—it is almost as though the ladder perched against the apple tree in the present painting leads us to *Apple Tree*, which depicts a birds-eye view of a distant landscape from the tree's canopy.

*Garden* epitomizes how Tansey embraces allegory, symbolism and metaphor in painting to probe questions of meaning and representation. Like René Magritte, Tansey strives for his imagery to be seen as both accessible and open-ended. As the artist noted in 1992, “Magritte’s work also led me to wonder if crisis could take place on other levels of content, more quietly, internally, more plausibly. Could a conventional picture include many less apparent crises—the way everyday life does—without the use of overt surrealist devices?”<sup>i</sup> The present work articulates the shift in Tansey’s practice at the time to engage with Surrealist strategies. With an explicit nod to Magritte’s *The Listening Room*, in the Menil Collection, Houston, Tansey dislocates notions of scale and reality by inserting the magnified form of apples and a ladder that leads to an ambiguous infinity. Whereas many of Tansey’s earlier figures were represented in the midst of a quest for truth, the woman here is ignorant of the path to “enlightenment” as embodied in the ladder and in her failure to feed the roots of the tree, instead choosing to eat the forbidden fruit.



Rene Magritte, *La chambre d'ecoute*, 1958. Menil Collection, Image: Banque d'Images, ADAGP / Art Resource, NY, Artwork: © C. Herscovici / Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York

With *Garden*, Tansey has revisited the motif depicted on the left panel of his iconic four-part painting *Four Forbidden Senses*, 1982, at The Broad, Los Angeles. Rendered in a similar blue monochromatic color palette, this vignette depicted a woman in a strikingly similar pose of hosing a tree whilst eating an apple. As with all of Tansey’s paintings, *Garden* developed from a visual and conceptual framework: the specific imagery is derived from the artist’s extensive archive of found imagery, culled over the years from myriad sources such as magazines, newspapers and art history books, as well as a conceptual trove of specific questions, philosophical themes and motifs conceived by the artist. This serves as a basis for Tansey’s creative process of carefully manipulating, combining, and photocopying images to produce a dense collage that serves as a preliminary study for his compositions.

*"A painted picture is a vehicle. You can sit in your driveway and take it apart or you can get in it and go somewhere."* —Mark Tansey

Coming full circle with *Four Forbidden Senses*, 1982, the present work epitomizes the groundbreaking representational style that Tansey pursued in opposition to modernist orthodoxy since coming to prominence in the late 1970s. In a context that was dominated by abstract and conceptual art, Tansey alongside such peers as David Salle radically embarked upon a return to figurative painting after it had been famously declared dead. For Tansey, “Pictures should be able to function across the fullest range of content. The conceptual should be able to mingle with the formal and subject matter should enjoy intimate relations with both.”<sup>ii</sup> To this end, the artist developed a rigorous method that merged appropriation and conceptual art into a highly unique painterly style.

Employing additive and subtractive painting techniques while adhering to a monochromatic hue, Tansey renders these surreal scenes with a photographically naturalistic style. Speaking of this complex technique, art critic David Joselit observed that, “Like the space of the mass media in which bits and pieces of information are broken loose from their historical grounding and freely recombined into novel configurations, the landscape Tansey describes is one in which radically dissimilar events and places can gracefully coexist. Although his use of grisaille reads most immediately as a reference to old photographs, it also recalls the space of film and television.”<sup>iii</sup> Typifying the complexity of our post-modern age, *Garden*, as with Tansey’s greatest paintings, performs the elusiveness of meaning.

<sup>i</sup> Mark Tansey, quoted in *Mark Tansey*, exh. cat., Los Angeles County Museum of Art, Los Angeles, 1993, p. 39.

<sup>ii</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 14.

<sup>iii</sup> David Joselit, “Wrinkles in Time: Mark Tansey”, *Art in America*, June 1987, p. 109.

**Provenance**

Gagosian Gallery, New York

Private Collection, Los Angeles

Private Collection, Los Angeles

Gagosian Gallery, New York

Private Collection (acquired from the above)

Phillips, New York, November 16, 2017, lot 11

Acquired at the above sale by the present owner

**Exhibited**

London, Gagosian Gallery, *MARK TANSEY*, December 10, 2009 - January 23, 2010, p. 83

(illustrated, p. 85; detail illustrated, pp. 86-89)

## 20th Century & Contemporary Art Evening Sale

New York Auction / 17 November 2021 / 7pm EST



PROPERTY FROM A PRIVATE COLLECTION, PARIS

23 ♦

**KAWS**

*THE WAY HE KNOWS*

signed and dated "KAWS.. 10" on the reverse

acrylic on canvas

84 x 48 in. (213.4 x 121.9 cm)

Painted in 2010.

**Estimate**

\$850,000 — 1,000,000

[Go to Lot](#)



Painted in 2010, KAWS's *THE WAY HE KNOWS* is a key example of the artist's ability to exude complex emotion through nostalgic imagery. Cropping in on the immediately recognizable cartoon character SpongeBob SquarePants, KAWS brings this character into his unique vernacular with his signature crossed out eyes. Presented with an open mouth and clenched face, his figure is suffused with primal emotion. At approximately seven feet tall, SpongeBob's iconic yellow visage is expanded to larger-than-life proportions, amplifying its emotional impact to the viewer.



Pablo Picasso, *Weeping Woman's Head with Handkerchief [III], Postscript of "Guernica"*, 1937. Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía, Madrid, Image: Album/Art Resource, NY, Artwork: © 2021 Estate of Pablo Picasso/Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York

*"Even though I use a comic language, my figures are not always reflecting the idealistic cartoon view that I grew up on, where everything has a happy ending."*  
—KAWS

In the early 2000s, the artist began to reappropriate iconic cartoon characters from the last half century in his painterly practice, making these universal characters his own by voiding them of their original narrative context. The artist notably illustrates the familiar faces of cartoon cultural icons such as Snoopy, SpongeBob, Smurfs, The Simpsons, Sesame Street, and Mickey Mouse. Evoking a unique sense of nostalgia, his iconography recalls the purity of childhood memories while conflicting with the complexities of contemporary life.



KAWS, *GRRR!*, 2008. Private Collection, Artwork: © KAWS ([Sold Phillips New York, November 2019](#))

Created by marine science educator Stephen Hillenburg in the late 1990s, *SpongeBob SquarePants* is the highest rated series to ever air on the children's American cartoon network, Nickelodeon. With more than 275 episodes spanning over two decades, *SpongeBob SquarePants* has become a household name adorning television screens in more than 200 countries. Despite being a common theme in the artist's body of work, KAWS admits, "SpongeBob was something I wanted to do because graphically I love the shapes. But honestly, when I'm painting SpongeBob, I'm not thinking, 'Oh, I loved this episode.' Honestly, I've never even watched it."<sup>i</sup>

*"It's a little hard to extract that personality out of me. I've always hated the smoke and mirrors from artists ahead of me, where you get to see this staged photo and that's what they stick to. I think, especially for kids following me, I try and make the point that you literally can do this. You can get into art."* —KAWS

KAWS's multidisciplinary practice which incorporates painting, sculpture, and print-making, has caught the attention of collectors worldwide. As his fine art practice continues to reach new heights, the artist has shown commitment to remaining accessible by collaborating with global fashion brands including Dior, Nike, and Uniqlo. His practice has been honored with numerous solo shows around the globe, including a 2011 solo exhibition at The Aldrich Contemporary Art Museum in Ridgefield, CT, where the present work was on view. The artist also received a retrospective at the National Gallery of Victoria, Australia (2019-2020) and most recently, the highly acclaimed major survey at the Brooklyn Museum, New York in 2021. His works are cemented within the permanent collections of international institutions, including the Brooklyn Museum, the Modern Art Museum of Fort Worth in Texas, the CAC Malaga in Spain, and the Rosenblum Collection in Paris.



The present work installed at KAWS, Aldrich Contemporary Art Museum, Ridgefield, June 27, 2010 – January 2, 2011. Artwork: © KAWS

<sup>i</sup> KAWS, quoted in Tobey Maguire, "KAWS," *Interview Magazine*, April 27, 2010, [online](#).

#### Provenance

Honor Fraser Gallery, Los Angeles

Private Collection

Acquired from the above by the present owner in 2013

**Exhibited**

Ridgefield, The Aldrich Contemporary Art Museum, *KAWS*, June 27, 2010 - January 2, 2011

## 20th Century & Contemporary Art Evening Sale

New York Auction / 17 November 2021 / 7pm EST



24

### Wassily Kandinsky

#### *Fliessend*

signed with the artist's monogram and dated "31" lower left; signed with the artist's monogram, titled and dated "1931 "Fliessend."" on the reverse  
oil on board

27 1/2 x 23 1/2 in. (69.9 x 59.7 cm)

Executed in 1931.

#### Estimate

\$2,000,000 — 3,000,000

[Go to Lot](#)



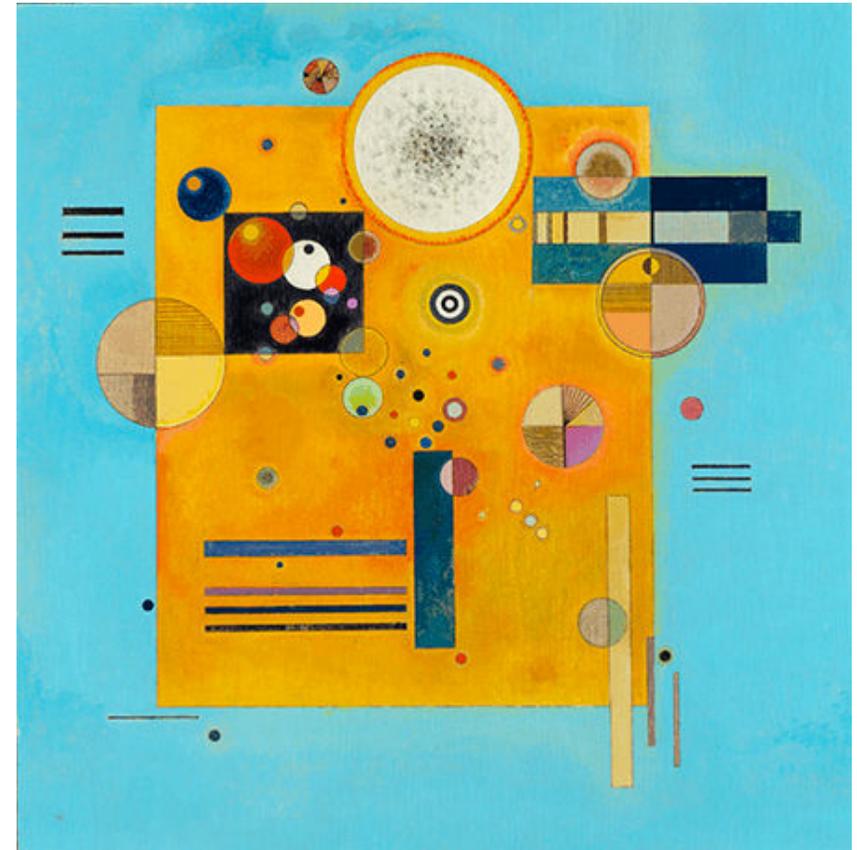
*"Repetition is a potent means of heightening the inner vibration [...] a source of elementary rhythm, which, in turn, is a means to the attainment of elementary harmony in every form of art." —Wassily Kandinsky*

With its striking lyrical precision characterized by bold color and the rhythmic repetition and variation of geometric forms, *Fliessend* is a lively expression of the radically non-representational directions in which Wassily Kandinsky pushed painting in the 1920s and 1930s. Executed in 1931, the work represents a key moment in the artist's career, drawing together the core formal motifs and theoretical preoccupations that he had refined over his years as a master at the Bauhaus before the ascendancy of the Third Reich and his move to Paris two years later that ushered in a new phase in his work.

### A Kind of Blue

*"Almost without exception, blue refers to the domain of abstraction and immateriality." —Wassily Kandinsky*

Set against a background of rich, midnight blues and vibrantly animated by a series of alternating triangular shapes, broad arcs, slim dash lines, and small, circular forms, the present work shares the visual vocabulary and compositional complexity of Kandinsky's most iconic works. Within *Fliessend's* sharply delineated geometric forms, the artist explored more subtle modulations of surface texture and tone, the counterpoint of denser and more diffused passages creating a strikingly spatial and even musical effect as motifs emerge and recede across the composition. In this respect, the painting belongs to a small but significant group of works from Kandinsky's last years at the Dessau Bauhaus which combined his earlier examinations into the spiritual dimension of color and its affects with the spatial possibilities between these more strictly geometric forms. As with several other works from this group including *Sanfter Nachdruck* and *Leicht Berührt*, both at the Museum of Modern Art, New York, the title of the present work is directly borrowed from musical terminology. *Fliessend* corresponds to the English term "flowing" notably used in Austrian composer Anton Webern's *Bagatelles* and in Arnold Schoenberg's music notation.



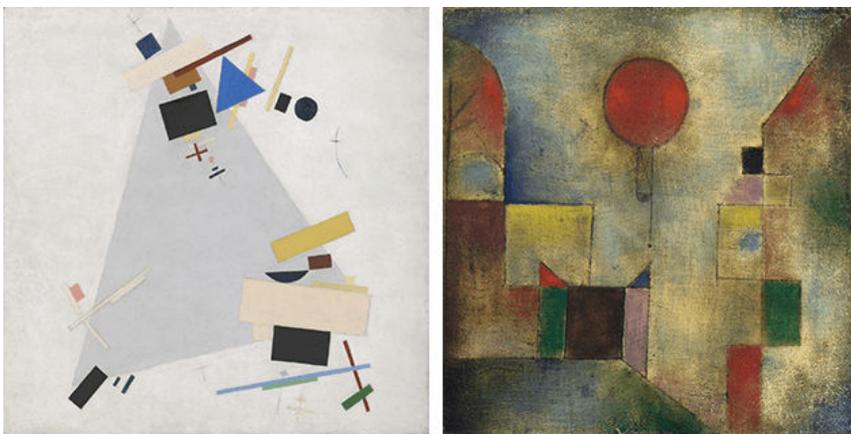
Wassily Kandinsky, *Soft Pressure*, 1931. Museum of Modern Art, New York, Image: © The Museum of Modern Art/Licensed by SCALA / Art Resource, NY, Artwork: © 2021 Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York / ADAGP, Paris

### Geometry, Abstraction, and the Bauhaus

Like many European artists of his generation, Kandinsky became increasingly interested in the mathematical precision and universality of geometry, and of the foundational possibilities that it presented for a radically new artistic language freed from directly representational concerns. Deftly transfusing the Constructivist lessons he had absorbed from the likes of Kazimir Malevich during his return to Russia between 1915 and 1921 into the ethos of interdisciplinarity that

characterized life at the Staatliches Bauhaus, Kandinsky transitioned away from “the expressionistic elements of his pre-war Compositions toward a more universal, objective idiom.”<sup>i</sup>

In the playful interactions established between a deliberately restricted repertoire of forms, *Fliessend* also records the influence of Kandinsky’s close friend and fellow Bauhaus master Paul Klee, with whom the artist reunited when he took up his position at the school alongside his old friend in 1922. While Klee’s work from this period remained more closely tied to the representational, the visual resonance between certain recurring shapes and compositional elements testifies to their close working practices, and to a broader culture of creative and intellectual exchange encouraged at the Bauhaus.



[left] Kazimir Malevich, *Dynamic Suprematism*, 1915 or 1916, Tate Collection, London [right] Paul Klee, *Red Balloon*, 1922, Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York, Artwork: © 2021 Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York

Successfully synthesizing these various elements, by 1923 Kandinsky had “consolidated the geometric tendencies that had been developing in his art from 1919 and brought to the fore the schematic construction and other theoretical principles he emphasized in his teaching at the school.”<sup>ii</sup> Presenting a masterful balance of color, rhythm, and harmonizing geometries with organic elements, *Fliessend* is an exuberant expression of Kandinsky’s maturation in this tendency, and what celebrated critic and art historian Will Grohmann aptly described as the “incomparable richness” of these Dessau years.

*“The impact of an acute angle of a triangle on a circle produces an effect no less powerful than the finger of God touching the finger of Adam in Michelangelo.”*

—*Wassily Kandinsky*

Within the new and increasingly complex compositional arrangements that characterize Kandinsky’s Bauhaus period, the circle and triangle were particularly privileged as “the two primary, most strongly contrasting plane figures.”<sup>iii</sup> In a letter to Grohmann, Kandinsky elaborated on this prevailing geometric logic. Describing the circle as a link to the cosmic, he emphasized its simultaneity and versatility: at once stable and unstable, loud and soft, precise and variable, the circle becomes “the synthesis of the greatest oppositions,” combining “the concentric and the eccentric in a single form, and in balance.”<sup>iv</sup>



In a powerful visualization of the “flowing” qualities suggested by the title, the present work develops these formal relationships, the triangle’s stability and repeated sense of upward momentum balanced and counterpointed by the chromatic brilliance and seeming weightlessness of the small circular forms. Harmonious and serenely ordered, the composition nevertheless possesses a sense of remarkable fluidity. The pictorial elements of geometric form, subtle shifts in surface textures, and exchanges between warmer and cooler colors all dynamically interact, responding to one another in a complex, polyphonic arrangement. It not only prefigures the rhythmic, all-over qualities that would define Abstract Expressionism, but speaks to a musical legacy of syncopated rhythms, atonality, and developing variation that runs across the 20th century and beyond.

<sup>i</sup> Magdalena Dabrowski, *Kandinsky Compositions*, exh. cat., The Museum of Modern Art, New

**Wassily Kandinsky**

---

York, 1995, p. 46.

<sup>ii</sup> C. V. Poling, *Kandinsky: Russian and Bauhaus Years, 1915 – 1933*, exh. cat., The Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York, 1983, p. 49.

<sup>iii</sup> Wassily Kandinsky, quoted in *ibid.*, p. 52.

<sup>iv</sup> Wassily Kandinsky, quoted in Will Grohmann, *Wassily Kandinsky: Life and Work*, 1958, New York, p. 188.

---

**Provenance**

Otto Gerson, New York

Mrs. E.L. Froelicher, New York

Mr. and Mrs. Samuel J. Holtzman, Baltimore

Private Collection, Baltimore (by descent by 1986)

Hôtel Drouot, Paris, June 26, 2006, lot 258

Acquired at the above sale by the present owner

**Exhibited**

London, April 1937

New York, Nierendorf Gallery, *Kandinsky, A Retrospective View*, October 1937

New York, Nierendorf Gallery, *Kandinsky*, March 1941, no. 19, n.p.

New York, Nierendorf Gallery, *Kandinsky, A Retrospective Show*, December 8, 1942 – February 1943, no. 12

**Literature**

Artist's Handlist IV, no. 548

Will Grohmann, *Wassily Kandinsky: Life and Work*, New York, 1958, pp. 339, 382 (illustrated, p. 392)

Hans K. Roethel and Jean K. Benjamin, *Kandinsky. Catalogue Raisonné of the Oil-Paintings Volume Two 1960-1944*, London, 1984, no. 994, p. 898 (illustrated)

## 20th Century & Contemporary Art Evening Sale

New York Auction / 17 November 2021 / 7pm EST



25

### Jean-Michel Basquiat

*Untitled (from Famous Negro Athlete Series)*

Xerox, graphite, gouache and oilstick on canvas board

23 7/8 x 36 in. (60.6 x 91.4 cm)

Executed in 1981.

Estimate

\$750,000 — 1,100,000

[Go to Lot](#)

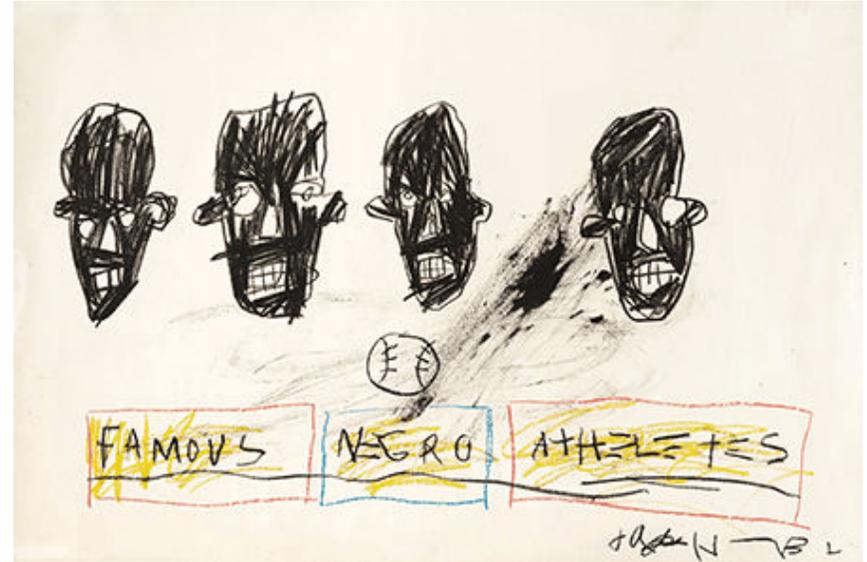


*"As a king rules by divine rights, so did Jean-Michel Basquiat draw and paint."  
—Peter Brant*



Basquiat on the set of *Downtown 81*, 1980-1981. Image: Edo Bertoglio © New York Beat Film LLC, Artwork: © Estate of Jean-Michel Basquiat. Licensed by Artestar, New York

With its gestural vigor and electric immediacy, *Untitled (from Famous Negro Athlete Series)* epitomizes the unbridled fervor that characterizes Jean-Michel Basquiat's early work and his singular graphic language. Executed in 1981, the work marks the pivotal moment at the cusp of Basquiat's meteoric rise to international acclaim and was notably a gift to his dear friend, Kai Eric, who had befriended Basquiat several years before his claim to fame and shared his apartment with the artist for a time. During the artist's lifetime, Eric temporarily consigned *Untitled (from Famous Negro Athlete Series)* to Basquiat's legendary art dealer Annina Nosei, and ultimately brought it to Mary Boone just before her first Basquiat show. Having been acquired by the present owner soon after, the present work arrives to the public for the first time in nearly four decades.



Jean-Michel Basquiat, *Famous Negro Athletes*, 1981. Former Collection of Glenn O'Brien, Artwork: © Estate of Jean-Michel Basquiat. Licensed by Artestar, New York

*"He wasn't out to get rich—he was out to win. He painted for the world title: heavyweight champion of the world and grandmaster." —Glenn O'Brien*

A significant conceptual anchor throughout Basquiat's oeuvre, the theme of the Black athlete appears in myriad paintings and works on paper especially during his early years, often referencing renowned contemporaneous figures including Cassius Clay (Muhammad Ali), Joe Louis, Jersey Joe Walcott, Hank Aaron, and Jackie Robinson. In *Untitled (from Famous Negro Athletes Series)*, Basquiat brings together his own kind of Hall, or Wall, of Fame, scrawling baseball imagery alongside his well-known crayon hopscotch squares and ambulances. Here, Basquiat's signature three-pointed crowns thereby potently showcase their trademark symbolism of autobiographically alluding to himself as well as recognizing the regal stature of his heroes.



Jean-Michel Basquiat, *Six Crimee*, 1982. Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles, Artwork: © Estate of Jean-Michel Basquiat. Licensed by Artestar, New York

For the present work, Basquiat xeroxed nine individual drawings he had made, pasting each onto the canvas and overpainting the collage like a downtown city wall at his disposal. With the vernacular dynamism of his street-poet, alter-ego SAMO©, the “HO”s and “OA”s at once evoke his frequent allusions to Hank Aaron’s name—as seen in works such as *Orange Sports Figure*, 1982—and the sounds of sirens that reflected the artist’s deep sensitivity to his environment. The suggested baseball diamonds at the lower right also recall boxing rings, further featuring Basquiat’s classic manipulation of his now-iconic signs and symbols through his exhilarating graphic intensity and unapologetic artistic sensibility that has come to define his extraordinary artistic legacy.



[left] Jean-Michel Basquiat, *Untitled*, 1981. Private Collection, Artwork: © Estate of Jean-Michel Basquiat. Licensed by Artestar, New York [right] Jean-Michel Basquiat, *The Ring*, 1981. Private Collection, Artwork: © Estate of Jean-Michel Basquiat. Licensed by Artestar, New York

Through his graphic lexicon, Basquiat at once transforms these respectable figures into canonized icons and renders their faces inscrutable, inciting a commanding statement about prejudicial stereotypes in society by “present[ing] so simply how society expected black people to be athletes and not painters.”<sup>i</sup> In the present work, Basquiat’s searing handling of the archetypal, mask-like countenances is as explosive as his gestural Franz Kline-esque brushwork in gouache. The free-flowing, liberal expression of energy seen in *Untitled (from Famous Negro Athletes Series)* is striking testament to Fred Hoffman’s words, “These images are...in an ecstatic state. Freed from worldly constraint, whether human or bird, they are an expression of freedom.”<sup>ii</sup>

*"There would be 20 sheets of paper on the floor, all seemingly half-finished pieces of work, and he would jump from one, walk across five, literally walking on them!"*  
—Kai Eric

*Untitled (from Famous Negro Athlete Series)* is one of two from the artist’s titular series that Basquiat left for Kai Eric among a number of pieces. Eric first met the artist on a pre-winter

morning in the late 1970s as he wandered the streets of Lower Manhattan, when he encountered a figure in the middle of the block. “I had started to see these oblique pieces of poetry around the city,” Eric recalled.<sup>iii</sup> “This figure I saw was Jean-Michel—he was standing there in an overcoat and I had caught him with a spray paint can in his hand. He was in mid tag. Al Diaz was with him. I had recognized his work from the streets and it caught my attention.”<sup>iv</sup> Soon after, the two would meet again at a punk rock concert at CBGB in East Village where their friendship solidified. “Jean-Michel walked in, sat in a corner, and we just talked. It was there we realized we were very like-minded and from there became best friends.”<sup>v</sup>

Video: <https://youtu.be/Mn1Q44H2QyE>

Basquiat’s street poetry was as nomadic as his living situations, and he would eventually live with Eric for about eight months in the latter’s place on Canal Street. In typical Basquiatian nature, the apartment became both a crash pad and studio, where he created, entertained, and produced a sea of work. Eric recalled, “Jean was prolific and would leave my apartment littered with his output. Every day I would come home to find a new array of works large and small. It was there that Henry Geldzahler first visited, bought a canvas which propelled Jean into his art career. Those are bittersweet memories.”

The year that Basquiat made and gave the present work to Eric would profoundly transform the course of the artist’s life as he joined Annina Nosei’s gallery and held his first solo show at the Galleria d’Arte Emilio Mazzoli in Modena, Italy. “When he first signed to Annina Nosei’s gallery in 1981,” Eric said, “his life changed practically overnight.”<sup>vi</sup>

## Basquiat's New York

Kai Eric shares his insights with Phillips on his relationship with Basquiat, the flourishing creative scene of 1980s downtown New York, and *Untitled (from Famous Negro Athlete Series)*. [Read here](#).

<sup>i</sup> Glenn O’Brien, quoted in *Jean-Michel Basquiat 1981: The Studio of the Street*, exh.cat., Deitch Projects, New York, 2006, p. 19.

<sup>ii</sup> Fred Hoffman, *The Art of Jean-Michel Basquiat*, New York, 2017, p. 137.

<sup>iii</sup> Kai Eric, quoted in Tamra Davis, *Jean-Michel Basquiat: The Radiant Child*, 2010, documentary.

<sup>iv</sup> Kai Eric, conversation with author, October 22, 2021.

<sup>v</sup> Ibid.

<sup>vi</sup> Kai Eric, quoted in Hayley Maitland, “American Graffiti: Memories of Jean-Michel Basquiat,” *Vogue*, September 20, 2017.

## Provenance

Kai Eric (gifted by the artist)

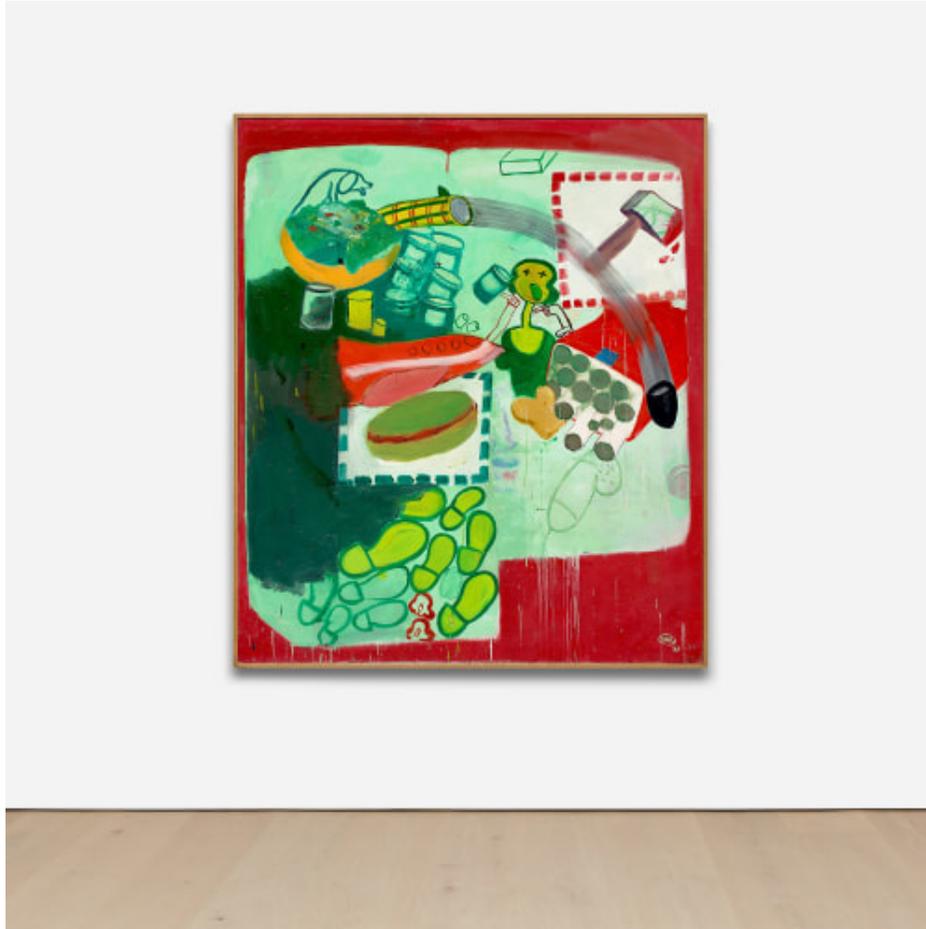
Annina Nosei Gallery, New York (on consignment)

Mary Boone Gallery, New York

Acquired from the above by the present owner in May 1984

## 20th Century & Contemporary Art Evening Sale

New York Auction / 17 November 2021 / 7pm EST



26

### Peter Saul

*Ice Box #3*

signed and dated "SAUL '61-'62" lower right  
oil on canvas on aluminum panel  
69 x 59 1/8 in. (175.3 x 150.2 cm)  
Painted in 1961-1962.

**Estimate**

\$350,000 — 450,000

[Go to Lot](#)



"A **Painted** picture  
has one relatively  
feeble advantage.  
It needs no financing  
or **PERMISSION**  
to be made."

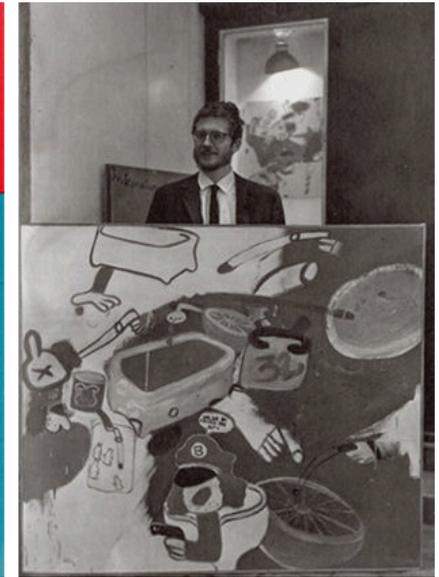
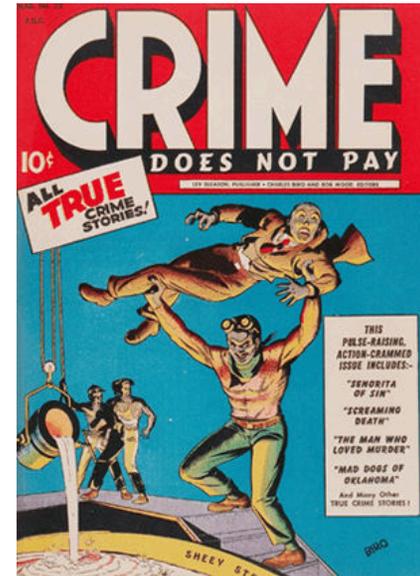
### Peter Saul on his *Ice Box #3*

I was living in Bures sur Yvette, south of Paris, and was very isolated, hadn't met any artists since leaving the states in 1956, but I kept in close contact by letter with my art dealer, Allan Frumkin, in New York, who I had met a year or so before as a result of phoning the artist [Roberto] Matta. So, I knew my icebox pictures were my most popular image. I don't remember exactly but I was probably painting this picture during my first NY show, at Frumkin Gallery which was January 1962.

This is the picture where it suddenly occurred to me to combine the icebox image and the "crime and punishment" imagery. You see a salad, or at least something in a bowl with a dog on it—that's the remnants of *Ice Box 1* and *2*: food and cigarettes misbehaving in an overall icebox shape. But fresher in my mind—it was a big deal for me for me then—is all the crime stuff, bloody axe, whizzing bullet, screaming woman and so on. This was in my mind at the moment, from remembering "Crime Does Not Pay" comics when I was a kid. My thought at the end of the picture was probably—oh, oh, lot more crime than food, can I still call it icebox?...It's just stream of conscience actually, like now, sometimes it's refreshing to not know what you're doing—I like painting that way a lot even now.

—Yerz, Peter Saul

October 20-21, 2021



[left] Cover of *Crime Does Not Pay*, Lev Gleason, New York, no. 32, March 1944 [right] Peter Saul with *Valda Sherman* (1961) in Paris, 1962

### Introduction

*"It simply came to me as an idea...I started to put together, quite consciously what I thought was an art style." —Peter Saul on his Ice Box paintings*

Painted between 1961 and 1962, *Ice Box #3* belongs to Peter Saul's highly coveted eponymous series comprising just ten works created from 1960 to 1963. Presenting an action-packed composition within the seemingly banal subject of a refrigerator, the present work derives from a groundbreaking chapter in the artist's acclaimed oeuvre that marked his singular aesthetic of fusing Pop, Surrealism, and Abstract Expressionism to pioneer his unique visual language. Testifying to its iconic stature, the present work featured in the 2005 documentary, *Imagining America: Icons of 20<sup>th</sup> Century American Art*, and was most recently exhibited in the major retrospective *Peter Saul: Crime and Punishment*, the artist's museum survey debut in New York at the New Museum from February 2020 and January 2021.



The present work installed at *Peter Saul: Crime and Punishment*, New Museum, New York, February 11, 2020 – January 3, 2021. Image: Dario Lasagni, Artwork: © 2021 Peter Saul / Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York

Saul's renowned body of *Ice Box* paintings bore out of a remarkably fertile period that notably shaped his artistic development. After graduating with his BFA from Washington University, St.

Louis in 1956, the artist moved to Europe, living in Amsterdam (1956-1958), Paris (1958-1962), and Rome (1962-1964) until his return to the United States in 1964. The present work was painted during Saul's formative time in Paris, where he would meet the Surrealist painter Roberto Matta and American art dealer Allan Frumkin, the former who would influence the artist's own Surrealist style and the latter who would give Saul his very first solo exhibition in 1961. The artist's distance from American culture allowed him to critically examine it as subject matter in itself (see below). Deriving inspiration from American comic books and magazines such as *Mad* and *Life*, he ultimately found his wildly inventive idiom in the icebox, incorporating symbols of American consumer culture such as mass-produced goods into explosive scenes containing at once the humorous and macabre.

*I always do things  
The wrong way,  
which is completely empty territory.*

### In the Artist's Words

On the occasion of his 2017 exhibition at the Schirn Kunsthalle in Frankfurt, Saul discussed his *Ice Boxes* and the journey of his artistic practice.

Video: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=s66P-IS\\_TgQ](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=s66P-IS_TgQ)

*"Fortunately, Abstract Expressionism turned out to be easy to do...[but] to be successful with a viewer, to be actually looked at with interest, my picture would need to have some potential for being right or wrong, better or worse, in someone's opinion, than some other picture." —Peter Saul*

Whilst embodying the endless proliferation of consumer madness, the icebox, for Saul ultimately

represented the creative freedom to express his artistic imagination—a painterly container through which he could compact divergent images and styles into one picture. Anticipating the cartoon-like figuration of Philip Guston later that decade, the series embodied Saul’s pioneering of “hand-painted Pop” and his epithet as one of Pop Art’s founding fathers. “But the idea of what you call Pop Art just came to me because I wanted something to put into my Abstract Expressionist pictures...I sat in the Dome Café, smoked Gauloise cigarettes and came up with these ideas, with most of it coming from memory,” Saul explained. “I never paid any attention to what was going on in New York. I had a fear of flying due to just missing going on a plane that crashed in 1956—the first mid-air collision.”<sup>i</sup> *Ice Box #3* materializes the artist’s words in a kind of outlandish self-portrait, depicting a figure afflicted by the arms of a plane and a box of cigarettes in the center of the composition.

### A Selection of Saul’s Ice Box Paintings in Notable Collections



*Ice Box #4*, 1961. Museum Boijmans Van Beuningen, Rotterdam, Artwork: © 2021 Peter Saul / Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York

## A Selection of Saul's Ice Box Paintings in Notable Collections



*Ice Box #5*, 1961. Collection of the Artist, Artwork: © 2021 Peter Saul / Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York

## A Selection of Saul's Ice Box Paintings in Notable Collections



*Ice Box #8*, 1963. Hall Art Foundation, Reading, Vermont, Artwork: © 2021 Peter Saul / Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York

### A Selection of Saul's Ice Box Paintings in Notable Collections



*Ice Box #9*, 1963. Museum of Modern Art, New York, Image: © The Museum of Modern Art/Licensed by SCALA / Art Resource, NY, Artwork: © 2021 Peter Saul / Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York

*"I liked the icebox best because the door could open and stuff could fall out."* —Peter Saul

From dense abstract masses to sweeping strokes, rough outlines to drips and splatters, the present work is a virtuosic manifestation of the artist's early intuitive exploration of his painterly language. As Norman L. Kleeblatt explained, "The painting *Ice Box #3* uses an array of popular imagery that is radically different in its freewheeling stream-of-consciousness arrangement from the more precise and premeditated compositions of Pop Art. Cartoon imagery and old-fashioned advertisements are juxtaposed in odd combinations. Saul even deployed representations of drips based on the intellectual memory of action rather than on the actual result of painterly process."<sup>ii</sup> At once visceral and cerebral, his style was as transgressive as his imagery, his conscious application of the blood drops from the axe in direct contrast to the trickles of paint bleeding down the canvas.



[left] Olive Oyl with a can of spinach, from the American cartoon *Popeye the Sailor Man* [right] Willem de Kooning, *Composition*, 1955. The Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York, Image: The Solomon R. Guggenheim Foundation / Art Resource, NY, Artwork: © 2021 The Willem de Kooning Foundation / Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York

*"Saul's Ice Box series treats the titular appliance as a container of consciousness: it is by turns a stage for character actors, an erotic setting, and nearly always, like Bacon's linear cubes, a frame and a prison, standing in for modernity as a whole."* —Dan Nadel

Slaying open the point of departure for Saul's widely acclaimed oeuvre, *Ice Box #3* also captures the deep influence of Francis Bacon's work on the artist's sensibility. In his words, "All my work,

1961-72, can be professionally seen as the artistic contribution that should, and did come after + stem from Francis Bacon.”<sup>iii</sup> Indeed, Saul’s *Ice Box* paintings lie more in the vein of Bacon’s psychologically charged compositions than, for example, Warhol’s *Icebox*, in its social commentary and allusions—here, conjuring the Irish artist even further in the screaming figure.



[left] Francis Bacon, *Painting*, 1946. Museum of Modern Art, New York, Artwork: © The Estate of Francis Bacon. All rights reserved. / DACS, London / ARS, NY 2021 [right] Andy Warhol, *Icebox*, 1961. The Menil Collection, Houston, Artwork: © 2021 The Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts, Inc. / Licensed by Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York

Coalescing the technical tenets of Abstract Expressionism with the absurdist sensibility of Surrealism and the anticipation of Pop Art into a single composition, *Ice Box #3* showcases an ambitious display of Saul’s maverick practice. As Saul once conveyed to Robert Storr, “I think I’ll paint anything that will help my pictures to be interesting, powerful, romantic, shocking, thrilling—all that stuff.”<sup>iv</sup> It is perhaps these qualities among others that so appeal to the artist KAWS, an avid collector of Saul’s work. “I have Sauls everywhere,” he claimed.<sup>v</sup> “Peter has elbowed out his own place in the contemporary-art world. He’s never been an artist you could put a

label on or add to a group. He’s created his own lane on the highway, and he’s not looking back.”<sup>vi</sup>



"It's the  
intellectual dignity  
of modern art that  
upsets me, excites me  
to paint as I do"

### Collector's Digest

*"Saul's Ice Box paintings were ahead of their time and undisputedly established the artist's role as a trailblazer in the 20th century avant-garde. Their widely acclaimed stature in his oeuvre, limited quantity, and precocious character make them among the most desirable to both modern and contemporary art collectors today." —Robert Manley, Deputy Chairman and Worldwide Co-Head of 20th Century & Contemporary Art*

- *Ice Box #3* is making its auction debut on the heels of renewed institutional interest in Saul's work, marked by the artist's critically acclaimed New York retrospective, [Peter Saul: Crime and Punishment](#).

- A rare-to-market opportunity, the present work is the first work from Saul's famous *Ice Box* series to come to auction in over half a decade.
- The New York Times recently published a profile on the artist, "[Peter Saul Doesn't Want Any Advice](#)", in July 2021.

<sup>i</sup> Peter Saul, quoted in Paul Laster, "Peter Saul and the Importance of Having a Salary (An Interview)," *Conceptual Fine Arts*, April 20, 2020, [online](#).

<sup>ii</sup> Norman L. Kleeblatt, "Greenberg, Rosenberg, and Postwar American Art," in *Action/Abstraction: Pollock, de Kooning, and American Art, 1940-1976*, exh. cat., Jewish Museum, New York, 2008, p. 176.

<sup>iii</sup> Peter Saul, quoted in Dan Nadel, "Wrong Rivers and Wrong Halls," in *Peter Saul: Crime and Punishment*, exh. cat., New Museum, New York, 2020, p. 10.

<sup>iv</sup> Peter Saul, quoted in Robert Storr, "I'm a Perfectly Norman Person," in *Peter Saul*, exh. cat., Orange County Museum of Fine Art, Newport Beach, 2008, p. 51.

<sup>v</sup> Brian Donnelly (KAWS), quoted in Linda Yablonsky, "The Collections of Artists," *The New York Times*, December 5, 2013.

<sup>vi</sup> Brian Donnelly (KAWS), quoted in A.M. Homes, "Peter Saul, Curmudgeonly Father of Pop Art, Has a New Exhibit," *Vanity Fair*, October 23, 2015, [online](#).

### Provenance

Allan Frumkin Gallery, New York

Marilyn Bedford, New York (acquired from the above in September 1962)

Frumkin/Adams Gallery, New York (acquired from above in 1987)

Galerie Bonnier, Geneva (acquired from the above circa 1988-1989)

Acquired from the above by the present owner in 1999

**Exhibited**

New York, George Adams Gallery, *Peter Saul: Early Paintings and Related Drawings, 1960-1964*, January 1-31, 1998

Les Sables-d'Olonne, Musée de l'abbaye Sainte-Croix; Chateauroux, Musée de l'hôtel Bertrand; Musée des beaux-arts de Dole; Musée des beaux-arts de Mons, *Peter Saul*, June 26, 1999 - June 25, 2000, no. 5, p. 70 (illustrated)

New York, George Adams Gallery, *Attitude: Paintings, Drawings & Sculpture, 1960-1969*, December 1, 2000 - February 10, 2001

Amsterdam, Stedelijk Museum, *Eye Infection*, November 3, 2001 - January 20, 2002, p. 131 (illustrated)

New York, The Jewish Museum; Saint Louis Art Museum; Buffalo, Albright-Knox Art Gallery, *Action/Abstraction: Pollock, de Kooning and American Art, 1940-1976*, May 4, 2008 - May 31, 2009, pl. 50, pp. 176, 282 (illustrated, p. 99)

New York, George Adams Gallery at CB1-G Gallery, *Peter Saul: From Pop to Politics*, January 7 - February 18, 2017

New York, New Museum, *Peter Saul: Crime and Punishment*, February 11, 2020 - January 3, 2021, p.182 (illustrated, p. 76)

**Literature**

John Carlin and Jonathan David Fineberg, *Imagining America: Icons of 20th-Century American Art*, PBS Documentary, London, 2003 (illustrated, 1 hour, 50 minutes)

Jonathan Griffin, "Peter Saul's 'Crime and Punishment'," *Art Agenda Review*, March 31, 2020, online (installation view illustrated)

## 20th Century & Contemporary Art Evening Sale

New York Auction / 17 November 2021 / 7pm EST



PROPERTY OF A DISTINGUISHED PRIVATE COLLECTOR

27

### Jean-Michel Basquiat

*Untitled (The Door)*

signed with the artist's initials and dated "JMB '84" on the reverse

acrylic, oil and Xerox collage on wooden door

81 1/2 x 33 1/4 in. (207 x 84.5 cm)

Executed in 1984.

**Estimate**

\$6,000,000 — 8,000,000

[Go to Lot](#)





Jean-Michel Basquiat with the present work, Stockholm, 1984. Image: Stellan Holm, Artwork: © 2021 Estate of Jean-Michel Basquiat. Licensed by Artestar, New York

*Henry Geldzahler: "What is your subject matter?" Jean-Michel Basquiat: "Royalty, heroism, and the streets."*

Executed in 1984, *Untitled (The Door)* exemplifies Jean-Michel Basquiat's gestural, painterly prowess with his transcendent ability to amalgamate seemingly incoherent themes. Showcasing his distinctive iconography including the crown, textual devices, animal imagery, and popular culture references, the present work is richly infused with the artist's biographical symbolism whilst also signaling to his collaborations with Warhol from 1984 to 1985. Part painting, part sculptural object, the work's wooden support situates *Untitled (The Door)* within the year when he conceived some of his most iconic works, such as *Flexible*, Private Collection; *Gold Griot*, The Broad, Los Angeles; and *Grillo*, Fondation Louis Vuitton, Paris.



Jean-Michel Basquiat, *Grillo*, 1984. Fondation Louis Vuitton, Paris, Artwork: © 2021 Estate of Jean-Michel Basquiat. Licensed by Artestar, New York

Visually divided into three distinct sections by a triad of blue squares, the wood panel bears the illusion of a vertical triptych. The most central element in these layers—and perhaps of the artist's artistic lexicon overall—is the human figure, which Basquiat used as an iconographic device to coalesce art history, pop culture, and the Black experience. The heads float in an ambiguous space, punctuated by the oversized yellow crowns that made their first appearance in his homage to Picasso, *Red Kings*, 1981. Francesco Clemente's expression on Basquiat's crowns is wonderfully encapsulated in *Untitled (The Door)*: "Jean Michel's crown has three peaks, for his three royal lineages: the poet, the musician, the great boxing champion. Jean measured his skill against all he deemed strong, without prejudice as to their taste or age."<sup>1</sup>



[left] Jean-Michel Basquiat, *Red Kings*, 1981. Private Collection, Artwork: © 2021 Estate of Jean-Michel Basquiat. Licensed by Artstar, New York [right] Jean-Michel Basquiat, *Hollywood Africans*, 1983. Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, Image: © Whitney Museum of American Art / Licensed by Scala / Art Resource, NY, Artwork: © 2021 Estate of Jean-Michel Basquiat. Licensed by Artstar, New York

The present work is emblematic of the same vigor and immediacy that harkens back to Basquiat's years as a "street poet" in the late 1970s when he emerged behind his pseudonym SAMO. Here, streaks of electric yellow and blocks of brilliant blue sharply contrast against neutral tones of gray, creams, and browns in a dual tension—much like that of the quick-drying acrylic and slow-setting oil paint fighting the materiality of Xeroxed transparencies. Having bonded with Keith Haring and Kenny Scharf during his time at the School of Visual Arts over their interest in Xerox, Basquiat would invest in his own color Xerox machine in 1983, reflecting his fascination with modern technology and ever employing collage as an integral element in his practice.

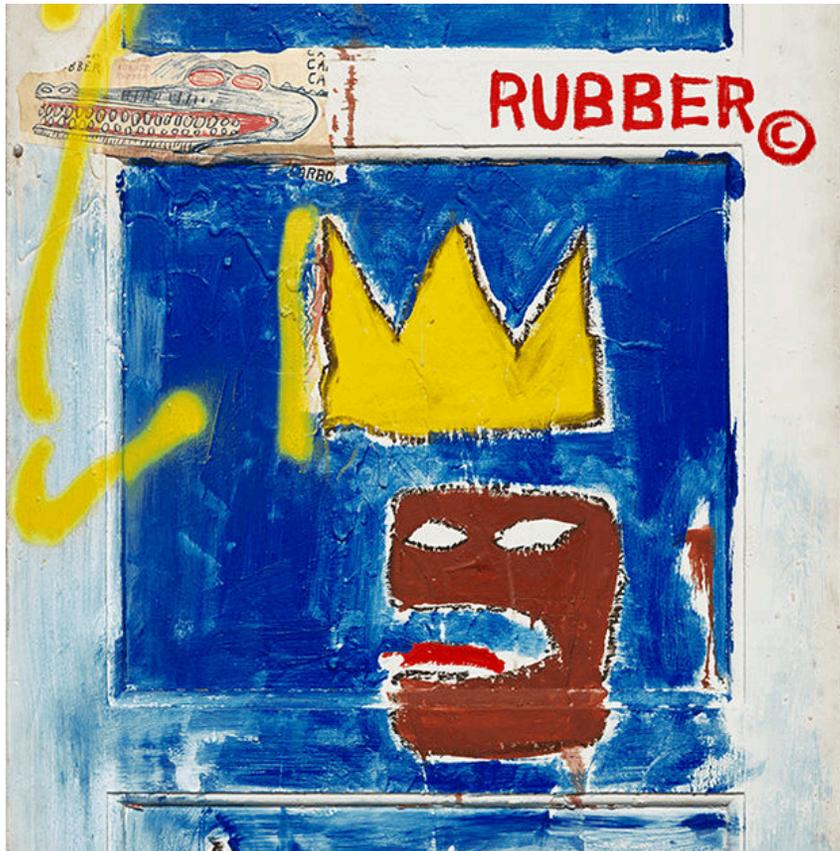
*"The black person is the protagonist in most of my paintings...I realized that I didn't see many paintings with black people in them."* —Jean-Michel Basquiat, 1985



Jean-Michel Basquiat, *Untitled*, 1984. Former Collection of David Bowie, Artwork: © 2021 Estate of Jean-Michel Basquiat. Licensed by Artstar, New York

Incorporating the trademark copyright logo from his SAMO days, Basquiat tags the words "RUBBER," "RUBBER TIRE," and "CARBON" throughout the composition with varying repetition and visibility, demonstrating his lifelong practice of collecting words from the world around him, including street signs, shop advertisements, songs, and books. Similarly seen in his *Izod* and *Untitled* of the same year, these references recur throughout the artist's works from this period alongside the crocodile motif, and "reveal Basquiat's interest in aspects of commerce—trading, selling and buying. Basquiat is scrutinizing man's seizure and monopolization of the earth's animal and material resources, and questioning why and how these resources, that are ideally owned by all of the world's inhabitants, have become objects of manipulation, power, and wealth at the





#### Provenance

Raymond and Patsy Nasher, Dallas (acquired directly from the artist in 1985; titled as *Rubber*)  
 Stellan Holm, New York  
 Private Collection  
 Phillips de Pury & Company, New York, May 13, 2010, lot 116  
 Acquired at the above sale by the present owner

#### Exhibited

New York, Gagosian Gallery, *Jean-Michel Basquiat*, February 7 - April 6, 2013, p. 206 (illustrated, p. 143; installation view of the artist with the present work, Stockholm, 1984, illustrated, p. 142)

#### Literature

Richard D. Marshall and Jean-Louis Prat, *Jean-Michel Basquiat*, vol. II, Paris, 1996, no. 3, p. 119 (illustrated, p. 118)  
 Richard D. Marshall and Jean-Louis Prat, *Jean-Michel Basquiat*, vol. II, Paris, 2000, no. 3, p. 197 (illustrated, p. 196)

<sup>i</sup> Francesco Clemente, quoted in Guggenheim Bilbao Museum, "Heroes and Saints," *Jean Michel Basquiat: Now's the Time*, 2015, press release.

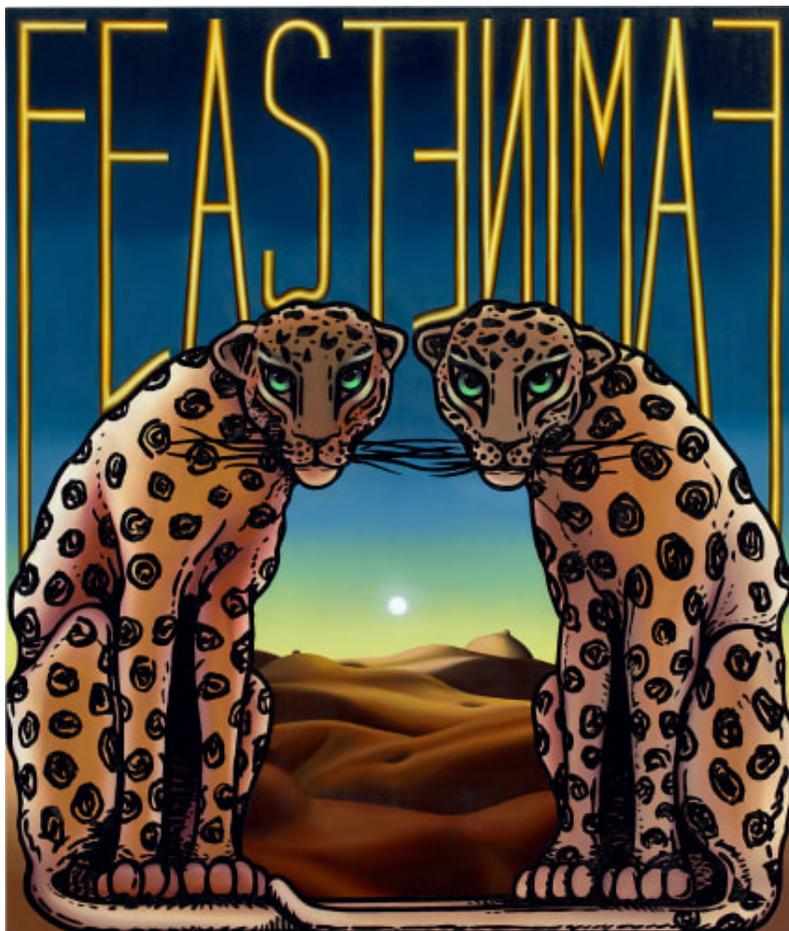
<sup>ii</sup> Richard Marshall, "Jean-Michel Basquiat and His Subjects," quoted in Enrico Navarra, *Jean-Michel Basquiat*, Paris, 2000, p. 43.

<sup>iii</sup> Jean-Michel Basquiat, quoted in, "I have to have some source material around me: Jean-Michel Basquiat interviewed by Becky Johnston and Tamra Davis, Beverly Hills, California, 1985," in *Basquiat*, exh. cat., Riehen/Basel, Fondation Beyeler, 2010, p. xxiii.

<sup>iv</sup> Richard D. Marshall, *Jean-Michel Basquiat*, exh. cat., Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, 1992, pp. 18-21.

## 20th Century & Contemporary Art Evening Sale

New York Auction / 17 November 2021 / 7pm EST



28

### Emily Mae Smith

#### *Feast and Famine*

signed and dated "Emily Mae Smith 2018" on the reverse

oil on linen

54 x 46 in. (137.2 x 116.8 cm)

Painted in 2018.

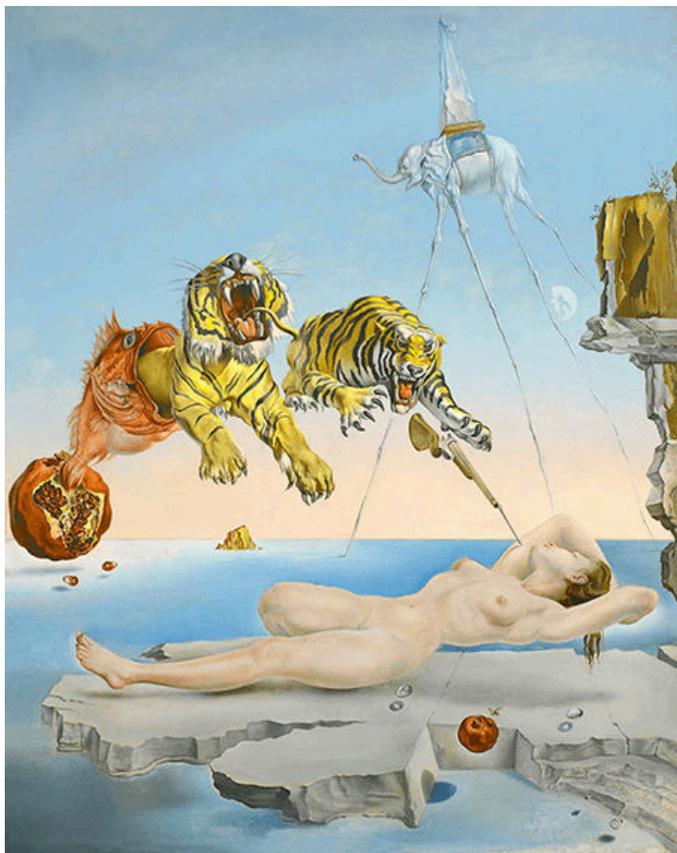
Estimate

\$200,000 — 300,000

[Go to Lot](#)



*"Her body is a feast, we consume it, we use it for everything, and her body is a famine because it contains no markers of its own self-defined meaning." —Emily Mae Smith*



Salvador Dalí, *Dream Caused by the Flight of a Bee around a Pomegranate a Second before Awakening*, 1944. Museo Thyssen-Bornemisza, Madrid, Image: Museo Nacional Thyssen-Bornemisza / Scala / Art Resource, NY, Artwork: © 2021 Salvador Dalí, Gala-Salvador Dalí Foundation / Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York

Presenting two majestic cheetahs guarding a surreal desert landscape of nude female bodies, Emily Mae Smith's singular *Feast and Famine* has become an iconic image within the artist's acclaimed oeuvre since its creation. Here, the mirrored words "FEAST" and "FAMINE" dominate

the upper half of the composition, showcasing Smith's usage of textual quips as a compositional device that are at once terse and loaded with meaning. Testifying to its formidable stature, *Feast and Famine* featured in the artist's major solo exhibition at Le Consortium Museum in Dijon from 2018 to 2019, and was positioned as the centerpiece of her titular show at the SCAD Museum of Art, Savannah from 2020 to 2021.

*"The image of the desert and the image of the body is perfect because the image of the reclining nude female body is so present everywhere in art. So there's the feast, right? But the famine is that it has nothing to do with that woman herself. She's just a kind of literal landscape on which the society or the culture is ascribing values." —Emily Mae Smith*



[left] Edgar Degas, *Steep Coast*, circa 1892. Private Collection [right] René Magritte, *La Magie Noir (Black Magic)*, 1945. Musée d'Art Moderne, Brussels, Image: Banque d'Images, ADAGP / Art Resource, NY, Artwork: © 2021 C. Herscovici / Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York

Drawing inspiration from Ingres to Magritte, Art Nouveau to Pop Art, Smith's works excavate the deeply rooted patriarchal iconographies of the Western canon, transforming them into ingenious metaphors that comment on the history of gender and sexuality in visual culture. The artist explained of the present work, "I liked the idea of these sort of lush erotic figures representing a desert because I thought there was a very strange twist there, and thinking about the kind of history of feminine agency in art and painting and in representation. Women's bodies are consistently used as vehicles for the meaning of others but never for their own meanings or own subjectivities. So that to me is a kind of literal desert, an empty place or a place that's sort of waiting for a fertile event or maybe once was fertile and has been depleted or overmined. So, this dichotomy between this feminine figure and the desert is then linguistically encapsulated by the

phrase ‘Feast and Famine.’”<sup>i</sup>

*"Context is like a frame, and I want to render frames visible, acknowledging limitations, point of view, and correcting the assumed frames of the past." —Emily Mae Smith*

The cheetahs in *Feast and Famine* present an extraordinary example of the artist’s signature framing motif—a visual and conceptual device inspired by Art Nouveau commonly seen in her oeuvre in the form of glasses, curtains, or gaping mouths. “I’m fascinated by the way artists and designers of that time use the concept of a frame or drawn some sort of framing device to contextualize what’s inside the painting or the image,” she elucidated. “I got the idea for these cat-like creatures from an Art Nouveau design that incorporated some feline figures. I like how they were sort of sphinx-like in some way, like these guardians but also sort of terrifying and mysterious.”<sup>ii</sup> Flanking the composition in the foreground, these figures safeguard the gateway to the landscape of the female body, subverting the unimpeded male gaze upon the female nude as seen throughout art history.



Fernand Khnopff, *Caress of the Sphinx*, 1896. Musée d’art Moderne, Brussels, Image: © Royal Museums of Fine Arts of Belgium/HIP/Art Resource, NY

In contrast to the realistic rendering of the supple female bodies, Smith’s overtly stylized depiction of the feline creatures makes them appear almost human, their elongated whiskers evoking a male mustache. Displayed alongside the artist’s “mustache paintings” in her show at Le Consortium (see below), the present work embodies the humorous element with which she imbues her work. At the same time, it degenderizes the trope of the sphinx—a favorite metaphor for Art Nouveau and Symbolist artists to personify the *femme fatale*—recalling the androgyny of Smith’s well-known broom characters. Revealing a strikingly original vision of the artist’s practice, *Feast and Famine* is a fresh manifestation of Smith’s words on her recurring motifs: “These are all things with slippery signification. They mean things like labor, gender, power, control, mortality, transcendence, etc.

They are forms doing the pictorial work of the intellect.”<sup>iii</sup>

## In the Artist’s Words

Video: <https://youtu.be/2nex0UnnVZw?t=699>

<sup>i</sup> Emily Mae Smith, quoted in “‘Feast and Famine’ with Emily Mae Smith and SCAD MOA’s Ben Tollefson,” SCAD Museum of Art, December 16, 2020, IGTV.

<sup>ii</sup> Ibid.

<sup>iii</sup> Emily Mae Smith, quoted in Layla Leiman, “Slippery Signification: In Conversation with Emily Mae Smith,” *ArtMaze Magazine*, October 11, 2019.

## Provenance

Contemporary Fine Arts, Berlin

Acquired from the above by the present owner in 2018

## Exhibited

Berlin, Contemporary Fine Arts, *Emily Mae Smith: Feast of Totems*, June 9 – July 14, 2018

Dijon, Le Consortium Museum, *Emily Mae Smith*, November 24, 2018 – April 14, 2019

Savannah, SCAD Museum of Art, *Emily Mae Smith: Feast and Famine*, August 20, 2020 – January 1, 2021

## Literature

Sasha Bogojev, “Looking Back on Emily Mae Smith’s ‘Feast and Famine’ @ SCAD Museum of Art,” *Juxtapoz*, January 6, 2021, online (illustrated)

## 20th Century & Contemporary Art Evening Sale

New York Auction / 17 November 2021 / 7pm EST



PROPERTY OF A DISTINGUISHED PRIVATE COLLECTOR

29 ♦

**Gerhard Richter**

*Weiß (White)*

signed, inscribed and dated "685-1 Richter 1988" on the reverse

oil on canvas

44 1/8 x 40 1/8 in. (112.1 x 101.9 cm)

Painted in 1988.

**Estimate**

\$4,000,000 — 6,000,000

[Go to Lot](#)



*"I've always been fascinated by abstraction. It's so mysterious, like an unknown land." —Gerhard Richter*

Painted in 1988, *Weiß (White)* is a lavish exemplar of Gerhard Richter's meditative engagement with abstraction within his acclaimed painterly practice. Belonging to his canonical *Abstraktes Bild* series, the present work ebbs and flows through a lushness of white, set against sharp tones of black and grey as subtle pops of pinks, blues, and greens glimmer from underneath the surface, resulting in a shimmering passage of painterly scintillation across the canvas. The colors undulate through the surface with the variance of each layer of paint, exuding an iridescent atmospheric quality through its chromatic life force and textual richness. The present work stands at the crossroads of the artist's early all-over investigations that characterized the 1980s and the more controlled chance of his single-pull squeegee technique of the early 1990s that marked the mature apex of his celebrated abstract visions. Marking this critical juncture in Richter's oeuvre, *Weiß (White)* magnificently delivers the artist's glimpse of "scenarios, surroundings or landscapes that don't exist...somewhere you can't go, something you can't touch."<sup>i</sup>



J.M.W. Turner, *Snow Storm: Steam-Boat off a Harbour's Mouth*, 1842. Tate Gallery, London, Image: © Tate, London / Art Resource, NY

Widely regarded as a significant contribution to the tradition of painting, Richter's innovative squeegee technique invites chance to his artistic process, allowing the medium to spontaneously guide his creations as the pigment shifts and spreads under the pressure of contact. He expressed, "With a brush you have control. The paint goes on the brush and you make the mark. From experience you know exactly what will happen. With the squeegee you lose control. Not all control, but some control."<sup>ii</sup> The serendipitous effect of the artist's idiosyncratic process partially removes the artist's hand from each composition as he pushes the viscous loads of paint across the work's surface, creating quasi-mechanical palimpsests of richly layered color. "Above all, it's never blind chance: it's a chance that's always planned, but also always surprising," Richter explained. "I'm often astonished to find how much better chance is than I am."<sup>iii</sup>



Gerhard Richter, *Snowscape (Blurred)*, 1966. Private Collection, Image and Artwork: © Gerhard Richter 2021 (0215)

*"In the case of the abstractions, I get vague notions of pictures that are just asking to be painted. That's how it starts, but nearly always the result is not at all what I imagined." —Gerhard Richter*

In his notes from 1974, Richter wrote, "In order to represent all shades of colour that occur in one picture I developed a system that—starting on the basis of the three primary colours and grey—proceed in stages that were always equal and made possible an ever-increasing degree in differentiation."<sup>iv</sup> Here, the intimation of a prism revealing hints of yellow, chartreuse green, red and russet brown trickles just below the layered cloaks of white, black, and grey in mesmerizing abandon. Richter's rhythm of painting gives way to an inherent movement in this lush composition, one that at once suggests the gentle ripples of water and the haze of a snowstorm.



Mark Rothko, *Untitled*, 1969. Collection Christopher Rothko, Image: Art Resource, NY, Artwork: 1998 © Kate Rothko Prizel & Christopher Rothko / Artists Rights Society (ARS), NY

From his early color and Old Master-inspired paintings to his later portraits and the still ongoing *Abstraktes Bild* series, Richter's key concern throughout the vast oeuvre of his 60-year career has lied in reconciling representation in painting and perception of the mind's eye. For Richter, figuration and abstraction derive from the same set of guiding principles. "The Abstract Pictures are no less arbitrary than all object-bound representations (based on any old motif, which is supposed to turn into a picture)," he explained. "The only difference is that in these the 'motif' evolves only during the process of painting."<sup>v</sup> Rising to the surface only through the process of the work's creation, the alluded subject matter in *Weiß (White)* refracts color and perception in its symbiotic interplay between darkness and light, absence and presence, ultimately capturing

Richter's famous conviction: "Painting is the making of an analogy for something nonvisual and incomprehensible: giving it form and bringing it within reach."<sup>vi</sup>



<sup>i</sup> Gerhard Richter, quoted in *Gerhard Richter: Panorama*, exh. cat., Tate, London, 2011, p. 19.

<sup>ii</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 27.

<sup>iii</sup> Gerhard Richter, quoted in Hans Ulrich Obrist, ed., *Gerhard Richter: The Daily Practice of Paintings. Writings and Interviews 1962-1993*, London, 1995, p. 159.

<sup>iv</sup> Gerhard Richter, quoted in "Gerhard Richter: Notes 1966-1990", in *Gerhard Richter*, exh. cat., Tate, London, 1991, p. 111.

<sup>v</sup> Gerhard Richter, quoted in Hans-Ulrich Obrist, ed., *Gerhard Richter: The Daily Practice of Paintings. Writings and Interviews 1962-1993*, London, 1995, p. 123.

<sup>vi</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 99.

#### Provenance

Marian Goodman Gallery, New York  
Private Collection, Florida  
Phillips, London, October 16, 2013, lot 10  
Acquired at the above sale by the present owner

#### Exhibited

Rotterdam, Museum Boymans-van Beuningen, *Gerhard Richter 1988/89*, October 15 – December 3, 1989, n.p. (illustrated, n.p.)  
New York, Marian Goodman Gallery, *Gerhard Richter: New Paintings*, February 2-24, 1990

#### Literature

*Gerhard Richter: Werkübersicht / Catalogue Raisonné 1962 – 1993, vol. III*, exh. cat., Kunst und Ausstellungshalle der Bundesrepublik Deutschland, Bonn, 1993, no. 685-1, p. 186 (illustrated, n.p.)  
Dietmar Elger, ed., *Gerhard Richter: Catalogue Raisonné 1988-1994, vol. 4 (Nos. 652-1 – 805-6)*, Ostfildern, 2015, no. 685-1, p. 196 (illustrated)

## 20th Century & Contemporary Art Evening Sale

New York Auction / 17 November 2021 / 7pm EST



PROPERTY OF A SCANDINAVIAN COLLECTOR

30 ♦

### Robert Ryman

*Series #25 (White)*

signed, titled and dated "Ryman 04 "SERIES #25"  
(WHITE)" on the overlap  
oil and gesso on canvas  
18 x 18 in. (45.7 x 45.7 cm)  
Executed in 2004.

This work will be included in the forthcoming  
catalogue raisonné being organized by David Gray  
under number 2004.025.

#### Estimate

\$1,000,000 — 1,500,000

[Go to Lot](#)



*"It is important that painting always be new for me." —Robert Ryman, 2004*

In 2004, Robert Ryman shockingly declared that he had painted his first "white paintings." This came as a surprise to most, as the artist had been known to paint in almost exclusively white pigments for the prior five decades. Upon further explanation, Ryman clarified that his previous paintings were executed in the most neutral palette he could envision, which just so happened to be white. His paintings from 2004, as the present example, marked his deliberate choice of white as his very subject matter.



James Abbott McNeill Whistler, *Arrangement in Grey and Black No. 1*, 1871. Musée d'Orsay, Paris

*Series #25 (White)* belongs to a discreet body of 33 square "white paintings" executed between 2003-2005, marked by their distinctive titling *Series # (White)*. The series is further differentiated from the artist's earlier work by the dark primed surface, to which white paint was systematically

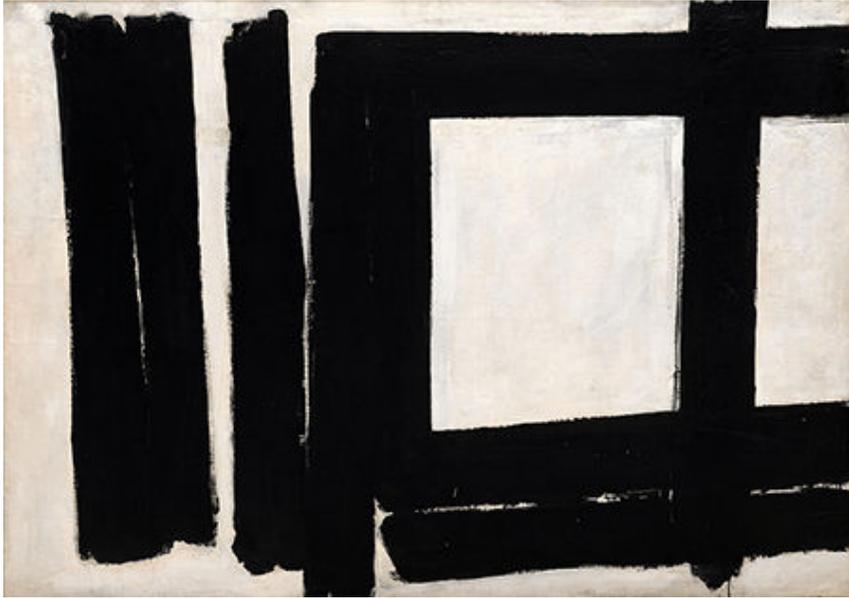
applied in four different "shades" of the color. In the present work, Ryman applied a thinner, atmospheric wash of white paint to the left of the composition, inviting the darker ground to seductively peek through the surface. At center, a mass of explosive brushwork ranging from opaque to slightly translucent extends across the canvas, engendering an amorphous form that bursts from the canvas. Here, the artist works the paint deeply into the ground, revealing the push and pull of his brush that at once suggests spatial recession and chromatic illumination. The sharp contrast between dark and light causes a sensorial reverberation across the canvas that pulsates with energy before the viewer's eyes.



Yayoi Kusama, *No. F.*, 1959. Museum of Modern Art, New York, Image: © The Museum of Modern Art / Licensed by SCALA / Art Resource, NY, Artwork: © 2021 Yayoi Kusama

With the "white paintings," Ryman situates himself amongst a lineage of artists who have pushed the boundaries of painterly limits in black-and-white. Ryman's *Series #25 (White)* particularly recalls Franz Kline's *Painting No. 7*, 1952 at the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York, which fuses gestural velocity with structural elegance to energize the most elementary of chromatic pairings. His "white paintings" further echo Yayoi Kusama's famed *Infinity Nets* series,

which too reveal an obsession with color, repetition, and form.



Franz Kline, *Painting No. 7*, 1952. Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York, Artwork: © 2021 The Franz Kline Estate / Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York

By declaring the color white as the subject of his painting, Ryman invites viewers to contemplate whether *Series #25 (White)* is abstract or figurative. The white form which hovers above the dark ground is both purely illusionistic and perhaps allegoric of things seen in reality. Occupying the liminal space between the abstract and referential, Ryman's *Series #25 (White)* embodies the new era in the artist's oeuvre that drew from his past and simultaneously launched him on a novel path.

#### Provenance

PaceWildenstein, New York

Private Collection (acquired from the above in 2004)

Pace Gallery, New York

Acquired from the above by the present owner

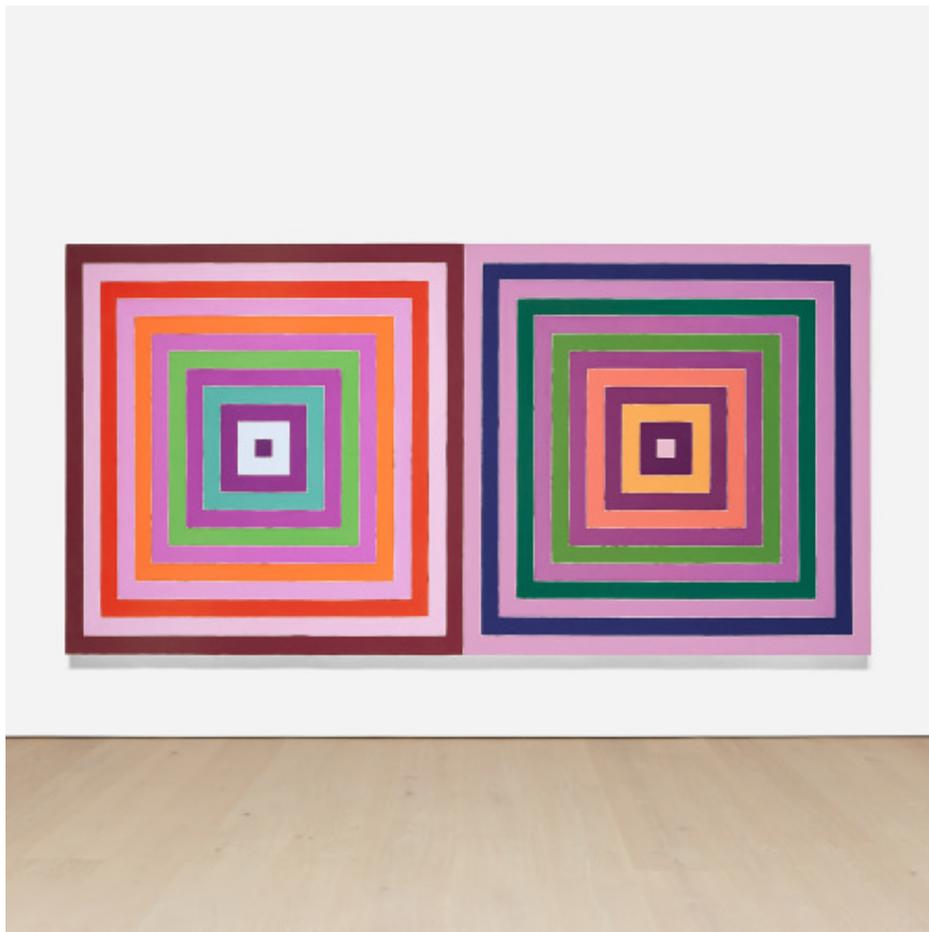
#### Exhibited

New York, PaceWildenstein, *Robert Ryman*, November 19, 2004 - January 8, 2005, p. 53 (illustrated, pp. 18, 19)

New York, Richard L. Feigen & Co., *Sublime Convergence: Gothic to the Abstract*, May - June 15, 2007, n.p. (illustrated)

## 20th Century & Contemporary Art Evening Sale

New York Auction / 17 November 2021 / 7pm EST



PROPERTY OF AN AMERICAN COLLECTOR

31 ♦

### Frank Stella

#### *Double Concentric Square*

signed and dated "F. Stella 78" on the overlap

acrylic on canvas

81 x 161 in. (205.7 x 408.9 cm)

Painted in 1978.

#### Estimate

\$1,500,000 — 2,500,000

[Go to Lot](#)



*"The concentric square format is about as neutral and as simple as you can get. It's just a powerful pictorial image. It's so good that you can use it, abuse it, and even work against it to the point of ignoring it. It has a strength that's almost indestructible." —Frank Stella*

Offering dueling matrices of scintillating color on an exceptionally large scale, Frank Stella's *Double Concentric Square* is a mesmeric iteration of the artist's relentless investigation on the power of formalism. Immersing the viewer into pulsating striations radiating with chromatic vibrance, this mature exemplar captures Stella's continued exploration with the symbol of the square that played a pivotal role in the development of his practice. Here, the artist presents a manifestation of his longstanding interest in the relationship between color, form, and perception, as the saturated bands reverberate with illusionistic depth that belies their austere flatness.



Helen Frankenthaler, *Mauve District*, 1966. Museum of Modern Art, New York, Image: © The Museum of Modern Art/Licensed by SCALA / Art Resource, NY, Artwork: © 2021 Helen Frankenthaler Foundation, Inc. / Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York

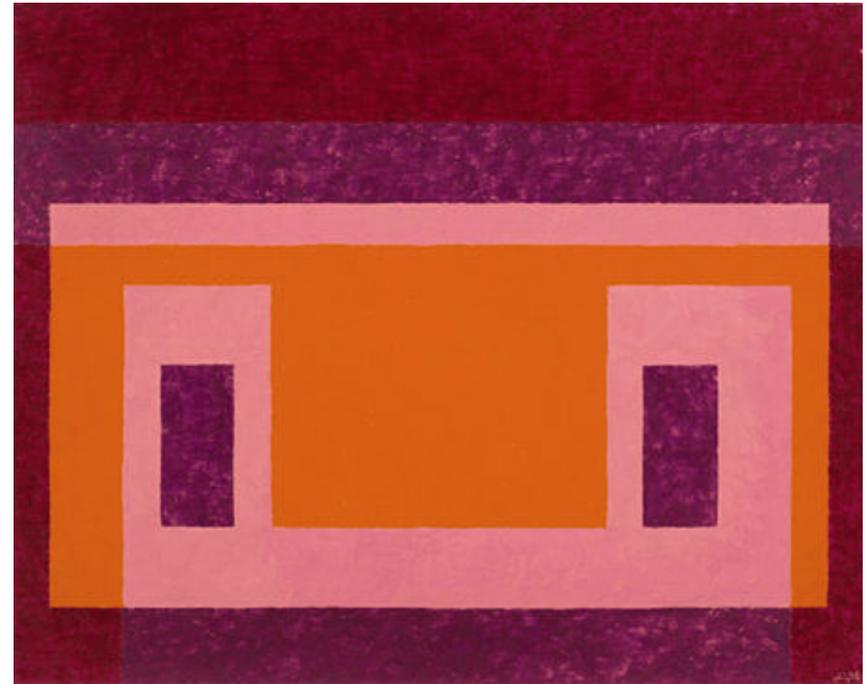
Following the success of his early *Black Paintings* in the late 1950s, in 1962, Stella turned his attention to a subject that would prove to be an essential touchstone for the rest of his career: the square. Despite the form's seeming directness, Stella found infinite visual possibilities in its prismatic clarity, repeatedly rendering new permutations of concentric squares each unique by their varying colored bands. Despite a hiatus from his *Concentric Squares*, Stella's triumphant return to the series in the mid-1970s reflected the square form as the foundation of his ultimate investigations between the two-dimensional picture plane and its three-dimensional support. As William Rubin observed, "The *Concentric Squares* could be said to have been already used by Stella

for over a decade as a kind of standard, or a qualitative ‘scale,’ by which to measure the necessity of using more complicated shapes, configurations, or color arrangements.”<sup>i</sup>

The arresting simplicity of Stella’s *Concentric Squares* betrays the artist’s deeply intellectual and systematic approach to their creation. Planning each composition in advance with meticulous detail, Stella would plot the form on graph paper, testing variable color combinations to determine the chromatic scheme. Taking paint directly from the tube, he would then painstakingly transpose the image onto canvas with monastic focus and precision, ensuring the crisp symmetry and linear regularity of the composition as well as the faintly feathered edges between the various layers of the colored bands that altogether suggest the hypnotic optical vibrations exuding from the canvas.

*“The Concentric Squares created a pretty high, pretty tough pictorial standard. Their simple, rather humbling effect—almost a numbing power—became a sort of “control” against which my increasing tendency in the seventies to be extravagant could be measured.” —Frank Stella*

As exemplified by the present work, Stella’s *Concentric Squares* of the 1970s was notably marked by their significantly larger scale, thinner strips of unpainted canvas between the colored bands, and reinvigorated palette of more complex color combinations. In *Double Concentric Square*, Stella alternates the rich palette between bands of mauve, lilac, plum, and violet, interspersing contrasting primary colors between them as the matrix recedes into the center. The Janus-faced nature of the work juxtaposes the simultaneous formal cohesion and discordant color combinations of the two sides with each other, creating a dynamic tension within the painting that oscillates between the left and right halves, foreground and background, two- and three- dimensions, before the viewer’s eyes.



Josef Albers, *Red, Violet around Orange, Pink*, 1948. Josef & Anni Albers Foundation, Artwork: © 2021 The Josef and Anni Albers Foundation / Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York

*“Frank Stella is not interested in expression or sensitivity. He is interested in the necessities of painting.” —Carl Andre*

Stella’s engagement with ostensibly straightforward geometries is among the most radical of his peers. Whereas Malevich strove for absolute form by situating shapes in infinite voids, and Albers sought to establish a taxonomy of chromatic harmony, Stella concerns himself only with the fundamentals of painting: color, line, and balance. As the present work powerfully manifests, this enduring exploration and the elemental simplicity of his endeavor have cemented his status as one of the most stalwart and innovative artists of the 20th century. Famously remarking on his work in an interview with Donald Judd and Bruce Glaser, Stella explained in his characteristic laconic wit, “My painting is based on the fact that only what can be seen there is there...All I want anyone to get out of my paintings, and all I ever get out of them, is the fact that you can see the whole idea without any confusion...What you see is what you see.”<sup>ii</sup>

## Cut from the Archives

Video: [https://youtu.be/cN\\_rCfRdmQ](https://youtu.be/cN_rCfRdmQ)

<sup>i</sup> William Rubin, *Frank Stella, 1970-1987*, exh. cat., Museum of Modern Art, New York, 1987, p. 43.

<sup>ii</sup> Frank Stella, quoted in Bruce Glaser, "Questions to Stella and Judd," *ARTnews*, September 1966, [online](#).

---

## Provenance

Private Collection, Tokyo

Sotheby's, New York, October 31, 1984, lot 63

Camille and Paul Oliver-Hoffmann, Chicago (acquired at the above sale)

Sotheby's, New York, November 19, 1997, lot 61

Acquired at the above sale by the present owner

## Exhibited

New York, Yares Art, *Larry Poons / Frank Stella: As It Was, As It Is*, March 20 - September 10, 2021

## 20th Century & Contemporary Art Evening Sale

New York Auction / 17 November 2021 / 7pm EST



PROPERTY FROM A PRIVATE AMERICAN  
COLLECTION

32

### **Carmen Herrera**

*Amarillo y Negro*

signed, titled and dated "'amarillo y negro." Carmen  
Herrera -2010-" on the overlap

acrylic on canvas

36 x 72 in. (91.4 x 182.9 cm)

Painted in 2010.

#### **Estimate**

\$500,000 — 700,000

[Go to Lot](#)



*"I like yellow and I like lines...[and] for me, black is all the colors somehow. The other colors are like a decoration." —Carmen Herrera*



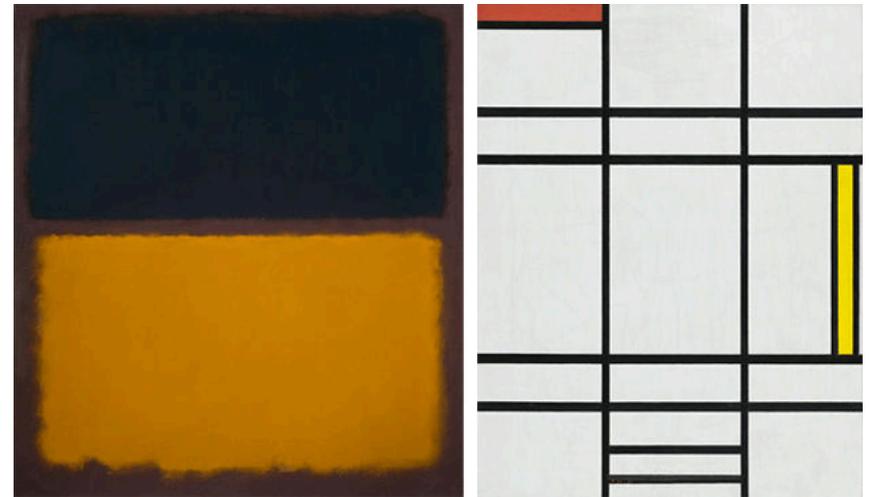
The artist with the present work. Image: Stefan Ruiz © Telegraph Media Group Limited 2021, Artwork: © Carmen Herrera

A stunning mature work hailing from Carmen Herrera's renowned oeuvre of geometric, minimalist paintings, *Amarillo y Negro* is an exemplary culmination of the artist's lifelong path to perfecting her singular vision of hard-edge abstraction. Spanning six feet in length, the present work depicts a large, yellow form cutting through the center of the composition. Set against an expanse of pitch-black darkness, the razor-sharp zigzag at once appears fixed and floating in space, enveloping the viewer in a pulsing oscillation between figure and ground, color and line.

*"The initial point of departure in my work is a process of organization that follows*

*the dictates of reason...It is a process that must choose, among innumerable possibilities, the one that balances reason and visual execution." —Carmen Herrera*

Herrera's rigorous practice of hard-edge abstraction developed between New York and Paris during the pinnacle of the 20<sup>th</sup> century European and American avant-garde. Herrera moved to New York with her husband in 1939 and enrolled in the Art Students League, where she closely befriended Barnett Newman and Leon Polk Smith. Herrera recalled, "We spoke about the nature of abstraction, its very essence. Barney felt strongly that abstraction needed a mythological or religious basis; I, on the other hand, wanted something clearer, less romantic and dark."<sup>1</sup>



[left] Mark Rothko, *No. 18 (Black, Orange on Maroon)*, 1963. Artwork: © 1998 Kate Rothko Prizel & Christopher Rothko / Artists Rights Society (ARS), Courtesy of The Mark Rothko Foundation [right] Piet Mondrian, *Composition in White, Red, and Yellow*, 1936. Los Angeles County Museum of Art, Image: © Los Angeles County Museum of Art, Mr. and Mrs. William Preston Harrison Collection (63.14)

This empirical sensibility carried through to her time in Paris from 1948 to 1953, when she began exhibiting alongside artists including Piet Mondrian, Theo van Doesburg, and Josef Albers at the Salon des Réalités Nouvelles. Gravitating towards a more constructivist vocabulary, Herrera gradually stripped her paintings down to the essentials of geometry and color over the following decades, resulting in the formidable precision and arresting simplicity mastered in *Amarillo y Negro*.

*"Color is the essence of my painting. What starts to happen to it as you reduce its numbers and come down to two colors, then there is a subtlety, an intensity in the way two colors relate to each other." —Carmen Herrera*

Despite facing the prevalence of Abstract Expressionism upon her return to New York in 1954, Herrera was resolute in refining her minimalist and rational aesthetic, working in relative isolation as an immigrant, female artist in a male-dominated art scene. As she continued to hone the structural and spatial articulations between simplified shapes and color, her investigations bloomed onto a monumental scale, allowing her the space to dissolve the distinction between color and form by *making* color her form.



Clyfford Still, *1957-D No. 1*, 1957. Albright-Knox Art Gallery, Buffalo, Image: Albright-Knox Art Gallery / Art Resource, NY, Artwork: © City and County of Denver / Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York

Here, the sharp angles of the yellow block meet the black field in a perfect lock-in-key fit, their interlocking planes and chromatic intensity generating a sensorial Op-Art effect that belies the flatness of the composition. This visual tension stretches the field of vision in both the second and third dimensions, the two colors suggestively expanding beyond the edges of the canvas laterally whilst projecting back and forth into the viewer's space in an illusionistic dance. "There is nothing I

love more than to make a straight line. How can I explain it? It's the beginning of all structures, really," Herrera elucidates.<sup>ii</sup> "My quest is for the simplest of pictorial resolutions."<sup>iii</sup>

### Collector's Digest

- The acclaimed 2015 documentary, *The 100 Years Show*, played a major role in reinvigorating interest in the artist's work, which culminated in the artist's seminal Whitney retrospective, [Carmen Herrera: Lines of Sight](#), from 2016-2017.
- Since her wide-spread institutional recognition, Herrera has had a number of public installations, including a major outdoor exhibition at New York's City Hall Park organized by the Public Art Fund in 2019. Her works reside in numerous major museum collections, such as the Museum of Modern Art, New York, Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, the Smithsonian American Art Museum, Washington, D.C., the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, and Tate, London.
- To date, Phillips has achieved 4 out of the artist's top 5 records.

<sup>i</sup> Carmen Herrera, quoted in Alejandro Anreus, "Carmen Herrera in the Context of Modern Painting in Cuba," *Carmen Herrera: The Black and White Paintings*, exh. cat., El Museo del Barrio, New York, 1998, p. 18.

<sup>ii</sup> Carmen Herrera, quoted in Helena De Bertodano, "Carmen Herrera: 'Is It a Dream?'" *The Telegraph*, December 20, 2010, [online](#).

<sup>iii</sup> Carmen Herrera, quoted in Estrellita B. Brodsky, "Ascetic Equation," in Dorothy Feaver, ed., *Carmen Herrera: Works on Paper, 2010-2012*, exh. cat., Lisson Gallery, New York, 2013, p. 7.

### Provenance

Lisson Gallery, London

Private Collection

Acquired from the above by the present owner

### Exhibited

London, Lisson Gallery, *Carmen Herrera*, February 1 - March 3, 2012

**Literature**

Helena de Bertodano, "Carmen Herrera: Is It A Dream?," *The Telegraph*, December 20, 2010, online (the artist with the present work in vertical orientation, artist's studio, illustrated)

Barry Schwabsky, *Vitamin P2: New Perspectives in Painting*, London, 2011, no. 3, p. 131 (illustrated; erroneously titled and dated *Morning*, 2009)

## 20th Century & Contemporary Art Evening Sale

New York Auction / 17 November 2021 / 7pm EST



PROPERTY FROM AN ESTEEMED PRIVATE  
COLLECTION

33

**Andy Warhol**

*The Last Supper/Be a Somebody with a Body*

acrylic and silkscreen ink on canvas  
118 1/8 x 231 1/8 in. (300 x 587.1 cm)  
Executed in 1986.

Estimate

\$6,000,000 — 8,000,000

[Go to Lot](#)



Executed in 1986, *The Last Supper/Be a Somebody with a Body* is a magnum opus of Andy Warhol's continued investigations on his final and most comprehensive series that ultimately coalesces his lifelong concerns with the human body and the pursuit of beauty. Initially conceived in 1984 as a commission for the gallerist Alexandre Iolas, the *Last Supper* series traces Warhol's transformation of Leonardo Da Vinci's masterpiece, *The Last Supper* at the rectory of the Santa Maria Stella Grazie in Milan, into reflections of his own vernacular through appropriation, repetition, and seriality. Juxtaposing the figure of Christ with the image of a bodybuilder frequently rendered in his oeuvre, the present work "crowns the series of this title," as expressed by Jane Dillenberger, by exemplifying a striking extension of Warhol's epic series whilst self-referencing his own imagery with dual impact.<sup>i</sup>



The present work installed at *Andy Warhol: The Last Supper*, Ayn Foundation, Marfa, September 2005 – May 2021. Artwork: © 2021 The Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts, Inc. / Licensed by Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York

Reimagining da Vinci was not a new endeavor for Warhol. Having riffed off the Italian master's *Mona Lisa* in the 1960s, he had more recently returned to Leonardo in that same year with his series of *Details in Renaissance Paintings*. Exceeding the demands of Iolas' commission—which entailed 22 paintings displayed at his January 1984 exhibition in Milan—Warhol would continue to engage with the subject through the end of his life. Producing over 100 variations on the theme within the span of just two years, Warhol would ultimately create the largest series of religious-

themed works with *The Last Supper*, not just within his own oeuvre, but for any artist in the United States.



[left] Andy Warhol, *Colored Mona Lisa*, 1963. Private Collection, Artwork: © 2021 The Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts, Inc. / Licensed by Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York [right] Andy Warhol's studio, 1987. Image: Evelyn Hofer/Getty Images, Artwork: © 2021 The Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts, Inc. / Licensed by Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York

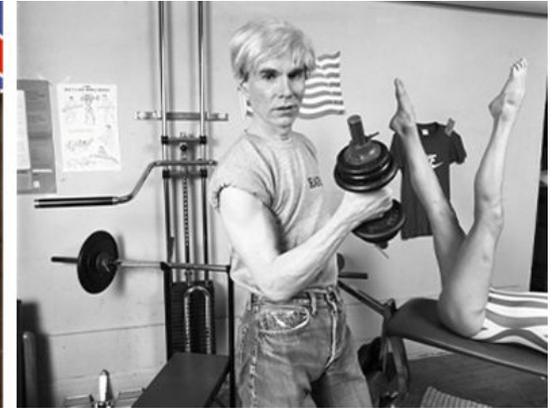
Enraptured with his new subject, Warhol executed two series based on two distinct sources. The first was a series of silkscreens derived from a 19th century reproduction of the da Vinci which comprise works such as *Sixty Last Suppers* and *The Last Supper (Pink)* (Andy Warhol Museum, Pittsburgh), as well as *The Camouflage Last Supper* (Menil Collection, Houston). The second series encompasses hand-painted works molded after a line drawing, including *The Last Supper* (Museum of Modern Art, New York), *The Last Supper / Be Somebody with a Body* (Andy Warhol Museum, Pittsburgh), and the present work.



Andy Warhol, *The Last Supper / Be Somebody with a Body* (detail), Andy Warhol Museum, Pittsburgh, Image: The Andy Warhol Museum, Pittsburgh; Contribution The Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts, Inc., Artwork: © 2021 Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts, Inc. / Licensed by Artists Rights Society, New York

In *The Last Supper/Be a Somebody with a Body*, Warhol homes in on the protagonist as seen in Leonardo's original, thereby obscuring the scene wherein Christ is offering the bread—his flesh—in the Eucharist. Here, Warhol himself offers the flesh instead by compositionally cropping out Christ's bread of life and juxtaposing the image of the brawny bodybuilder in its place. Dillenberger observes of the present work, "In this large painting the two images are adjacent to each other, enlarging the meanings of both. The Christ, large in size and physicality, seems to reach with his left hand toward the young man linking the Christ with the smiling young man whose head is haloed. The black contours of Christ are inscribed against a phosphorescent white background which contrasts dramatically with the dark zone surrounding the bodybuilder. The luminosity of his body and the encompassing white radiance about his head show him transfigured and haloed."<sup>ii</sup>

*"Went to Martin Poll's apartment on Park Avenue for his party for Sylvester Stallone and Brigitte Nielsen...Stallone used my kind of lines on me...And for a present I gave Stallone one of those paintings, Be a Somebody with a Body, and he liked it a lot."* —Andy Warhol, February 14, 1986



[left] Muscle Training magazine, July 1979. The Andy Warhol Museum, Pittsburgh, Contribution The Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts, Inc. [right] Warhol working out with Soho Training Center owner Lidija Cengic at the Factory, 860 Broadway, June 18, 1982. Image: © Christopher Makos

The latter half of the work's title references Warhol's familiar, stand-alone compositions of the bodybuilder, often believed to represent the famous actor Sylvester Stallone, likely due to his well-known series of the famous actor at the turn of the 1980s. Ultimately, the artist's bodybuilder began as an adaptation of an advertisement on the back of a muscle magazine. Since the beginnings of his career, Warhol perpetually reflected his perpetual fascination with presentation, appearances, and beauty through his explorative treatments of the human body. "[Warhol's] connection to Pop art starts with the body," Jessica Beck explained.<sup>iii</sup> "With the bodybuilder, there's a trying on of masculinity or a performing masculinity that comes out. It's an extreme exaggeration of an ideal."<sup>v</sup>

*"I really feel the body is so beautiful...beauty is sort of beauty to different people. And my kind of beauty might be different from your kind of beauty."* —Andy Warhol



[left] Warhol, *Before and After, 4*, 1962. Whitney Museum of Art, New York, Artwork: © 2021 The Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts, Inc. / Licensed by Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York [right] Warhol, *Portrait of Jean-Michel as David*, 1984. Private Collection, Artwork: © 2021 The Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts, Inc. / Licensed by Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York

Warhol's romanticized rendering of the muscular young body oscillates between irony and desire, reality and representation, interiority and exteriority. Here, the artist colligates this reflexive relationship across the canvas with the image of Christ, the two figures in a dialectical opposition with conceptual and visual force—religious and secular, black and white. In true Warholian fashion, *The Last Supper/Be a Somebody with a Body* presents a most spectacular manifestation of the artist's words: "Pop is just taking the outside and putting it on the inside or taking the inside and putting it on the outside."<sup>v</sup>

<sup>i</sup> Jane Dagget Dillenberger, *The Religious Art of Andy Warhol*, New York, 1998, p. 87.

<sup>ii</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 88.

<sup>iii</sup> Jessica Beck, quoted in Cristina Rouvalis, "My Perfect, Imperfect Body," *Carnegie Magazine*, Fall 2016.

<sup>iv</sup> Jessica Beck, quoted in Emily Colucci, "Be Somebody With A Body: Curator Jessica Beck on *Andy Warhol: My Perfect Body*," *Art F City*, October 27, 2016.

<sup>v</sup> Andy Warhol, quoted in Kenneth Goldman, ed., *I'll Be Your Mirror: The Selected Andy Warhol Interviews*, New York, 2009, p. 90.

#### Provenance

The Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts, New York  
The Brant Foundation, Greenwich  
Acquired from the above by the present owner

#### Exhibited

New York, Ayn Foundation, 1995-1998  
Munich, Bayerischen Staatsgemäldesammlungen/Staatsgalerie moderner Kunst, *Andy Warhol, The Last Supper*, May 27 – September 27, 1998, no. 13, pp. 70, 143 (illustrated, p. 71 and on the front cover)  
New York, The Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum SoHo, *Andy Warhol, The Last Supper*, June 24, 1999 – May 2001  
Marfa, Ayn Foundation, *Andy Warhol: The Last Supper*, September 2005 – May 2021

#### Literature

Jane Dagget Dillenberger, *The Religious Art of Andy Warhol*, New York, 1998, fig. 61, pp. 87, 128 (installation view illustrated, p. 88; titled as *Be Somebody With a Body (With Christ of Last Supper)*)



34

**Christopher Wool**

*Blue Fool*

signed, titled, dedicated and dated "BLUE FOOL FOR GLEN WOOL 1990" on the reverse

enamel on aluminum  
12 x 7 7/8 in. (30.5 x 20 cm)

Executed in 1990.

**Estimate**

\$800,000 — 1,200,000

[Go to Lot](#)



*"With their velvety white grounds and stylized letters rendered in dense, sign painter's enamel that pooled and dripped within the stencils, the word paintings have a resolute material presence that transcends the graphic." —Katherine Brinson*

Formerly a gift from the artist to the late famed writer Glenn O'Brien, *Blue Fool* is a singular example of Christopher Wool's highly coveted body of Word paintings created between 1987 and 1992. Executed in 1990, the present work depicts one of the artist's signature slogans in an intimately sized composition. Encapsulating Wool's masterful ability to coalesce the language of graffiti with the concerns of conceptual art, *Blue Fool* oscillates between textuality and visuality to exemplify the deeper, complex modes of communication, representation, and meaning that dominate the core of the artist's renowned practice.



Bruce Nauman, *None Sing Neon Sign*, 1970. The Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York, Image: The Solomon R. Guggenheim Foundation / Art Resource, NY, Artwork: © 2021 Bruce Nauman / Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York

codes in their imagery to engage semiotics through compositional presentation, from René Magritte and Marcel Duchamp to his contemporaries including Ed Ruscha, Barbara Kruger, and Jenny Holzer. Reflecting Wool's emergence against the backdrop of the 1980s New York art scene, the present work embodies how amidst the Conceptualists' use of language, "Wool made it new," as Peter Schjeldahl observed. "He merged the anonymous aggression of graffiti with the stateliness of formal abstract painting."<sup>i</sup> *Blue Fool* perfectly encapsulates this painterly quality about Wool's signature style, as the enamel oozes beyond the precise borders of the stenciled letters.

Wool, like his contemporary Jean-Michel Basquiat, drew inspiration from New York's graffitied streets. One of the earlier advocates and collectors of the artist's work, Glenn O'Brien—an icon of New York's cultural fabric in the 1970s and 1980s who frequently collaborated with Andy Warhol, Madonna, Basquiat, and Wool, among other critical figures—articulated this comparison. "Jean-Michel Basquiat loved the do-it-yourself bilingual bricolage esthetic of Alphabet City, the district of improvisational bootstrap enterprise. Wool, another far-Eastsider, has a similar romance with fringe New York, the no man's land, the interzone, the DMZ, and the ruins of concrete jungle. Where Basquiat gleaned pop cues from that world, Wool finds an alphabet of symbolic abstractions. Here is the action painting of the unconscious—accidental splashes and streaks that mark fields of blighted architecture."<sup>ii</sup>

*"Through process, technique, scale, composition, and imagery, Wool's work accentuates the tensions and contradictions between the act of painting, the construction of a picture, its physical attributes, the visual experience of looking at it, and the possibilities of playing with and pushing open the thresholds of its meanings. They are defined by what they're not—and what they hold back." —Ann Goldstein*

The artist's word paintings situate Wool within a lineage of artists who have employed textual



René Magritte, *La clef des songes (The Key to Dreams)*, 1927. Staatsgalerie Moderner Kunst, Munich, Image: Banque d'Images, ADAGP / Art Resource, NY, Artwork: © 2021 C. Herscovici / Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York

Wool's word paintings were conceived out of an iconic moment during the artist's early career in a now-legendary account. While living in the Lower East Side of New York City in 1987, Wool serendipitously encountered a new white truck with the words "SEX LUV" graffitied on its surface. Moved by the striking simplicity of the image and its ability to convey visual force, he appropriated the phrase for his own work, laying the foundation for what would become his trademark technique—large dark letters stenciled upon a stark white background. Manifesting an exceptional example of the artist's rare employment of color in his practice, the dark blue rendering of the bold block lettering starkly contrasts with the white ground to connote urban grit and iconicity.

Belonging to Wool's first body of word paintings, the work depicts each letter of the word "FOOL" segmented into a four-part grid. By deconstructing the word and isolating its individual components, Wool compels the viewer to focus on the letters as purely visual elements. Seen through this lens, the shapes operating on the surface ironically conjure his own name—and deliberately so, as the artist has acknowledged that his rendering of the word functions in part as a self-portrait.<sup>iii</sup> In such compositions, Wool at once destabilizes words of their communicative utility and allows for a multiplicity of meanings to rise from the surface, through the literal and conceptual spaces in between. In the words of O'Brien, "Slowly and surely Christopher Wool has

reinvented abstraction and devised a radical new way of working that partakes in the clarity and the heroism, but in a way that is shockingly novel and perhaps heretically casual."<sup>iv</sup>

<sup>i</sup> Peter Schjeldahl, "Writing on the Wall," *The New Yorker*, November 4, 2013, [online](#).

<sup>ii</sup> Glenn O'Brien, "Apocalypse and Wallpaper" in Hans Werner Holzwarth, ed., *Christopher Wool*, Cologne, 2008, p. 13.

<sup>iii</sup> Katherine Brinson, *Christopher Wool*, exh. cat., Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York, 2013, p. 41.

<sup>iv</sup> Glenn O'Brien, "Apocalypse and Wallpaper" in Hans Werner Holzwarth, ed., *Christopher Wool*, Cologne, 2008, p. 10.

#### Provenance

Glenn O'Brien (acquired directly from the artist)

Acquired from the above by the present owner via Richard Gray Gallery, Chicago

#### Exhibited

London, Simon Lee Gallery, *Family Guy* (curated by Kenny Schachter), October 3-20, 2018

## 20th Century & Contemporary Art Evening Sale

New York Auction / 17 November 2021 / 7pm EST



PROPERTY FROM A FAMILY COLLECTION

35

### Milton Avery

*Brown Bolero*

signed and dated "Milton Avery 1957" lower right;  
signed, titled and dated ""BROWN BOLERO" Milton  
Avery 1957" on the reverse

oil on canvas

48 1/8 x 32 1/8 in. (122.2 x 81.6 cm)

Painted in 1957.

**Estimate**

\$1,500,000 — 2,500,000

[Go to Lot](#)



*"I never have any rules to follow. I follow myself." —Milton Avery*

Painted in 1957, Milton Avery's *Brown Bolero* encompasses the pivotal moment in the artist's career when he fully refined his visual vocabulary. Avery's paintings between 1947 and 1963 are arguably the most significant manifestations of his aesthetic and technique, situating him as one of the most influential American painters of the 20th century. Emblematic of his mature style, the present work depicts a seated figure rendered through painterly blocks of color, distilled down to its most essential form.



Henri Matisse, *Young Sailor II*, 1906. Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, Image: © The Metropolitan Museum of Art. Image source: Art Resource, NY, Artwork: © 2021 Succession H. Matisse /

Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York

By the turn of the 1950s, Avery departed from the brushy application of paint that had previously characterized his work and made him known as the "American Fauvist" for its notable comparisons to the work of Henri Matisse. The artist once stated, "I work on two levels. I try to construct a picture in which shapes, spaces, colors form a set of unique relationships, independent of any subject matter. At the same time, I try to capture and translate the excitement and emotion aroused in me by the impact with the original idea."<sup>i</sup>

*"I am not seeking pure abstraction; rather the purity and essence of the idea—expressed in its simplest form." —Milton Avery*

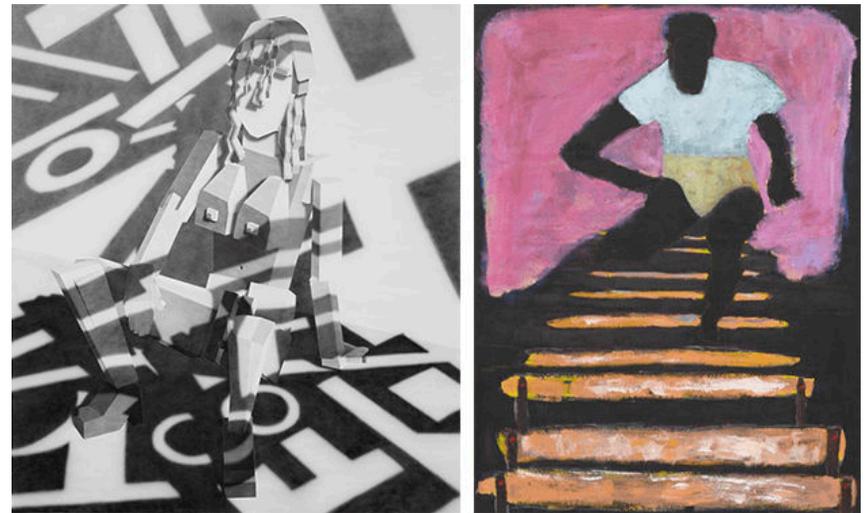


Pablo Picasso, *Seated Bather*, 1930. Museum of Modern Art, New York, Image: © The Museum of Modern Art/Licensed by SCALA / Art Resource, NY, Artwork: © 2021 Estate of Pablo Picasso/Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York

As the thin interlocking planes of color echo Henri Matisse's handling in *Young Sailor II*, the present composition also reflects Avery's renewed dialogue with Picasso. As Haskell elucidated, "The smooth surfaces of thinly modulated color divided by precise, but not hard, edges which Picasso had developed in this period particularly fascinated Avery...his subsequent work [in the 1950s] resembled these Picassos both in the modulation of color and in the simplification of figures into geometric yet biomorphic shapes."<sup>ii</sup>

*"It is time he were given a full-scale retrospective by a New York museum, not for the sake of his reputation but for the sake of the situation of art in New York. The latest generation of abstract painters in New York has certain salutary lessons to learn from him that they cannot learn from any other artist on the scene."* —Clement Greenberg, 1957

By 1952, Avery declared "I do not use linear perspective, but achieve depth by color—the function of one color with another. I strip the design to the essentials; the facts do not interest me as much as the essence of nature."<sup>iii</sup> Unlike his contemporaries Mark Rothko and Adolph Gottlieb, Avery's devotion to the power of color would not lead to a relinquishment of figuration. True to his unique sensibility, Avery captures nature through his subjective formalist language in a kind of radical reductionism which remains true to reality. It is this virtuosity as embodied in *Brown Bolero* that encapsulates Mark Rothko's words on the artist: "There have been several other in our generation who have celebrated the world around them, but none with that inevitability where the poetry penetrated every pore of the canvas to the very last touch of the brush."<sup>iv</sup>



[left] Avery Singer, *Sad Woman Projecting Libidinal Thoughts*, 2014. Collection of Andre Sakhai, Image: Joerg Lohse, Artwork: © Avery Singer [right] Reggie Burrows Hodges, *Hurdling: Sky Blue*, 2020. Private Collection, Artwork: Courtesy of the artist and Karma, New York

"During the flood of enthusiasm for American Scene painting in the 1930s, his work was criticized for being too abstract. When abstraction received critical acclaim in the 1950s, Avery was ignored

because he refused to abandon natural forms,” Haskell noted.<sup>v</sup> Ahead of his time, Avery would eventually be viewed as a pioneer for future generations of artists, as Clement Greenberg observed upon an exhibition for the artist the year the present work was created. Works such as *Brown Bolero* reflect his resonating influence on artists from Avery Singer—who was named after the artist—to Reggie Burrow Hodges, to Matthew Wong, who have each in their own way followed in the path of Milton Avery’s judicious words: “In order to paint one has to go by the way one does not know. Art is like turning corners; one never knows what is around the corner until one has made the turn.”<sup>vi</sup>

<sup>i</sup> Robert Hobbs, *Milton Avery*, New York, 1990, p. 172.

<sup>ii</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 89, 92.

<sup>iii</sup> Robert Hobbs, *Milton Avery: The Late Paintings*, New York, 2001, p. 51.

<sup>iv</sup> Mark Rothko, Memorial Address, delivered January 7, 1965.

<sup>v</sup> Barbara Haskell, *Milton Avery*, New York, 1982, p. 8.

<sup>vi</sup> Milton Avery, quoted in *ibid.*, p. 12.

---

#### Provenance

Grace Borgenicht Gallery, New York

Private Collection (acquired from the above in 1961)

Thence by descent to the present owners

## 20th Century & Contemporary Art Evening Sale

New York Auction / 17 November 2021 / 7pm EST



PROPERTY OF A DISTINGUISHED EAST COAST  
COLLECTOR

36

### Lynette Yiadom-Boakye

*Six PM, Malaga*

signed with the artist's initials, titled and dated "LYB  
2009 6pm, Malaga" on the reverse

oil on canvas

78 3/4 x 47 1/4 in. (200 x 120 cm)

Painted in 2009.

**Estimate**

\$500,000 — 700,000

[Go to Lot](#)



Painted in 2009, *Six PM, Malaga* depicts a character from Lynette Yiadom-Boakye's own imagination. Inhabiting the full height of the 78-inch canvas, her figure is relaxed and confident, rendered with a poise that recalls such canonical influences as Édouard Manet and Barkley L. Hendricks. Capturing our gaze with a steadfast one of their own, her figures are at once real and figments conjured by her paintbrush—color, form, and physical tactility acting as the ingredients by which she builds her open-ended narratives. Having featured in the 2013 Venice Biennale the same year she was shortlisted for the Turner Prize and representing Ghana for its debut pavilion at the Venice Biennale in 2019, Yiadom-Boakye is presently enjoying a major retrospective at Tate, London through February 2023.



Édouard Manet, *Young Man in the Costume of a Majo*, 1863. Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, Image: © The Metropolitan Museum of Art. Image source: Art Resource, NY

*"Her titles run parallel to the images...the canvas is the text."* —Zadie Smith

The present work anticipates a selection of works the artist named by time and place including *8am Cadiz*, 2017, Baltimore Museum of Art. These titles add an extra dimension to the scenes that Yiadom-Boakye conceives, infusing her paintings with more mood than specific narrative. Yiadom-Boakye noted, "For me there's the wider exercise of removing time or trying to, in some ways, disregard it. I suppose it goes to also thinking about the figures themselves and what they represent and what they stand for...my relationship to time is perhaps that of anyone who's never felt particularly fixed anywhere."<sup>i</sup>

*"For me there's the wider exercise of removing time or trying to, in some ways, to disregard it. I suppose it goes to also thinking about the figures themselves and what they represent and what they stand for; and what a history is and what a future could be."* —Lynette Yiadom-Boakye

Her subjects are at once imaginary and familiar—emptied of narrative—pieced together in her mind's eye. In conversation with Nadine Rubin Nathan of *New York Times Magazine*, the artist describes her fictitious sitters as "suggestions of people...They don't share our concerns or anxieties. They are somewhere else altogether."<sup>ii</sup> She conceives of her compositions from a diverse range of source imagery including scrapbooks, archival photographs and drawings. When she arrives at the canvas, however, it is without the accompaniment of these aids, instead wielding her paintbrush with an intuitive ease and fluency. What is evident is Yiadom-Boakye's firm place within the legacy tradition of portraiture. Her figures emerge from a somber half-light reminiscent of Velázquez and Zurbarán, or Manet's reworkings of those same shadowy old master backgrounds.



Mark Rothko, *Orange and Yellow*, 1956. Albright-Knox Art Gallery, Buffalo, Image: Albright-Knox Art Gallery / Art Resource, NY, Artwork: © 1998 Kate Rothko Prizel & Christopher Rothko / Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York

*"I learned how to paint from looking at painting and I continue to learn from looking at painting. In that sense, history serves as a resource. But the bigger draw for me is the power that painting can wield across time." —Lynette Yiadom-Boakye*

While recalling the work of Manet, Yiadom-Boakye's practice simultaneously absorbs the monochromatic lessons of the Abstract Expressionists. Her approach is near-scientific, building her composition in accordance with color and form. She notes of her process, "each time I have a

particular goal for that work. Whether it's something to do with color or light or form in some way...[I] build each painting out of colors...it almost becomes scientific in that way that there's this balancing of different colors."<sup>iii</sup> The palette in *Six PM, Malaga* is at once indicative of her first mature period predominately driven by muted, earth-toned colors and anticipates the bolder painterly splashes that would enter her oeuvre in earnest in 2012.

*"Painting for me is the subject. The figures exist only through paint, through color, line, tone and mark-making." —Lynette Yiadom-Boakye*

The present work was executed at a time in her career when her use of canvas still compelled her to complete each painting in a day due to a faster paint drying process. Building her composition through loose, expressive brushstrokes, Yiadom-Boakye deftly builds her complex compositions a *giornata* ("a day's work") in the same tradition as the great Renaissance frescos in order to retain "something in the quality of the mark and in my own mind."<sup>iv</sup>

<sup>i</sup> Lynette Yiadom-Boakye, quoted in Isabella Maidment, "The Power of Invention," *Lynette Yiadom-Boakye: Fly In League With the Night*, exh. cat., Tate, London, 2020, p. 51.

<sup>ii</sup> Lynette Yiadom-Boakye, quoted in Nadine Rubin Nathan, "Lynette Yiadom-Boakye's Fashionable Eye," *The New York Times*, November 15, 2010.

<sup>iii</sup> Lynette Yiadom-Boakye, quoted in "Biennale Arte 2013 - Lynette Yiadom-Boakye", 11 June 2013, [online](#).

<sup>iv</sup> Ibid.

#### Provenance

Faye Fleming & Partner, Geneva

Acquired from the above by the present owner in 2010

#### Exhibited

Geneva, Gowan Contemporary, *Lynette Yiadom-Boakye: Manifesto*, October 1 – November 6, 2009

## 20th Century & Contemporary Art Evening Sale

New York Auction / 17 November 2021 / 7pm EST



PROPERTY FROM AN IMPORTANT WEST COAST  
COLLECTION

37

### Mickalene Thomas

#### *Portrait of Qusuquzah #5*

signed, titled and dated "Portrait of Qusuquzah #5,  
2011 M. Thomas" on the reverse

rhinestones, acrylic and enamel on panel

72 x 46 in. (182.9 x 116.8 cm)

Executed in 2011.

#### Estimate

\$400,000 — 600,000

[Go to Lot](#)



*"All of my muses possess a profound sense of inner confidence and individuality. They are all in tune with their own audacity and beauty in such unique ways. They are unafraid to exude boldness and vulnerability at the same time, and most importantly, they are real." — Mickalene Thomas*

Executed in 2011, Mickalene Thomas' *Portrait of Qusuquzah #5* is a stunning example of the artist's acclaimed practice. Drawing inspiration from 19th century French painting to 1970s pop culture and Blaxpoitation films, Thomas' multi-media collage paintings address contemporary notions of beauty, sexuality, femininity, and power through the Black female experience. Showcasing her signature collaged layers of acrylic paint and rhinestones, the present work belongs to the artist's well-known series of portraits on the transgender model Qusuquzah. Here, Thomas renders the figure up close, directing viewers to meet the subject's gaze—a leitmotif in her oeuvre—that at once exudes boldness and a tender reflection of her humanity.



Cover of *Jet* magazine, issue no. 300, December 1960

For Thomas, her subjects are not models—they are muses. “‘Muse’ is a way of celebrating all of these women and what they have to give in these images,” she explained. “For me, it was very much the personal relationship, and also the historical relationship that I have with the women and the world.”<sup>11</sup> Introduced to Thomas through a friend, Qusuquzah has become one of the artist's most frequent sitters, with many of the artist's representations of this muse residing in museum collections around the world, such as the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, San Francisco Museum of Art, and the Minneapolis Institute of Art. The artist's portrayal of Qusuquzah in the present work readily recalls notable references throughout Thomas' oeuvre, such as Pam Grier as Foxy Brown and the 1960s-70s cover women of *Jet* magazine, paying homage to the women who have long populated Thomas' visual imagery.



Mickalene Thomas, *Qusuquzah, une très belle négresse 1*, 2011. San Francisco Museum of Art, Image: © Mickalene Thomas / Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York

First photographing her muses in her Brooklyn studio, Thomas then crystallizes her portraits through paint and collage, evoking the practices of Romare Bearden and Henri Matisse—in this case, with additional resonance of Matisse’s portraits of women such as *Le chapeau aux roses* (*Hat with Roses*). The artist’s hallmark technique of lavishly imbedding her compositions with rhinestones both formally and symbolically layer her paintings, reflecting her investigations of the broader human experience. As Thomas explains, “Everyone had wood paneling in their house, regardless of race, and everyone loves rhinestones. These elements are not necessarily about the black experience; it’s about the idea of covering up, of dress up and make up—of amplifying how we see ourselves. It’s beyond a black esthetic.”<sup>ii</sup>



*"The unabashed visual richness of these works attests to the power of the decorative while extending the tenets of Conceptual identity art into an unusually full-bodied form of painting...Above all, these works convey a pride of person that gives any viewer—not only women—an occasion to rise to."* —Roberta Smith

*Portrait of Qusuquzah #5* captures the visual decadence of Thomas’ paintings, which functions to insist on her subjects’ presence and visibility, as does their assertive gaze—subverting not just the male gaze but also the absence of Black female representation in the art historical canon. “By selecting women of color, I am quite literally raising their visibility and inserting their presence into the conversation, portraying real women with their own unique history, beauty and background, working to diversify the representations of Black women in art.”<sup>iii</sup> Thomas masterfully presents this insistence through the intimate nature of the present composition, encapsulating the artist’s word, “Just as my muses insist on their visibility and identity, I want my viewers to feel present with fierceness and boldness. Through the act of seeing, I want them to feel validated just as much. I want them to claim their rightful space in the world.”<sup>iv</sup>

<sup>i</sup> Mickalene Thomas, quoted in Allyssia Alleyne, “What makes a muse? Mickalene Thomas on the power of the model,” *CNN Style*, May 31, 2016.

<sup>ii</sup> Mickalene Thomas, quoted in “From the Archives: Mickalene Thomas on Why Her Work Goes ‘Beyond the Black Aesthetic,’” in 2011,” *ARTnews*, September 14, 2018, [online](#).

<sup>iii</sup> Mickalene Thomas, quoted in Diana d’Arenberg, “Mickalene Thomas at Lehmann Maupin, Hong

**Mickalene Thomas**

---

Kong," *Ocula*, December 2, 2016.

<sup>iv</sup> Mickalene Thomas, quoted in Katie Booth, "In Mickalene Thomas's Awe-Inspiring Portraits, a Meaningful Reflection of Black Women in Art," *The New York Times*, January 29, 2016.

---

**Provenance**

Lehmann Maupin, New York

Acquired from the above by the present owner

**Exhibited**

San Jose Museum of Art, *Rise Up! Social Justice in Art*, June 8 - September 30, 2018, p. 9 (illustrated)

## 20th Century & Contemporary Art Evening Sale

New York Auction / 17 November 2021 / 7pm EST



38

### Mike Kelley

#### *Memory Ware Flat #3*

signed and dated "M. Kelley 2000" on the reverse  
mixed media on wood panel

object 70 1/4 x 46 1/4 x 4 1/2 in. (178.4 x 117.5 x 11.4  
cm)

framed 76 x 52 1/2 x 4 1/2 in. (193 x 133.4 x 11.4 cm)

Executed in 2000.

#### Estimate

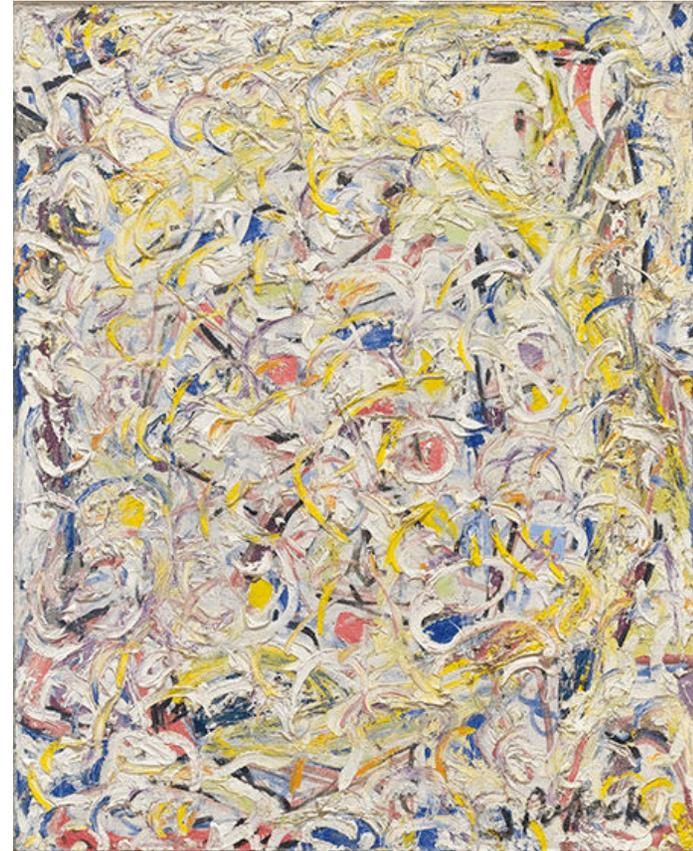
\$1,000,000 — 1,500,000

[Go to Lot](#)



*"For me, psychedelia was sublime because in psychedelia, your worldview fell apart. That was a sublime revelation... my notion of beauty. And that was a kind of cataclysmic sublime. It was very interiorized, it wasn't about a metaphysical outside; it was about your own consciousness." —Mike Kelley*

Presenting a dazzling cacophony of countless, accumulated charms and trinkets, Mike Kelley's *Memory Ware Flat #3* is a stunning early iteration of his renowned eponymous series spanning between 2000 and 2010. Executed in the year of the series' inception, the work encapsulates the artist's investigations on memory, remembrance, and reconstruction that informed the latter half of his career. Seen from afar, the composition presents a kaleidoscopic field of hypnotizing color; examined up close, it presents a trove of wildly diverse ephemera densely packed together, ranging from seemingly latent mementos to futile bric-a-brac. In this materially and conceptually loaded phantasmagoria, Kelley coalesces high and low, irreverent with academic, achieving an artistic synthesis that is as deeply thought-provoking as visually alluring.

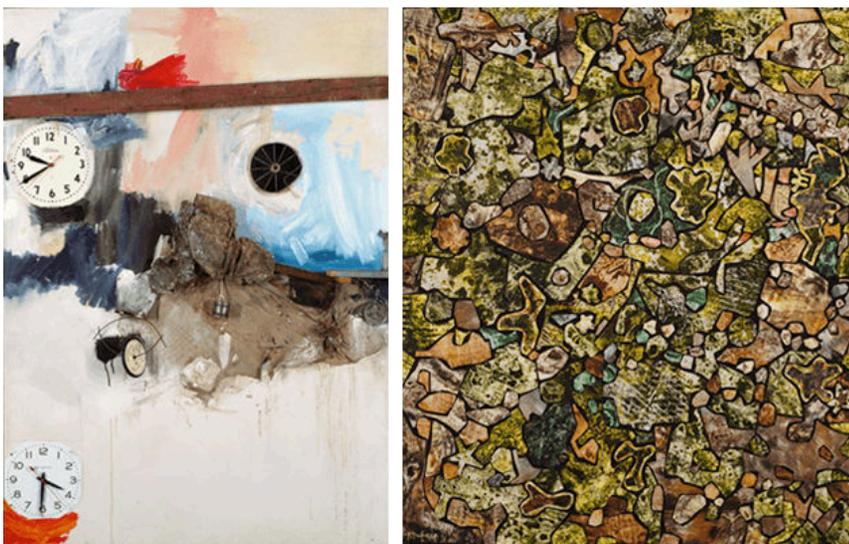


Jackson Pollock, *Shimmering Substance*, 1946. Museum of Modern Art, New York, Image: © The Museum of Modern Art/Licensed by SCALA / Art Resource, NY, Artwork: © 2021 Pollock-Krasner Foundation / Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York

*"In art school I was trained in the modernist tradition, yet I felt compelled to return again and again to materials associated with my lower-middle-class upbringing, to re-examine those materials from a critical vantage point... I was using these traditional materials in an intentionally perverse way—misusing them to reveal their conventionality." —Mike Kelley*

Kelley named the series after a form of North American folk art involving the decoration of common household items with sentimental objects such as jewelry, beads, and buttons—a genre

he first discovered at a Toronto antiques fair in 2000. Offering a new form of expression to his longstanding engagement with repurposing materials and interest in the low brow, the inspiration Kelley found in this realm of craft filtered through his own artistic sensibility. “The materials used to decorate objects in the memory ware tradition are often keepsakes, things saved for sentimental reasons that prompt fond memories. My works are not loaded with similar sentiments, of course, as I am more interested in the themes of reexamination and reuse than in the production of nostalgia.”<sup>i</sup>



[left] Robert Rauschenberg, *Reservoir*, 1961. Smithsonian American Art Museum, Washington, D.C., Image: Smithsonian American Art Museum, Washington, DC / Art Resource, NY, Artwork: © 2021 Robert Rauschenberg Foundation / Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York, [right] Jean Dubuffet, *Soil Ornamented with Vegetation, Dead Leaves, Pebbles, Diverse Debris*, 1956. Museum of Modern Art, New York, Image: © The Museum of Modern Art/Licensed by SCALA / Art Resource, NY, Artwork: © 2021 Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York / ADAGP, Paris

The *Memory Ware Flats*, with their brilliantly chromatic and teeming surfaces contained within wood frames, represent an arresting hybrid between the aesthetic of painting and sculptural assemblage. Here, Kelley evokes a striking fusion of Jackson Pollock’s all-over style, Marcel Duchamp’s readymades, and Jean Dubuffet’s painted collage canvases, showcasing a sumptuous presentation of his singular painterly language. As he described of the series, “Some paintings are completely covered with similarly sized buttons that, because of their uniformity, produce an intense optical effect when arranged in a field. Others are made up of a wider variety of decorative

materials in a more garish ‘wild style’ approach, while still others are composed of strings of brightly colored beads and have swirling psychedelic surfaces. All of the paintings, however, share a noncompositional, ‘overall’ approach to their dispersion of materials.”<sup>ii</sup>



Mike Kelley, *More Love Hours Than Can Ever Be Repaid*, 1987. Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, Image: © Whitney Museum of American Art / Licensed by Scala / Art Resource, NY, Artwork: © The Mike Kelley Foundation for the Arts / Licensed by VAGA at Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York

*"Yet the borrowed aesthetics deployed by the artist must not be taken at face value; instead, they represent elements in an associative labyrinth, discussion points within an intricately spiraling web of linked ideas and allusions... The determining factor is not the formal vocabulary but the conceptual framing and contextualization."*  
—Ralph Rugoff

Underneath the eye-popping and shimmering surface of *Memory Ware Flat #3* lies a deeper conceptual discourse on both the course of objecthood and the human condition. Kelley’s and reuse and reconception of materials reflect how framing them in a new context can breathe new life into our perceptions of ideas and objects over time. As he explained, “I playfully give new ‘life’

to unused studio materials and discarded formal and thematic considerations in a manner similar to memory ware's revitalization of cast-off objects."<sup>iii</sup> The work therefore ultimately draws viewers to consider a psychological reading of memory and visibility, alerting us to the inevitable development of art and popular culture as percolating appropriations or reactions to ideas over time. In this way, Kelley's Memory Wares transcend fixed boundaries of identification that straddle micro to macro, abstraction and representation. "I am not solely interested in arresting visuals; I am more interested in questioning the conventions of reading within a given genre," he expressed.<sup>iv</sup> "I really think art's about representation. And I don't believe in nonobjective art; I don't think there's such a thing."<sup>v</sup>



<sup>i</sup> Mike Kelley, "Memory Ware," in John C. Welchman, ed., *Minor Histories: Statements, Conversations, Proposals*, Cambridge, 2004, p. 153.

<sup>ii</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>iii</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 152.

<sup>iv</sup> Mike Kelley, quoted in "Interview: Isabelle McGraw in Conversation with Mike Kelley," in John C. Welchman, *Mike Kelley*, London, 1999, p. 14.

<sup>v</sup> Mike Kelley, quoted in "Language and Psychology: Mike Kelley," *Art21*, September 2005 (repr. November 2011), [online](#).

#### Provenance

Galerie Ghislaine Hussenot, Paris  
Private Collection  
Phillips de Pury & Company, New York, November 16, 2006, lot 21  
Private Collection  
Acquired from the above by the present owner

#### Exhibited

Paris, Galerie Ghislaine Hussenot, *Mike Kelley: Memory Ware*, October 26 – December 24, 2000  
New York, Skarstedt Gallery, *Mike Kelley: Memory Ware Flats*, September 13 – October 20, 2012

#### Literature

*Mike Kelley: Memory Ware*, exh. cat., Jablonka Galerie, Essen, 2002, p. 74 (illustrated, p. 10)  
*Mike Kelley: Memory Ware, A Survey*, exh. cat., Hauser & Wirth, New York, 2017, p. 245 (illustrated, p. 58)

## 20th Century & Contemporary Art Evening Sale

New York Auction / 17 November 2021 / 7pm EST



39

### George Condo

#### *Collision Course*

signed and dated "Condo '09" on the reverse  
acrylic, charcoal, wax crayon, pastel and paper collage  
on linen

71 7/8 x 57 7/8 in. (182.6 x 147 cm)

Executed in 2009.

#### Estimate

\$1,500,000 — 2,500,000

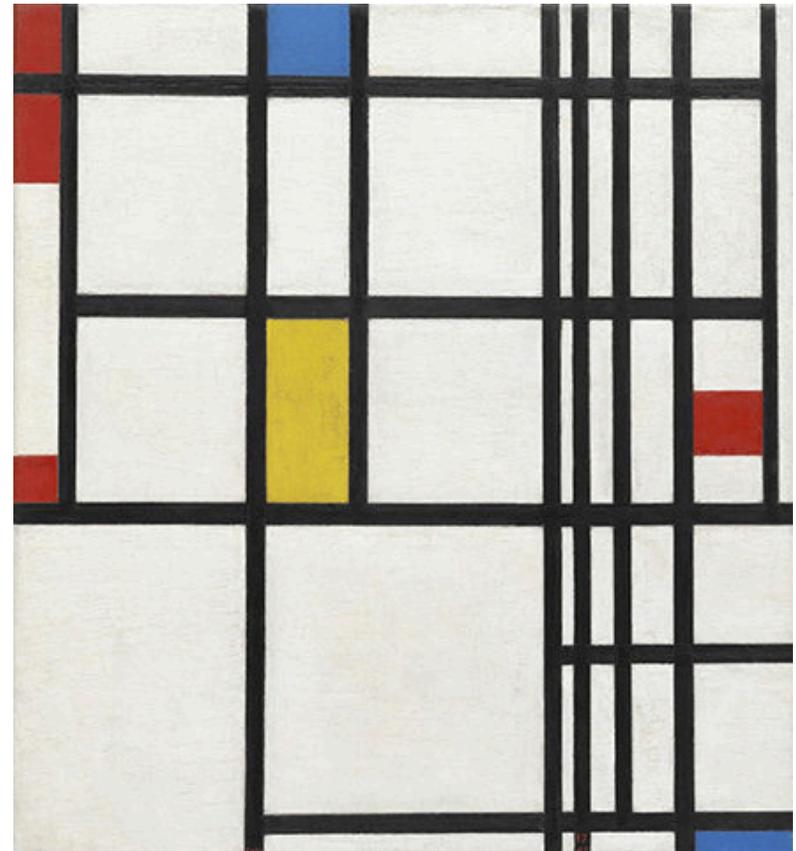
[Go to Lot](#)



*Collision Course*, George Condo's surreal and fragmented puzzle of imagery, is characteristic of the artist's enquiry into the notions of perception. A spliced dreamscape of interlocking silhouettes patently reveals the artist's ability to fluently work line, form and color into his celebrated oeuvre. Marrying figuration with abstraction, the present composition is exemplary of Condo's self-termed style of "psychological cubism." Presenting the onlooker with what the imagination—rather than the eye—sees, in *Collision Course* the mental state of each subject is refracted across the composition.

*"There was a time when I realized that the central focal point of portraiture did not have to be representational in any way. You don't need to paint the body to show the truth about a character. All you need is the head and the hands."* —George Condo

Informed by an art historical trajectory, from the Renaissance and the Baroque to Cubism, Surrealism and Pop Art, Condo's multifarious oeuvre is awash with imagery taken from myriad sources. The present canvas, a stylized patchwork of discrete compartments composed of small images of fragmented body parts, displays the psychological perspective of multiple colliding figures. Evocative of Pablo Picasso's Synthetic Cubism, where portraits of individuals are limited to planar surfaces and restricted geometric forms, the present work pairs multiple fragmented characters with blocks of color. Commenting on the influence of art historical masters, Condo notes, "The only way for me to feel the difference between every other artist and me is to use every artist to become me."<sup>ii</sup>



Piet Mondrian, *Composition in Red, Blue, and Yellow*, 1937-1942, Museum of Modern Art, New York, Image: Digital Image © The Museum of Modern Art/Licensed by SCALA / Art Resource, NY, Artwork: © 2021 Mondrian/Holtzman Trust. All rights reserved

In *Collision Course*, executed in 2009, the artist expertly dissects the composition into a flurry of fractured planes, the work comprised of underlying and overlapping forms which coalesce in a tangle of visual intrigue. Blurring the light purple ground with white, cloudy washes, Condo segments the canvas with his delineated figures, interwoven in a tapestry of forms. Layering a multitude of mediums, the artist projects his divided configuration into the third-dimension. Snippets of faces and bodies twist and turn, punctuated by visual anchors of yellow and red squares. In the same manner of Piet Mondrian, who used flashes, strips and small planes of color to create depth and dynamism in his black and white banded compositions, Condo absorbs the

viewer's gaze, his painting a Cubist prism through which to see his constructed microcosm.

## Cut from the Archives

Video: <https://youtu.be/BhRdlVcQnjK>

Unlike Mondrian's balanced compositions which provide a meditative realm of reflection, Condo's dizzying constellations are charged with vital energy. Splicing his image and splitting his protagonist's faces, Condo's paintings often bear an uncanny undertone, striking at the heart of our subconscious anxieties. Violently rupturing the canvas with clowns, bared teeth, genitalia and glazed eyes, our eyes rove across the composition, its visual complexities presenting us with flashes of dream-like figures. Through the artist's evocation of child-like visual references, the present work forces us to tap into our underlying fears and desires, our subconscious dreams and also nightmares. Creating a tension between memory and the present, Condo seeks to destroy the gulf between viewer and object, creating a visual world which provokes underlying reactions.

*"Condo's portraits... ultimately return our attention to the varied responses that they trigger us in. They confront us with the curious fact that we can feel pity and ridicule for something at the same time, or sympathy and revulsion. In the end, these imaginary portraits lead us to wonder at the schizoid and contradictory character of our own natures. And they leave us to revel in what Soberg memorably termed 'the irresolvable clownishness of being.'" —Ralph Rugoff*

Subverting traditional practice, Condo infrequently depicts real people in his portraits; instead he often portrays characters derived from his imagination. In the present composition, multiple figures collide. Accurately portraying the fantastical extremes of his imagination, Condo's protagonists nonetheless appear remarkably familiar. Throughout his oeuvre the artist revisits a repertoire of recognizable protagonists, his imaginary butler Jean-Louis, visible at the left edge of the present composition, is accompanied by recurrent relatives and acquaintances. Distorting the familiar figures, Condo leaves the personalities in a state of flux, juxtaposing the mental state of the characters with their physical appearance. Employing multiple perspectives, Condo presents a vividly psychological portrait exemplary of his mastery of abstraction. "When we abstract in imagistic terms from a recognizable form—let's say a face—to an impression of a face, we can still recall the face somewhere within this abstraction. But when we represent to the best of our ability the reverse—which is to turn an abstraction back into a recognizable form—that form is the language of abstraction as it relates to painting."<sup>iii</sup>



Presenting intricately worked facial features and voluptuous female forms, the artist intimately engages with his subjects. In his scrambled and vivid pictorial scene he leaves "the sense of the female form prey to the vicissitudes and arbitrary geometry of posing in a constant theme of Condo's unedited female disasters."<sup>iii</sup> Registering distinct yet dislocated body parts—the curve of breasts, the outline of an eye, the texture of hair—Condo allows the portrait to take cognitive form, revealing caricatures that are both serene and frenzied.

*"I try to depict a character's train of thoughts simultaneously—hysteria, joy, sadness, desperation. If you could see these things at once that would be like what I'm trying to make you see in my art." —George Condo*

Condo's eccentric imagination and his extraordinary ability to cite art historical sources, whilst depicting a spectrum of human emotions and mental states, situate the artist at the forefront of contemporary painting. "The traditional opposition between abstraction and figuration is now no longer pertinent: it has more to do with ideology than with the 'art of painting.'" The contribution made by George Condo is exemplary in this respect. Although totally immersed in the image culture of the late 20th century, his painting is still informed by modernist questions concerning the uncertain status of representation."<sup>iv</sup>

<sup>i</sup> George Condo, quoted in Stuart Jeffries, "George Condo: 'I was delirious. Nearly died,'" *The Guardian*, February 10, 2014.

**George Condo**

---

<sup>ii</sup> George Condo, quoted in Simon Baker, *Painting Reconfigured*, London, 2015, p. 109.

<sup>iii</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 198-199.

<sup>iv</sup> Bernard Marcadé, quoted in *ibid.*, p. 109.

---

**Provenance**

Massimo de Carlo, Milan

Private Collection (acquired from the above)

Phillips, London, June 27, 2018, lot 7

Acquired at the above sale by the present owner

## 20th Century & Contemporary Art Evening Sale

New York Auction / 17 November 2021 / 7pm EST



PROPERTY FROM A PROMINENT PRIVATE  
COLLECTION

40

### **Bruce Nauman**

*Untitled (from Fifteen Pairs of Hands)*

stamped with the artist's initials, number and date  
"B.N. 1996 I 2/2" lower right  
white bronze, on artist's base  
54 1/2 x 12 x 12 in. (138.4 x 30.5 x 30.5 cm)  
Executed in 1996, this work is number 2 from an  
edition of 2 plus 1 artist's proof.

The artist's proof is housed in the permanent collection  
of the Glenstone Museum, Potomac.

#### **Estimate**

\$1,000,000 — 1,500,000

[Go to Lot](#)





Michelangelo, *The Creation of Adam* (detail), circa 1508-1512. Sistine Chapel, Vatican City, Image: Scala / Art Resource, NY

*"My hand tells me what I'm thinking."* —Pablo Picasso

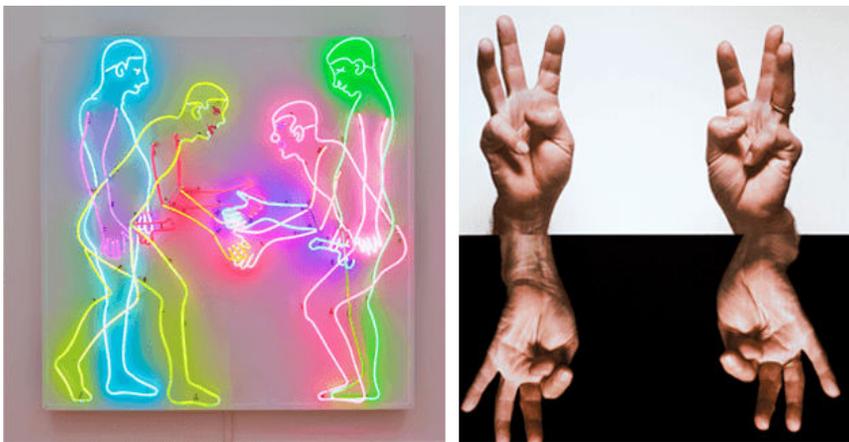
Exemplifying Bruce Nauman's preoccupations with theme of the human body throughout his extensive oeuvre, *Untitled (from Fifteen Pairs of Hands)* is a stunning example of the artist's acclaimed titular series that featured at the Venice Biennale in 2009. Executed in 1996, the sculpture encapsulates Nauman's frequent practice of employing his own body in his lifelong investigations of self-exploration and corporeal communication. Timeless in subject matter, the present work personifies the human condition in its disembodiment, both attesting to the power of nonverbal communication and celebrating the foundational tools of artistic creation.



Bruce Nauman, *Fifteen Pairs of Hands*, 1996. Artwork: © 2021 Bruce Nauman / Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York

*"I used myself as an object...the attempt is to go from the specific to the general. Maybe it's the same kind of way of making a self-portrait, as Rembrandt made a self-portrait, and a lot of other people, making a self-portrait...making an examination of yourself and also making a generalization beyond yourself."* —Bruce Nauman

From the beginnings of his career, the artist would use his own body throughout his self-referential practice, believing it allowed him to develop a more holistic artistic sensibility. "I think because when you're trying to find something out, it's much easier to do, using yourself," Nauman expressed. To use somebody else, "You have to make a whole different set of instructions, you have to think about the work: whether it's a performance or having a piece made or something; you have to be able to think about it in a different way. If I have an object fabricated out of steel or something then I have to know, maybe even more, because you have to tell somebody else everything, more than maybe you have to tell yourself."<sup>1</sup>



[left] Bruce Nauman, *Welcome (Shaking Hands)*, 1985. Staatsgalerie, Stuttgart, Image: bpk Bildagentur / Staatsgalerie, Stuttgart / Art Resource, NY, Artwork: © 2021 Bruce Nauman / Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York [right] Bruce Nauman, *For Beginners (all the combinations of the thumb and finger)*, 2010. Los Angeles County Museum of Art, Image: © 2021 Museum Associates / LACMA. Licensed by Art Resource, NY, Artwork: © 2021 Bruce Nauman / Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York

*"I think there is a need to present yourself. To present yourself through your work is obviously part of being an artist...But artists are always interested in some level of communication."* —Bruce Nauman

Conceiving the series in the year of the present work's creation, Nauman depicts pairs of hands united through various formations. In this particular iteration, he portrays two hands joined together that meet at the fingertips in striking detail, which not only highlights an acute sense of tactility but also lends itself to an empathic evocation of personal intimacy. At once delicate and robust, personal and universal, the present cast showcases Nauman's masterful sculptural handling, emphasizing the musculature of the curved palms and fingers as well as the meticulous creases and wrinkles of the artist's hand. By displacing the subject from its usual context of the body, Nauman reveals the expressive potential of simple gestures whilst opening up the work to the subjective interpretation and a multiplicity of meanings, materializing his own words: "What is given *and* what is withheld become the work...I try to make work that leaves options, or is opened in some way."<sup>ii</sup>



**BRUCE NAUMAN**  
**FIFTEEN PAIRS OF HANDS, WHITE BRONZE,**  
**'END OF THE WORLD' WITH LLOYD MAINES**  
 NOVEMBER 2 - DECEMBER 14, 1996 LEO CASTELLI 420 WEST BROADWAY NEW YORK

Poster by Bruce Nauman for his exhibition *Bruce Nauman: Fifteen Pairs of Hands* at Leo Castelli, New York, November 2 - December 14, 1996. Artwork: © 2021 Bruce Nauman / Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York

From Michelangelo to Rodin, Géricault and Courbet to Picasso, the human hand has been the central symbol of artistic creation and communication. Throughout the history of the visual arts, the hand not only revealed an artist's virtuosity in conveying expression through rendered form, but further became a leitmotif signaling the creative genius of the artist. In *Untitled (from Fifteen Pairs of Hands)*, Nauman simultaneously conjures a lineage of masters in their studies of the human form and its parts and testifies to the hands as the mediator between the mind and the world. In the words of Leonardo da Vinci: "Where the spirit does not work with the hand, there is

no art.”<sup>iii</sup>



[left] Gustave Courbet, *The Desperate Man (Self-Portrait)*, 1843-1845. Private Collection, Image: HIP / Art Resource, NY [right] Pablo Picasso, *Study of a Hand (The Hand of the Artist)*, 1920. Private Collection, © 2021 Estate of Pablo Picasso / Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York

<sup>i</sup> Bruce Nauman, quoted in Michele de Angelus, “Oral History Interview with Bruce Nauman,” *Smithsonian Archives of American Art*, Washington, D.C., May 27-30, 1980, transcript.

<sup>ii</sup> Bruce Nauman, quoted in Joan Simon, “Breaking the Silence: An Interview with Bruce Nauman,” *Art in America*, September 1, 1988, [online](#).

<sup>iii</sup> Leonardo da Vinci, quoted in Joseph Comyns Carr, *Essays on Art*, London, 1897, p. 19.

#### Provenance

Sperone Westwater, New York

Acquired from the above by the present owner in April 1999

#### Exhibited

New York, Leo Castelli, *Bruce Nauman: Fifteen Pairs of Hands*, November 2 - December 14, 1996 (another example exhibited and illustrated on the exhibition poster)

Sante Fe, James Kelly Contemporary, *Art in New Mexico, Part I: Works by Agnes Martin, Bruce Nauman, Susan Rothenberg, Richard Tuttle*, July 31 - October 2, 1998

Venice, United States Pavillion at the Giardini della Biennale, *Bruce Nauman: Topological Gardens*, June 7 - November 22, 2009, pl. 7, p. 174 (another example exhibited and illustrated, p. 119)

Washington, D.C., National Gallery of Art, *Bruce Nauman: Fifteen Pairs of Hands*, March 2011 - January 2012 (another example exhibited)

#### Literature

Peter Plagens, *Bruce Nauman: The True Artist*, Berlin, 2014, no. 261, p. 277 (another example illustrated)

## 20th Century & Contemporary Art Evening Sale

New York Auction / 17 November 2021 / 7pm EST



PROPERTY FROM A DISTINGUISHED BELGIAN  
COLLECTION

41

**David Hammons**

*Untitled*

signed "Hammons" on the reverse  
rubber tube, frying pans and metal chains  
48 x 18 x 7 in. (121.9 x 45.7 x 17.8 cm)  
Executed in 1988.

**Estimate**

\$1,000,000 — 1,500,000

[Go to Lot](#)



*"You have to go back to what we were before you go forward to what we want to be. I am here to remind us [where] we came from. I be into memory, more than the avant-garde." —David Hammons*

Executed in 1988, *Untitled* epitomizes David Hammons' renowned practice of transforming discarded, banal objects into powerful creations loaded with conceptual power and multiplicities of meaning. Drawing inspiration from African art, Egyptian history, and music to European modernism and popular culture, Hammons' work alters objects and materials through forceful, and at times humorous, shifts in context to explore racial stereotypes and cultural clichés. In the present work, he layers frying pans over remolded rubber tire in the shape of a cassock or black dress, completing the sculpture with a metal chain to ostensibly form a fashionable ensemble that wonderfully encapsulates Kay Larson's words: "It says a lot about Hammons' visual sensibilities that all this remains interesting as art, not just politics."<sup>i</sup>



The present work installed at *Unexchangeable*, Brussels, Wiels, April 19 – August 12, 2018, alongside the artist's *It's Not Necessary*, 1990 (Sold Phillips New York, June 2021). Image: Courtesy of WIELS, Brussels, Photo: Philippe De Gobert, Artwork: © David Hammons

By the early 1970s, Hammons began shifting his focus from referencing the *power* of symbols to the *interrogation* of symbols in his practice. As the artist recalled, "I was influenced in a way by Mel

Edwards' work. He had a show at the Whitney in 1970 where he used a lot of chains and wires. That was the first abstract piece of art that I saw that had a cultural value in it for Black people. I couldn't believe that piece when I saw it because I didn't think you could make abstract art with a message. I saw symbols in Mel's work...Egypt and stuff. How a symbol, a shape has a meaning. After that, I started using the symbol of the spade...I was trying to figure out why Black people were called spades, as opposed to clubs. Because I remember being called a spade once, and I didn't know what it meant...I started dealing with the spade the way Jim Dine was using the heart. Then I started getting shovels (spades); I got all of these shovels and made masks out of them. It was just like a chain reaction."<sup>ii</sup>



[left] David Hammons, *Spades with Chains*, 1973. Artwork: © 2021 David Hammons [right] David Hammons, *Untitled*, 1988. Museum of Modern Art, New York, Artwork: © 2021 David Hammons

*"One thinks of Brancusi's visual simplicity, while marveling at the complex layer of meanings that the real objects convey. His art is strikingly graceful and starkly inventive. Each raw component has what you might call street use value." —Kay Larson*

By the time Hammons created *Untitled*, he had fully realized the expressive possibilities of employing found objects as potent signs and symbols of meaning. The present work at once

relates to his use of chains in his *Spades* that alludes to African masks as well as the history of slavery and conjures the sensibility of his later *Bag Lady*, for which he draped Senegalese-sold handbags over a classicized sculptural nude in Italy, the title emphasizing his acerbic wit. Here, the sculpture appears to be a visual pun of “pan-toting,” a common historical practice of African-American domestic workers taking leftover goods from their White employers as a form of compensation, which developed into the Black workers “re-appropriating the material assets of their employers for their use.”<sup>iii</sup> Alternating black cast-iron skillet and aged pans, Hammons presents an aesthetic know-how in the overall black, silver, and gold color scheme, suggesting a nice outfit with the necklace-like chain; at the same time, he exposes weary versos by placing them face down as if to reveal this dark history and its players.



David Hammons, *Bag Lady*, 1990, installed in the exhibition *Casinò Fantasma*, May 24 – July 15, 1990, at

Ca' Vendramin Calergi, part of the 44th Venice Biennale. Artwork: © 2021 David Hammons

*"As an artist, David Hammons expands our definition of the term with his varied and evolving practice. He is a 'hip junk dealer', sculptor, performer, conceptual artist, environmental sculptor, magician, philosopher, social commentator... who positions himself somewhere between Marcel Duchamp, outsider art and Arte Povera."* —Kellie Jones

Hammons' virtuosic ability in investigating the origins and identity of American society through conceptual rigor channeled through seeming visual simplicity lies in the works' "connotations and physicality," as Kellie Jones observed. Whilst re-envisioning the functionless ready-mades of Marcel Duchamp within the context of racial realities, Hammons's objects carry an emotive charge transcending Dadaism as poignant metaphors for the Black experience in America. It is through this lens that, as Jones expressed, "By making art from detritus and found materials, Hammons attempts to put himself on the same plane as the historically marginal and opens himself up to their canons of beauty and perseverance that sometimes translates as transformational magic."<sup>iv</sup>

<sup>i</sup> Kay Larson, "David Hammons," *Galerie Magazine*, February/March 1991, p. 143.

<sup>ii</sup> David Hammons, quoted in Kellie Jones, "Interview: David Hammons," *Real Life*, Autumn 1986.

<sup>iii</sup> Tera W. Hunter, *To 'Joy My Freedom: Southern Black Women's Lives and Labors after the Civil War*, Cambridge, 1997, p. 60.

<sup>iv</sup> Kellie Jones, *David Hammons: Rousing the Rubble*, New York, 1991, pp. 15-16.

#### Provenance

Jack Tilton Gallery, New York

Acquired from the above by the present owner circa 1990

#### Exhibited

Atlanta, High Museum of Art; La Jolla Museum of Contemporary Art; Seattle, Henry Art Gallery, University of Washington; New York, The BMW Gallery, *Awards in the Visual Arts 8: Jo Ann Callis, Patrick T. Dougherty, James Drake, Ron Fondaw, Ed Fraga, David Hammons, Paul Kos, Erik Levine, Ann McCoy, Charles Wilson*, April 25, 1989 - September 1990, p. 61 (illustrated)  
Brussels, Wiels, *Unexchangeable*, April 19 – August 12, 2018

#### Literature

Kay Larson, "David Hammons," *Galleries Magazine*, February/March 1991, p. 103 (illustrated)

## 20th Century & Contemporary Art Evening Sale

New York Auction / 17 November 2021 / 7pm EST



PROPERTY FROM AN IMPORTANT EAST COAST  
COLLECTION

42

### Nicolas Party

*Houses*

signed and dated "Nicolas Party 2015" on the reverse  
soft pastel on linen

58 3/4 x 39 1/4 in. (149.2 x 99.7 cm)

Executed in 2015.

Estimate

\$400,000 — 600,000

[Go to Lot](#)



*"I don't have much interest in what could be labelled as 'reality.' I'm more interested in the signs, symbols and codes we've created for reality." —Nicolas Party*

One of just two pastels presenting an architectural landscape, *Houses* is a rare example showcasing Nicolas Party's distinctive visual language. Executed in 2015, the present work featured in the artist's first major institutional show in the United Kingdom at the Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh later that same year. Rendered as simplified geometric shapes in saturated color, *Houses* oscillates between still life and landscape, representation and abstraction—at once evoking the familiar and the surreal.



The present work installed at *Nicolas Party, Boys and Pastel*, Inverleith House, Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh, May 2 – June 21, 2015. Image: Courtesy of Inverleith House, Edinburgh, Photo: Michael Wolchover, Artwork: © 2021 Nicolas Party

Notably foreshadowing Party's preoccupation with arches, *Houses* eloquently captures the influence of classical architecture on his practice. Recently in 2020, the artist further elucidated in reference to the present work, "I did two pastels a while ago with arches, the only two pastels with houses. I still want to go back to that, but I haven't yet. The Karma show [in 2017] was the first time that I used arches, and as soon as I did, I was like, 'Oh my God, that's very powerful and it works extremely well.'" <sup>i</sup>

*"Arches have been used, obviously, in a lot of temples or churches and they make you feel very different when you cross through them in those spaces...I really do believe that can affect you, along with the colors, basically the forms and shapes in different aspects of space." —Nicolas Party*



[left] Giorgio de Chirico, *Italian Square with Politician (Piazza d'Italia con uomo politico)*, 1950-1955. Galleria Nazionale d'Arte Moderna, Rome, Image: Mondadori Portfolio / Art Resource, NY, Artwork: © 2021 Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York / SIAE, Rome [right] René Magritte, *La Poitrine (The Breast)*, 1961. Private Collection, Brussels, Image: Herscovici / Art Resource, NY, Artwork: © 2021 C. Herscovici / Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York

Drawing upon the Convent of San Marco in Florence decorated by Fra Angelico, the geometric curvatures of arches are now immediately recognizable across Party's compositions and installations—a device he deploys to coalesce the past and present in *Houses*. "When you look at an artwork from the past, you feel that time becomes much more elastic. Time and history become a 'zone' where you can travel," the artist expressed. <sup>ii</sup> "At the end it is exactly what being an artist means: exploring the incredible, imaginative power of the human mind." <sup>iii</sup>



Giorgio Morandi, *Still Life*, 1948. Galleria d'Arte Moderna, Bologna, Image: © DeA Picture Library / Art Resource, NY, Artwork: © 2021 Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York / SIAE, Rome

Best known for reviving pastel as a contemporary medium, Party plays with form, space, and color to reinvigorate the traditional genres of landscape, still life, and portraiture. Here, Party's biomorphic, volumetric rendering of the houses recall the tranquil, focused compositions of Giorgio Morandi and Milton Avery. At once redolent of his own still lifes of pots, *Houses* exemplifies the fascinating visual and conceptual discourse on reality and perception that permeates Party's oeuvre.

*"I like simplicity that has an inherent complexity...How many masterful pieces are made of the simplest of subjects?" —Nicolas Party*

A classically trained, Swiss-born artist with a background in graffiti art, Party channels his unique

sensibility in creating his surrealist figurations that evoke the likes of David Hockney, René Magritte, and Giorgio de Chirico. "The super-bright colors, the very clear lines and effective shapes, these are all things you do with graffiti," he explained.<sup>iv</sup> Set against a white backdrop and maroon-brown ground, edifices of dynamic scales and shapes alternate between Fauvist and earthy hues. Here, the artist presents a masterful dialogue on the power of color in constructing a composition with optical force. As he expressed, "A color by itself doesn't mean anything. It's only the relationship between them that makes something happen in a painting."<sup>v</sup> Transforming reality into illusory visions on canvas, Party's crisp lines and nuanced tones present the suggestion of volume without ceding the effect of flatness, suffusing life into the dreamlike composition.

<sup>i</sup> Nicolas Party, quoted in Sasha Bogojev, "Nicolas Party: A Hug From On Top of You," *Juxtapoz*, Fall 2020, [online](#).

<sup>ii</sup> Nicolas Party, quoted in Rita Vitorelli, "Interview Nicolas Party," *Spike Art Magazine*, no. 44, Summer 2015, [online](#).

<sup>iii</sup> Nicolas Party, quoted in Manuela Martorelli, "Nicolas Party," *ODDA Magazine*, 2018.

<sup>iv</sup> Nicolas Party, quoted in Catherine Hong, "Nicolas Party's Audacious Sense of Color," *Surface*, December 4, 2019, [online](#).

<sup>v</sup> Nicolas Party, quoted in Elena Bordignon, "Two Naked Women: Interview with Nicolas Party," *ATPdiary*, March 24, 2015.

#### Provenance

The Modern Institute, Glasgow  
Private Collection, USA  
Acquired from the above by the present owner

#### Exhibited

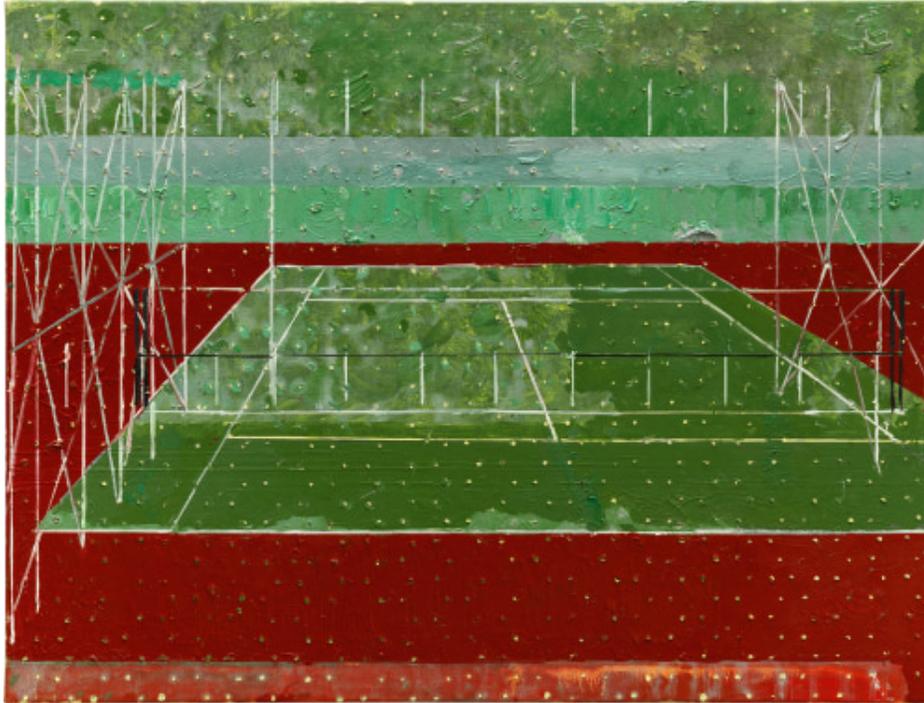
Edinburgh, Inverleith House, *Nicolas Party: Boys and Pastel*, May 2 – June 21, 2015

#### Literature

Nicolas Party, *Nicolas Party: Pastel*, New York, 2017, n.p. (illustrated)

## 20th Century & Contemporary Art Evening Sale

New York Auction / 17 November 2021 / 7pm EST



43

### Hurvin Anderson

*Country Club—Mixed Doubles*

signed and dated "Hurvin Anderson Nov 2011" on the overlap

oil and acrylic on canvas  
19 1/2 x 26 in. (49.5 x 66 cm)  
Painted in 2011.

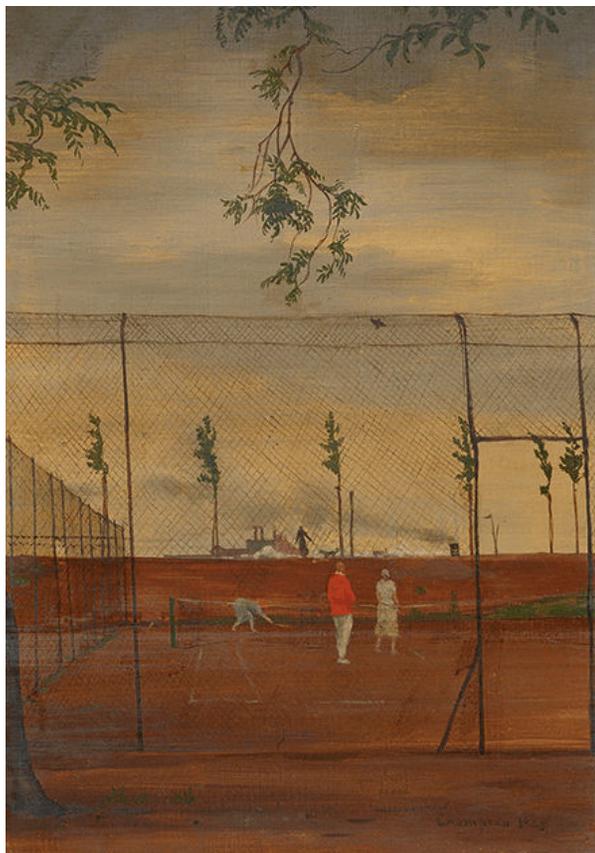
**Estimate**

\$400,000 — 600,000

[Go to Lot](#)



*"I am looking at where things collide, how these things respond to each other. I like the contradictions and the friction that results. I have been thinking of things like overlapping worlds." —Hurvin Anderson*



Theo Champion, *Tennis Players*, 1925. Nationalgalerie, Staatliche Museen, Berlin, Image: bpk Bildagentur / Nationalgalerie, Staatliche Museen / Andres Kilger / Art Resource, NY

Painted in 2011, Hurvin Anderson's *Country Club—Mixed Doubles* is a stunning example of the artist's celebrated *Country Club* series that pulses between sharp geometries and lavish brushwork, memory and imagination, figuration and abstraction. The artist presents a visual feast of painterly marks as the eye scans the canvas—from abstract strips to grid-like dots, light pastel

tones to deep primary hues, gestural swathes to impastoed dabs. Set against a lush, wooded area, the scene depicts an empty green tennis court with a dark maroon ground beyond the baseline, sectioned off by towering fences that suggests a sense of unsettling seclusion. The linear verticals, horizontals, diagonals combined with the uniform speckles flooding the canvas at once exude vibration and stillness, transporting the viewer into a matrix of alternate dimensions in space.

*"I had always felt a double-edged thing about who I was and where I came from. In Trinidad I could be all these things, I was the Englishman, but I was also the Jamaican. It was an interesting place to explore this no man's land, you could kind of drift back and forwards between these identities." —Hurvin Anderson*

Fundamentally imbedded in his personal conflicts of identity as an ethnically Jamaican, English-born artist, Anderson's works reveal his fascination with the concept of distance—mentally, physically, and visually. This rootlessness manifests in Anderson's oeuvre as a remarkably diverse art historical dialogue within his practice. As his washes and the muted vibrancy of his images reminisce of Color Field painting, his stencils and architectonic approach recall geometric abstraction. The concern with formal construction and the dreamlike quality of the artist's compositions bring to mind the frequent comparisons made to his contemporary and teacher, Peter Doig, with whom Anderson studies at the Royal College of Art. From Doig's series of *Concrete Cabins* to his Caribbean scenes, the conflux between the two artists is certainly apparent—but it is ultimately the concept of memory space that culminates their convergence in a striking light.

*"When you take a photograph you focus on something in the distance, but you get this residue of highlights, a glint of light. Maybe I was too obsessed with the hexagons, but the more you work with it the more you see that even a glint of light could describe something, could disturb the surface." —Hurvin Anderson*



[left] Peter Doig, *Paragon*, 2006. Private Collection, Artwork: © 2021 Peter Doig/Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York [right] Hurvin Anderson, *Country Club: Chicken Wire*, 2008. Private Collection,

**Hurvin Anderson**

---

Artwork: © Hurvin Anderson, ARS/NY

Working from drawings, photographs, and his own recollections, Anderson reimagines the past into complex spaces that speak to the individual and cultural significance of his work. In his *Country Club* series, the wire lattices guarding the tennis courts allude to the isolation of locals into Jamaican country clubs during the colonial era, functioning as a physical and symbolic barrier breeding exclusion and desire. In the present work, Anderson virtuosically manifests this tantalizing gaze between the second and third dimensions. The organized hexagonal spots evoke the sense of peering in from outside the pictorial space as they subtly obstruct our view of the forbidden realm just beyond reach, creating a distance that realizes the alluring yet unattainable.

---

**Provenance**

Anthony Meier Fine Arts, San Francisco

Acquired from the above by the present owner

## 20th Century & Contemporary Art Evening Sale

New York Auction / 17 November 2021 / 7pm EST



MAXIMILIANA: MAX ERNST FROM THE COLLECTION  
OF PETER SCHAMONI

44

### Max Ernst

*Ohne Titel (les hommes ne le sauront jamais)*

signed "max ernst" lower right  
gouache, watercolor, pen and graphite on buff-colored  
paper

19 3/4 x 25 1/2 in. (50.1 x 64.8 cm)

Executed circa 1921.

#### Estimate

\$500,000 — 700,000

[Go to Lot](#)



*"The joy in every successful metamorphosis conforms...with the intellect's age-old energetic need to liberate itself from the deceptive and boring paradise of fixed memories and to investigate a new, incomparably expansive areas of experience, in which the boundaries between the so-called inner world and the outer world become increasingly blurred and will probably one day disappear entirely." —Max Ernst*

Executed circa 1921, Max Ernst's *Ohne Titel (les hommes ne le sauront jamais)* emerges from one of the most innovative moments of the artist's career as he reached a fully articulated Surrealist style that placed him among the pantheon of 20th century avant-garde masters. Demonstrating his use of collage as a device to create striking conjunctions of disparate imagery, the present work exhibits Ernst's application of Freudian thought to Surrealist ends as he recreated the absurd logic of dreams with groupings of unrelated but inexplicably interconnected elements. Situating his iconic figure amidst a mélange of alchemical symbols, arcane geometry, and ornithological illustrations in an isolated seascape, *Ohne Titel* showcases a constellation of the iconographical vocabulary that would come to characterize Ernst's pioneering oeuvre.



Hermann Landshoff, *The Surrealists* (back row: Jimmy Ernst, Peggy Guggenheim, John Ferren, Marcel Duchamp, Piet Mondrian; center row: Max Ernst, Amédée Ozenfant, André Breton, Fernand Léger, Berenice Abbott; front row: Stanley William Hayter, Leonora Carrington), 1942. Muenchner Stadtmuseum, Munich, Image and Artwork: © bpk Bildagentur / Art Resource, NY

In 1921, Ernst made his acquaintance with André Breton, who shared the artist's interest in psychological realms in addition to his artistic inclinations. Upon studying psychology at the University of Bonn prior to World War I, Ernst encountered not only mainstream psychological thought but also the cutting-edge theories of Sigmund Freud. Breton and many of the French Surrealists were largely unaware of Freud, and Ernst's injection of Freudian thought into the group catalyzed not only his own work, but ultimately the development of the entire movement. For Ernst, Freud presented the arsenal to undermine the conventions through which the world is

perceived and understood; for the Surrealists, Freud offered a point of departure into the unknown domain of dreams.

*"One cannot overstate the importance of this point of departure for Max Ernst; his knowledge of Freud enabled him to analyze his own personality and to keep under control the associations that thronged his unconscious." —Werner Spies*



Max Ernst, *Les Hommes n'en sauront rien* (*Men Shall Know Nothing of This*), 1923. Tate, London, Artwork: © ADAGP, Paris and DACS, London 2021

Beginning in the early 1920s, Ernst used collage to incorporate elements influenced by Freudian

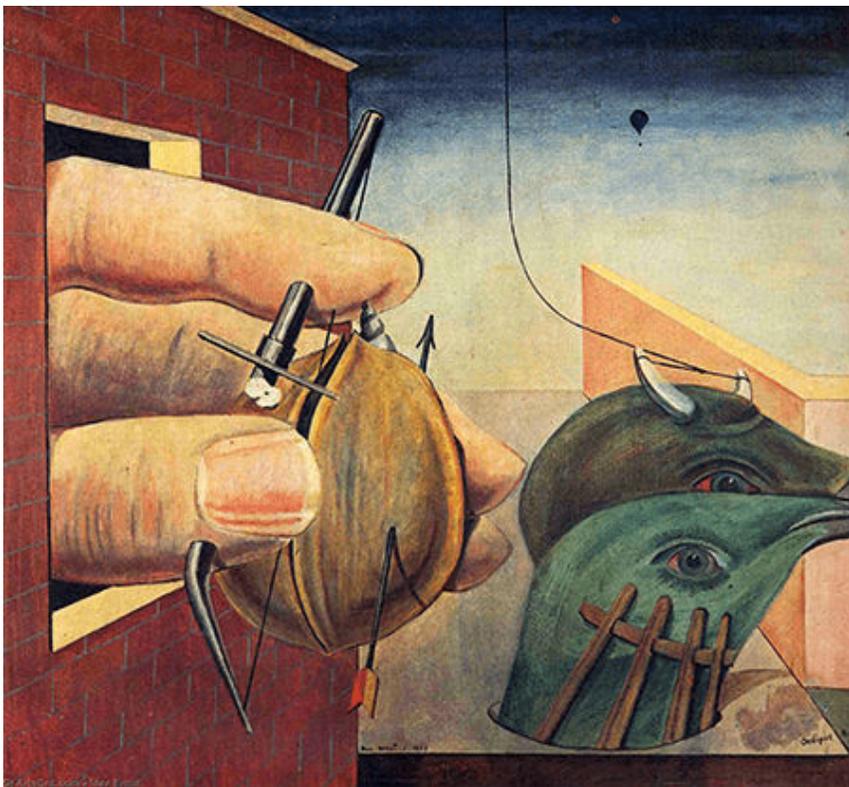
theory into his work. Ernst conceived of collage as “the coupling of two realities, irreconcilable in appearance, upon a plane that apparently does not suit them,” and his adoption of the technique as a device to bring together unrelated elements on a common plane of existence gave birth to the strange new iconography that frequents his work from this period.<sup>i</sup> In *Ohne Titel*, Ernst taps the reservoir of imagery that foreshadowed the language of Surrealism, revealing the “manifest dream content” of which Freud wrote in *The Interpretation of Dreams* and that the Surrealists sought to liberate.



As Breton wrote of Ernst’s work after seeing his first exhibition in Paris in 1921, about the most notable quality of Ernst’s painting of these years was its “wonderful ability to reach, without leaving the field of our experience, two widely separated worlds, bring them together, and strike a spark from their conjunction.”<sup>ii</sup> While not comprised of collage in the conventional sense, works such as the present example and the related *Les hommes n’en sauront rien*, 1923, achieve its effects by bringing together unrelated images into a cohesive—if absurd—whole.

*"Above the clouds the midnight is wandering. Above the midnight the unseen bird of day is soaring. A little higher than the bird, the ether is growing and the walls and the roofs are floating away." —Max Ernst*

Frequently incorporated into his work, birds held a powerful role in Ernst's imagination. The most notable example comes in the form of Loplop, Father Superior of the Birds, the totem of Ernst's Surrealism—part avatar, part shamanic guide—who presided over the leaps into the unconscious and juxtaposition of strange, dream-like images that preoccupied his Surrealist work. Ernst's fixation with avian avatars can be traced back to his childhood: he often recounted an apocryphal tale of metamorphosis when, on a cold January morning in 1906, his beloved childhood cockatoo expired at the very moment his father announced Ernst's sister's birth. Conflating the two events, the young Ernst believed that his bird's life had been given over for his sister's, which would amount to a foundational moment for his deep personal associations with the animal and his "voluntary if irrational confounding of the images of human beings with birds and other creatures."<sup>iii</sup>



Max Ernst, *Oedipus Rex*, 1922. Private Collection, Artwork: © ADAGP, Paris and DACS, London 2021

The paired birds of the present work may not only allude to the artist's spiritual kinship with the animal, but also to Freud's concept of the *Doppelgänger*, an uncanny motif comprising the alter ego or identical double of a protagonist which poses the paradox of encountering oneself as another. Fusing Freudian thought with the artist's personal mythology, *Ohne Titel (les hommes ne le sauront jamais)* encapsulates the tools in Ernst's painterly arsenal that allowed him to channel the unconscious mind into fantastical materialized creations.

### Maximiliana: Max Ernst from the Collection of Peter Schamoni

This special collection of Max Ernst works offered across Phillips Fall Sale Season comes directly from the personal collection of the renowned filmmaker Peter Schamoni. Encompassing a range of works in a variety of mediums from the 1920s through to the 1960s, the collection reflects key moments in the artist's career and personal life, highlighting Ernst's consistent interest in scientific modes of inquiry and discovery, especially in mathematics and astronomy. Ernst and Schamoni worked closely together on several collaborative projects, including the short 1966 film *Maximiliana oder die widerrechtliche Ausübung der Astronomie (Maximiliana and the Illegal Practice of Astronomy)* on which the collection title is based. Representing the depth of their personal and professional relationship, the collection also includes works that were made especially for these film projects and were gifted directly to Schamoni by Ernst. Exhibited extensively and previously on long-term loan to the Max Ernst Museum Brühl des LVR, the works were also included in the internationally renowned 2013 exhibition *Entdeckungsfahrten zu Max Ernst Die Sammlung Peter Schamoni*.

<sup>i</sup> Max Ernst, *Beyond Painting, and Other Writings by the Artist and His Friends*, New York, 1948, p. 13.

<sup>ii</sup> Werner Spies, *Max Ernst: Collages*, London, 1988, p. 228.

<sup>iii</sup> Werner Spies, *Max Ernst, Loplop: The Artist's Other Self*, London, 1983, p. 10.

#### Provenance

Galerie Alexandre Iolas, Paris

Jacques Kaplan, New York

Acquired from the above by the present owner

## Exhibited

- Turin, Galleria Galatea, *Max Ernst*, October 22 - November 18, 1966, no. 7, n.p.
- Barcelona, Galeria René Metras, *Max Ernst*, May 1968, no. 14, n.p.
- Stockholm, Moderna Museet, *Max Ernst: målningar, collage, frottage, teckningar, grafik, böcker, skulpturer 1917-1969*, September 13 - November 2, 1969, no. 9, p. 73
- Paris, Galeries nationales du Grand Palais, *Max Ernst*, May 16 - August 18, 1975, no. 105, p. 159 (illustrated, p. 52)
- Kunsthhaus Zürich; Frankfurt am Main, Städelsches Kunstinstitut und Städtische Galerie; Munich, Städtische Galerie, *Max Ernst*, August 18, 1978 - April 15, 1979, no. 44, p. 162 (illustrated, p. 85)
- Kolnischer Kunstverein, *Max Ernst in Köln*, May 7 - July 6, 1980, no. 91, p. 327 (illustrated, p. 169)
- Bonn, Ausstellung im Bundeskanzleramt, *Max Ernst*, July 1980, no. 6, n.p. (illustrated)
- Staatliche Kunsthalle Baden-Baden, *Kosmische Bilder in der Kunst des 20. Jahrhunderts*, November 11, 1983 - January 6, 1984, no. 23, p. 190 (illustrated, p. 145)
- Madrid, Fundación Juan March, *Max Ernst*, February 28 - April 27, 1986, no. 8, n.p. (illustrated, n.p.)
- London, The Tate Gallery; Stuttgart, Staatsgalerie; Dusseldorf, Kunstsammlung Nordrhein-Westfalen, *Max Ernst: A Retrospective*, February 13 - November 3, 1991, no. 61, p. 375 (illustrated, p. 106)
- New York, The Museum of Modern Art; Houston, The Menil Collection; The Art Institute of Chicago, *Max Ernst: Dada and the Dawn of Surrealism*, March 14 - November 30, 1993, pl. 127, no. 143, p. 371 (illustrated, p. 258)
- Kunsthhaus Zürich; Munich, Haus der Kunst; Berlin, Nationalgalerie, *Arnold Böcklin, Giorgio de Chirico, Max Ernst: Eine Reise ins Ungewisse*, October 3, 1997 - August 10, 1998, no. 169, p. 442 (illustrated, p. 354)
- Berlin, Neue Nationalgalerie; Munich, Haus der Kunst, *Max Ernst - Die Retrospektive*, March 5 - September 12, 1999, no. 34, p. 62 (illustrated, p. 63)
- Munster, Landesmuseum für Kunst und Kulturgeschichte, *Max Ernst lässt grüßen: Peter Schamoni begegnet Max Ernst*, September 27, 2009 - January 10, 2010, p. 57 (illustrated)
- Max Ernst Museum Brühl des LVR, *Entdeckungsfahrten zu Max Ernst / Die Sammlung Peter Schamoni*, February 24 - June 23, 2013, pp. 62, 175 (illustrated, p. 63)

## Literature

- Werner Spies, *Max Ernst - Collagen, Inventar und Widerspruch*, Cologne, 1974, no. 170, p. 489 (illustrated, n.p.)
- Peter Schamoni, *Max Ernst Maximiliana, die widerrechtliche Ausübung der Astronomie*, Munich, 1974, p. 19 (illustrated, p. 18)
- Werner Spies, Sigrid and Günter Metken, eds., *Max Ernst Oeuvre-Katalog. Werke 1906-1925*, Cologne, 1975, no. 464, p. 238 (illustrated)
- Winifried Konnertz, *Max Ernst*, Cologne, 1980, no. 23, p. 250 (illustrated, p. 54)

## 20th Century & Contemporary Art Evening Sale

New York Auction / 17 November 2021 / 7pm EST



MAXIMILIANA: MAX ERNST FROM THE COLLECTION  
OF PETER SCHAMONI

45

### Max Ernst

*Kachina, le chien de Peggy Guggenheim*

signed "max ernst" center left

oil on canvas

18 1/8 x 21 5/8 in. (46 x 54.9 cm)

Painted circa 1942.

Dr. Jürgen Pech has confirmed the authenticity of this work, which will be included in the supplementary volume of the complete work of Max Ernst now in preparation, edited by Prof. Dr. Werner Spies in collaboration with Dr. Jürgen Pech and Dr. Sigrid Metken.

**Estimate**

\$280,000 — 350,000

[Go to Lot](#)





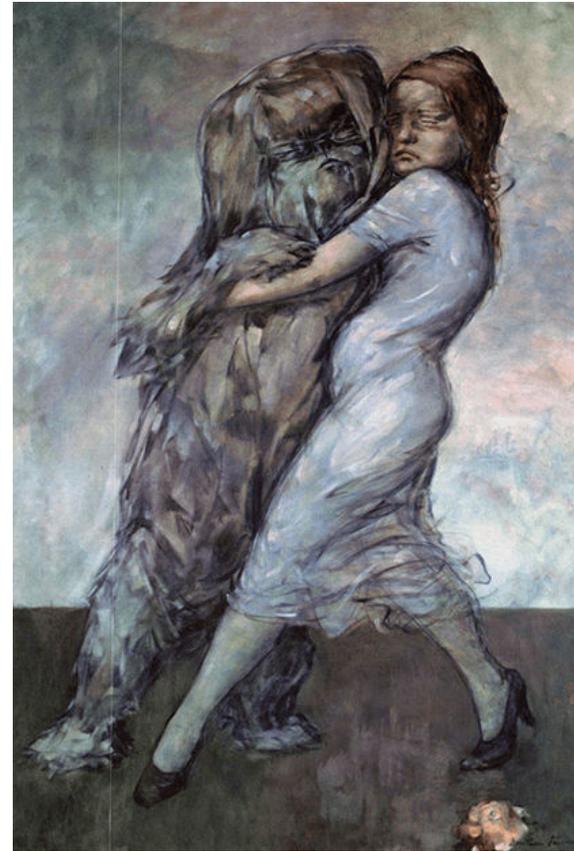
Max Ernst and Kachina, photographed by Dorothea Tanning. Artwork: © ADAGP, Paris / DACS, London

Picturing a windswept dog exuding confidence and majesty, Max Ernst's *Kachina* is a lovingly painted portrait of one of Ernst's closest companions: his dog. Ernst named Kachina after the Hopi kachina dolls he collected, situating the present work not only as a touching homage to the artist's Pekingese but also amidst his belief in the power of myth and longstanding interest in Hopi sculpture. Here, the artist renders Kachina more as a lioness in his manipulation of scale, presenting the dog in an uncanny landscape devoid of detail.

*"If Richard Wagner had seen this, his music would be even louder than it is."* —Max Ernst on the sublime Southwestern landscape

Kachina's name refers to the powerful spiritual deities of the Pueblo Villages of the American Southwest. Revered especially by the Hopi tribe, who occupied terrain close to the homestead Ernst and Dorothea Tanning made in 1946, a kachina can resemble anything in the natural world or cosmos, including animals, objects, structures, and elements. The Hopi believed that the immortal

kachinas acted as messengers between the human and spirit worlds and could be implored, through ritualistic dance and the ceremonial giving of carved dolls, to bring about the harvest rains. The colorful cottonwood dolls were typically presented to young girls or new brides to instruct them in the societal expectations and elemental forces of the world in which they lived.



Dorothea Tanning, *Valse bleue (The Blue Waltz)*, 1954. Private Collection, Artwork: © ADAGP, Paris / DACS, London

Ernst first encountered Hopi culture and the kachinas on a trip to the West with Peggy Guggenheim, with whom the artist lived in New York at the time. Knowing that Ernst's former partner Leonora Carrington also lived in New York, Guggenheim swept Ernst away to California,

where they lived a life of luxury and pleasure. Guggenheim, however, concluded that California was unprepared to receive the Surrealist art that she so championed, and the couple returned to New York. On the drive back across the country, the pair routed through Arizona, where Ernst discovered the Southwest and its sublime, spartan landscapes. He felt that the region contained the striking and unusual imagery he had invented in his painting using his decalcomania technique. In Arizona, Ernst also encountered the extraordinary mysticism of the Hopi culture. On this first trip west in the early 1940s, Ernst was so taken with the Hopi Kachina dolls that he purchased the entire stock of the Grand Canyon Trading Post and brought the figures back with him to New York.<sup>i</sup>



René Magritte, *The Civilizer*, 1946. Image: Banque d'Images, ADAGP / Art Resource, NY, Artwork: © 2021 C. Herscovici, Brussels / Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York

Ernst's kachina figures eventually gave way to Kachina, the dog. Despite the work's title, Kachina technically belonged to Ernst. Guggenheim adored the dog deeply and considered requesting joint custody of Kachina in their divorce—but ultimately, she magnanimously allowed Ernst to keep the dog, under the condition that she could adopt two of Kachina's puppies. Later, Ernst brought Kachina with him upon moving in with Dorothea Tanning into her New York apartment. Traveling with the couple to Arizona and France, Kachina became part of the family after their marriage and became a dear subject of many of Tanning's works. In the present composition, Ernst pictures his dog in the de Chiriquisque landscape; framed by gently sloping red surfaces and a ramshackle

wooden wall, the environment evokes the isolation and self-reliance of the homestead Ernst built by hand in the Sedona desert. The inscrutable face of this small dog stares out from the canvas as Kachina; totemic like the Hopi figures, Kachina assumes a mythic posture and alludes to the mysterious power of the spiritual world.

### Maximiliana: Max Ernst from the Collection of Peter Schamoni

This special collection of Max Ernst works offered across Phillips Fall Sale Season comes directly from the personal collection of the renowned filmmaker Peter Schamoni. Encompassing a range of works in a variety of mediums from the 1920s through to the 1960s, the collection reflects key moments in the artist's career and personal life, highlighting Ernst's consistent interest in scientific modes of inquiry and discovery, especially in mathematics and astronomy. Ernst and Schamoni worked closely together on several collaborative projects, including the short 1966 film *Maximiliana oder die widerrechtliche Ausübung der Astronomie* (*Maximiliana and the Illegal Practice of Astronomy*) on which the collection title is based. Representing the depth of their personal and professional relationship, the collection also includes works that were made especially for these film projects and were gifted directly to Schamoni by Ernst. Exhibited extensively and previously on long-term loan to the Max Ernst Museum Brühl des LVR, the works were also included in the internationally renowned 2013 exhibition *Entdeckungsfahrten zu Max Ernst Die Sammlung Peter Schamoni*.

<sup>i</sup> Samantha Kavky, "Max Ernst in Arizona: Myth, Mimesis and the Hysterical Landscape," *RES: Anthropology and Aesthetics*, vol. 57-58, Spring-Autumn 2010, p. 210.

#### Provenance

Galerie Drouant-David, Paris  
Private Collection (acquired from the above in the 1950s)  
Private Collection, England (by descent from the above)  
Christie's, London, February 7, 2007, lot 394  
Acquired at the above sale by the present owner

#### Exhibited

Munster, Landesmuseum für Kunst und Kulturgeschichte, *Max Ernst lässt grüßen: Peter Schamoni begegnet Max Ernst*, September 27, 2009 - January 10, 2010, p. 91 (illustrated; illustrated on the front cover)  
Max Ernst Museum Brühl des LVR, *Entdeckungsfahrten zu Max Ernst / Die Sammlung Peter Schamoni*, February 24 - June 23, 2013, pp. 78, 176 (illustrated, p. 79)

## 20th Century & Contemporary Art Evening Sale

New York Auction / 17 November 2021 / 7pm EST



46

**Cy Twombly**

*Untitled*

signed and dated "Cy Twombly 1964" lower edge;  
signed, inscribed and dated "Cy Twombly Val Gardena  
aug 1964" on the reverse  
pencil, colored pencil and ballpoint pen on paper  
27 1/2 x 39 in. (69.9 x 99.1 cm)  
Executed in 1964.

**Estimate**

\$600,000 — 800,000

[Go to Lot](#)



Delivering the impressive impact of Cy Twombly's unique pictorial language, *Untitled* is a vivid example of the "whorl" works that the artist created in 1964. A flurry of scribbles, scratches and loops coalesce into an abstract composition that is simultaneously delicate and dynamic—punctuated by subtle bursts of red and blue color, and anchored by four dominant monument-like rectangular structures. Created during a spurt of creativity between July and August 1964, *Untitled* belongs to a suite of nineteen drawings called *Notes from a Tower* that Twombly embarked on at Castel Gardena, a Renaissance castle in the Italian Alps where he regularly summered. Charged with frenetic energy, other examples from this series reside in prominent collections, such as that of Jasper Johns, the Albright-Knox Art Gallery, Buffalo, the Whitney Museum of American Art and the Morgan Library & Museum, New York, the latter previously belonging to fellow artist Roy Lichtenstein. Executed at a pivotal point in the artist's career, *Untitled* suspends the viewer in a moment of spirited sublimity.



Julie Mehretu, *Untitled*, 2004. The Museum of Modern Art, New York, Image: Digital Image © The Museum of Modern Art/Licensed by SCALA / Art Resource, NY, Artwork: © 2021 Julie Mehretu

*"When I work, I work very fast, but preparing to work can take any length of time."*  
—Cy Twombly

Created seven years after the artist's career-defining move to Rome in 1957, the present work epitomizes the revolutionary visual idiom that Twombly developed in response to the mythical past of his surroundings and his immediate experiences in Italy. In 1957, he expressed, "Each line is now the actual experience with its own innate history. It does not illustrate — it is the sensation of its own realization."<sup>i</sup> While his American counterparts were finding inspiration in Pop culture or Minimalism, Twombly, ever the contrarian, was developing a series of groundbreaking works inspired by the epic and dramatic panoramas and classical landscapes of the High Renaissance and Baroque.



Wassily Kandinsky, *Untitled*, 1940. Musée National d'Art Moderne, Centre Georges Pompidou, Paris, Image: Digital Image © CNAC/MNAM, Dist. RMN-Grand Palais / Art Resource, NY, Artwork: © 2021 Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York / ADAGP, Paris

*Untitled* is emblematic of the seminal body of work that Twombly created in the 1960s, widely considered as a critical and extremely fertile period in his long and illustrious career. As Simon Schama has observed, "Twombly's creative energy erupts, turning out an extended series of untitled compositions in which pictograms and ideograms...swim and seethe in a broth of jittery action."<sup>ii</sup> While Twombly's 1961-1963 series of works frequently referenced specific classical tales as a point of departure, the present work demonstrates how, starting in 1964, Twombly's work is characterized by that which Roland Barthes termed a "Mediterranean effect": a topology of references constituting, "an enormous complex of memories and sensations...a historical, mythological, poetic culture, this whole life of forms, colors and light which occurs at the frontier of

the terrestrial landscape and the plains of the sea.”<sup>iii</sup>



Cy Twombly in Rome, Italy. Horst P. Horst for Vogue, 1966. Image and Artwork: Horst P Horst/Condé Nast/Shutterstock

The drawings Twombly created in the summer of 1964 at the Castel Gardena represent a crucial stage in the formal evolution of Twombly’s oeuvre in that period. Twombly began work on this series shortly after completing the triptych *Ilium* titled *One Morning Ten Years Later*, 1964, in Rome; Part I of this work resides in The Broad Museum, Los Angeles. While drawing upon the events leading up to the Trojan War, as detailed in Homer’s epic *The Iliad*, Twombly creates an

ambivalent scene, evocative of a frenzied battle, but also a “deliberately eroticized apotheosis of life and death.”<sup>iv</sup> Through his experimentations in his *Notes from a Tower* series, Twombly further developed these iconographic themes, in anticipation of his solo exhibition *The Artist in the Northern Climate* at the Galerie Friedrich + Dahlen, Munich, in the autumn of 1964 where he exhibited a selection of the Castel Gardena drawings alongside ten paintings created for the exhibition. While resuming the visual dialogue with the *Notes from a Tower* works, these paintings introduced an unprecedented level of formal reduction that was characterized by an emphasis on the dominant rectangular structures. Situated at this critical juncture, *Untitled* articulates an important evolution in Twombly’s practice, which culminated in the artist’s celebrated mid-1960s monochromatic, grey paintings.

<sup>i</sup> Cy Twombly, quoted in “Signs,” *L’Esperienza moderna*, no. 2, August/September 1957, pp. 32–33.

<sup>ii</sup> Simon Schama, *Cy Twombly Fifty Years of Works on Paper*, exh. cat., State Hermitage Museum, St. Petersburg, 2003, p. 14.

<sup>iii</sup> Roland Barthes, quoted in “The Wisdom of Art,” in Nicola Del Roscio, ed., *Writings on Cy Twombly*, Munich, 2002, p. 19.

<sup>iv</sup> Heiner Bastian, ed., *Cy Twombly Catalogue Raisonné of the Paintings*, Volume II, 1961–1965, Munich, 1993, p. 30.

#### Provenance

Ugo Ferranti, Rome  
Locksley Shea Gallery, Minneapolis  
Estate of John M. and Marion A. Shea, Palm Springs  
Christie’s, New York, November 19, 1997, lot 328  
Private Collection, Belgium  
Van de Weghe Fine Art, New York  
Private Collection, Japan (acquired from the above)  
Phillips, London, March 8, 2018, lot 12  
Acquired at the above sale by the present owner

#### Exhibited

Newport Beach, Harbor Art Museum; Madison, Elvehjem Museum of Art; Richmond, Virginia Museum of Fine Arts; Toronto, Art Gallery of Ontario, *Cy Twombly. Works on Paper 1954 – 1976*, October 2, 1981 – October 17, 1982, no. 14, p. 37 (illustrated)

#### Literature

Nicola del Roscio, *Cy Twombly: Catalogue Raisonné of Drawings, 1964–1969*, vol. IV, New York, 2014, no. 51, p. 57 (illustrated)

## 20th Century & Contemporary Art Evening Sale

New York Auction / 17 November 2021 / 7pm EST



47

### Reggie Burrows Hodges

*On the Verge: Green*

signed with the artist's initials and dated "RB 20" on the reverse

acrylic and pastel on canvas  
60 x 44 in. (152.4 x 111.8 cm)

Executed in 2020.

**Estimate**

\$100,000 — 150,000

[Go to Lot](#)



*"My practice has been inspired by the study of moments and translating the essence of them through color, figuration, abstraction, and various techniques of mark making." —Reggie Burrows Hodges*

Executed in 2020, the present work is a meditative example of Reggie Burrows Hodges' mysterious silhouette-like canvases. Belonging to his *On The Verge* series, the composition depicts a figure riding a unicycle set against an inky, matte black expanse. A singular motif expressed here, the figure's shadow becomes a spectral protagonist hewed out of the rust and ochre ground. The soft blended brushstrokes of the subject's jacket create a radiant visual contrast to the abstracted landscape conjured by Hodges.



Reggie Burrows Hodges, *On The Verge: Suspension of a Blue State*, 2020. Private Collection, Artwork: Courtesy of the artist and Karma, New York

A reoccurring theme in Hodges' recent work, the unicycle is referenced in at least ten other canvases executed in 2019 and 2020, six of which were included in the artist's lauded debut show in New York at Karma in 2021. In Hodges oeuvre, the balancing act of riding a unicycle presents "a metaphor for the complexity of navigating the world with attention and immediacy. Traversing through varied environments, each canvas in the series suggests different stages of a metaphorical journey."<sup>1</sup>

*"I start with a black ground [as a way] of dealing with blackness's totality. I'm painting an environment in which the figures emerge from negative space [...] If you see my paintings in person, you'll look at the depth." —Reggie Burrows Hodges*



Mark Rothko, *Untitled (White, Black, Rust, on Brown)*, 1968, Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, Image: © The Metropolitan Museum of Art. Image source: Art Resource, NY, Artwork: © 1998 Kate Rothko Prizel & Christopher Rothko / Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York

*"I'm interested in intersecting an internal experience and symbolizing that in my work in order to present a view of my personal heritage and journey."* —Reggie Burrows Hodges

Hodges often explores themes of identity and personal memories. Many of his faceless portraits, almost always with bold, color-field backgrounds, depict abstract scenes of his subjects in movement or partaking in leisurely activities such as tennis, track and field, and dancing. Now living and working in Maine, the Compton-born artist takes inspiration from previous color-field

masters such as Milton Avery, Helen Frankenthaler, and Mark Rothko to create a forceful density in his works. Hodges employs a unique process where he "paints entire canvases black, then fills in furniture, walls and clothing around them, leaving the subjects themselves as untouched, impossibly deep silhouettes."<sup>ii</sup>



Milton Avery, *Blue Figure - Blue Sea*, 1945. Private Collection, Artwork: © 2021 Milton Avery Trust / Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York

## Collector's Digest

- Reggie Burrows Hodges made his auction debut with Phillips London in October 2021, when his [For the Greater Good](#) achieved £441,000, soaring over 15 times its low estimate.
- The artist's work resides in major institutional collections around the world including the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, and the Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam.
- Following the artist's highly acclaimed New York debut at Karma, New York earlier this year, Hodges will be the subject of a solo exhibition at the Centre for Maine Contemporary Art, Rockland in 2022.
- After becoming the 2019 recipient of the Ellis-Beauregard Foundation Fellowship in the Visual Arts, Hodges was awarded the Jacob Lawrence Award in Art by the American Academy of Arts and Letters in 2021.



*For the Greater Good*, 2019 Achieved £441,000 in 2021.

<sup>ii</sup> Will Heinrich, "3 Art Gallery Shows to See Right Now," *The New York Times*, February 10, 2020.

### Provenance

Surovek Gallery, Palm Beach (acquired directly from the artist)  
Acquired from the above by the present owner

<sup>i</sup> Karma, *Reggie Burrows Hodges*, January 2021, press release.

## 20th Century & Contemporary Art Evening Sale

New York Auction / 17 November 2021 / 7pm EST



MAXIMILIANA: MAX ERNST FROM THE COLLECTION  
OF PETER SCHAMONI

48

### Max Ernst

*Portrait de Ernst Wilhelm Leberecht Tempel*

signed and dated "max ernst 65" lower right; signed,  
titled and dated "Ernst Wilhelm Leberecht Tempel max  
ernst 1965" on the reverse

collage and oil on wood panel  
39 1/2 x 20 in. (100.3 x 50.8 cm)

Executed in 1965.

#### Estimate

\$200,000 — 300,000

[Go to Lot](#)



*"The significance of suns, moons, constellations, nebulae, galaxies and space as a whole outside the earth zone have steadily taken root during the last century in human consciousness as well as in my work, and will most probably remain there."*  
—Max Ernst

As a portrait of the 19th century amateur astronomer and lithographer Ernst Wilhelm Leberecht Tempel, the present work occupies a place of distinctive significance in the collection of renowned film-maker Peter Schamoni. Traveling around Europe, Tempel discovered several comets before turning his sights to minor planets, including his discovery of 65/Cybele in 1861 which he named "Maximiliana" in honor of Maximilian II of Bavaria. Operating outside of the establishment however, Tempel's "illegal" discoveries were frequently challenged and overruled, and he was frustrated in his desire for recognition and acknowledgment by the scientific community that he so longed to be accepted into. Tempel and the story of Maximiliana began to preoccupy Ernst in the early 1960s, explored first in a 1964 artist's book collaboration with Russian Dadaist Ilya Zdanevich), and then in his 1966 collaboration with Schamoni, the short film *Maximiliana oder die widerrechtliche Ausübung der Astronomie* (*Maximiliana and the illegal practice of astronomy*) and their later 1974 text *Max Ernst: Maximiliana*.

Video: <https://vimeo.com/603207431/bc3c5eff54>

*Maximiliana oder die widerrechtliche Ausübung der Astronomie* (1966), directed by Peter Schamoni.

Executed in 1965, in the early years of Ernst and Schamoni's burgeoning friendship, the playful assemblage *Portrait de Ernst Wilhelm Leberecht Tempel* is deeply representative of both the artist's formal experimentation and his thematic preoccupations during these years. Showcasing Ernst's characteristically witty and expressive juxtaposition of materials, he combines black checker pieces, a wooden-handled metal brush, and one of the printing plates used for the 1964 artist's book *65 Maximiliana ou l'exercice illégal de l'astronomie* in his portrait of the 19th century astronomer. Touching on a broader cultural shift towards the stars as the Space Race intensified through the 1960s, Ernst's playful portrait of this historically marginalised figure speaks fondly to the fundamental importance of assemblage in his practice, and of the central role played by Tempel and Maximiliana in Ernst's radically interdisciplinary collaborations.

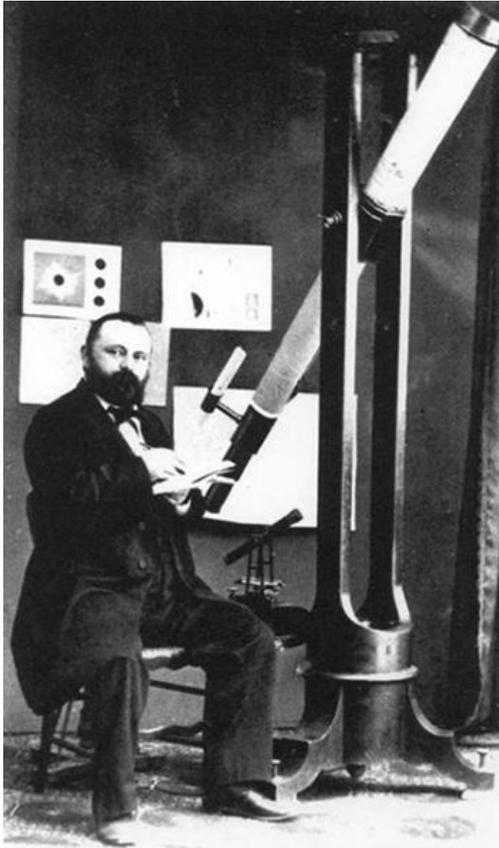
## The Artist and the Astronomer

*"The art of seeing is on the point of getting lost as a result of the invention of all sorts of optical instruments."* —Ernst Wilhelm Leberecht Tempel, 1878



Max Ernst standing with the present work in Paris, 1964. Photo by Viktor Schamoni, courtesy of the estate of Peter Schamoni

Especially pronounced in his collage and frottage works from the 1920s and early 1930s, Ernst had a well-established interest in natural history and astronomy, and freely incorporated these visual elements into his work. After having stumbled on Tempel's poem *Der Glöckner* in 1960, Ernst became immediately fascinated by the compelling parallels he was able to draw between the two of them. Beyond sharing a name and a robust engagement with print illustration for which Tempel had formally trained, Ernst found himself convinced that Tempel shared his own, rebellious instincts and revolutionary vision.



Astronomer Ernst Wilhelm Leberecht Tempel at his observatory in Marseilles

At odds with the technical developments of his own time, Tempel preferred rudimentary instruments that allowed him to capture astronomical phenomena such as the Merope Nebulae in the Pleiades in 1859. Rejecting the significant developments in photography during the mid-19th century, Tempel instead cultivated a complex notion of what he described as the “art of seeing,” a process that involved both close scientific observation and leaps of imaginative faith not dissimilar to that practiced by Ernst. Such pronouncements deeply resonated with Ernst, whose pioneering forays into the visual languages of Dada and Surrealism had prioritized precisely these questions of vision and “seeing.”

*"May I allow myself, as a painter, to discover a similar phenomenon in art: that everything that has accumulated over the centuries has lost direct, real seeing. And at all times there have been painters who have come back to see this. And these are the real revolutionaries in painting." —Max Ernst*

Evolving out of his early Dada collage experiments and closely related to the artist's restless experimentation with materials and technique that he would develop in his celebrated frottages after 1925, the present work comes from a period of more intensive exploration of these processes and playful approach to his selected materials.



Max Ernst, *Two Children Are Threatened by a Nightingale (Deux Enfants sont menacés par un rossignol)*, 1924. Museum of Modern Art, New York, Artwork: © ADAGP, Paris and DACS, London 2021

While the checker-piece eyes perhaps refer to the elements of play and chance advocated by Dada and Surrealist practices that to some extents were also incorporated in Tempel's own largely unaided observation of the stars, the metal-toothed comb (most likely a dog grooming tool) playfully corresponds to the formal elements of nose and mouth while wittily evoking the bushy beard of the portrait's subject.



*"It is possible to interpret this confrontation of script and stars. Just as now and then a star emerges from the host – as a moving planet, as a comet – so also does a cipher, whose ideogram becomes intelligible to us, rise up now and then from the heap of incomprehensibility. One could draw the conclusion that the limits of vision correspond to the limits of understanding." — Werner Spies*

Incorporating one of the lithographic plates used in the earlier *65 Maximiliana* project, the present work simultaneously pays tribute to Tempel's own lithographic talents, and of the extent to which Ernst not only incorporated Tempel into his thinking in significant ways during this period, but of his attempts to communicate directly with this great visionary through his own secret script. At once a witty tribute to the pioneering amateur scientist, the present work is also a proud announcement of the mutually illuminating practices of the artist and the astronomer.

### Maximiliana: Max Ernst from the Collection of Peter Schamoni

This special collection of Max Ernst works offered across Phillips Fall Sale Season comes directly from the personal collection of the renowned filmmaker Peter Schamoni. Encompassing a range of works in a variety of mediums from the 1920s through to the 1960s, the collection reflects key moments in the artist's career and personal life, highlighting Ernst's consistent interest in scientific

modes of inquiry and discovery, especially in mathematics and astronomy. Ernst and Schamoni worked closely together on several collaborative projects, including the short 1966 film *Maximiliana oder die widerrechtliche Ausübung der Astronomie (Maximiliana and the Illegal Practice of Astronomy)* on which the collection title is based. Representing the depth of their personal and professional relationship, the collection also includes works that were made especially for these film projects and were gifted directly to Schamoni by Ernst. Exhibited extensively and previously on long-term loan to the Max Ernst Museum Brühl des LVR, the works were also included in the internationally renowned 2013 exhibition *Entdeckungsfahrten zu Max Ernst Die Sammlung Peter Schamoni*.

#### Provenance

Alexander Iolas Gallery, New York

Acquired from the above by the present owner

#### Exhibited

New York, The Jewish Museum, *Max Ernst, Sculpture and recent painting*, March 3 - April 17, 1966, no. 86, p. 56 (illustrated)

Venedig, Palazzo Grassi, *Max Ernst, Sculpture and recent painting*, June 17 - October 2, 1966, no. 85, n.p. (illustrated)

Tokyo, The Seibu Museum of Art; Kobe, Museum of Modern Art Hyogo, *Exhibition of Works by Max Ernst*, April 15 - July 10, 1977, no. 120, n.p. (illustrated, n.p.)

Neustadt an der Weinstraße, Villa Böhm, *Max Ernst, Abfälle vom Werk / Déchets d'oeuvres; Originale und Grafik aus der Sammlung Peter Schamoni*, December 9-23, 1978, n.p. (illustrated, n.p.)

Munich, Haus der Kunst; Berlin, Nationalgalerie, *Max Ernst. Retrospektive*, February 17 - July 15, 1979, no. 318, p. 342 (illustrated)

Westfälisches Landesmuseum für Kunst und Kulturgeschichte Münster; Kunsthaus Zürich, *Relief. Formprobleme zwischen Malerei und Skulptur im 20. Jahrhundert*, August 22 - November 2, 1980, no. 114, p. 201 (illustrated)

Berlin, Neue Nationalgalerie; Munich, Haus der Kunst, *Max Ernst - Die Retrospektive*, March 5 - September 12, 1999, no. 177, p. 236 (illustrated, p. 238)

Brühl, Max Ernst Museum, *Max Ernst, Eröffnungsausstellung*, September 4, 2005 - September 30, 2006

Brühl, Max Ernst Museum, *Max Ernst, Schausammlung im Wechsel II*, October 24, 2006 - April 1, 2007

Munster, Landesmuseum für Kunst und Kulturgeschichte, *Max Ernst lässt grüßen: Peter Schamoni begegnet Max Ernst*, September 27, 2009 - January 10, 2010, p. 141 (illustrated)

Max Ernst Museum Brühl des LVR, *Entdeckungsfahrten zu Max Ernst / Die Sammlung Peter Schamoni*, February 24 - June 23, 2013, p. 178 (illustrated, p. 147; the artist with the present work, Paris, 1967, illustrated, p. 146)

**Literature**

Peter Schamoni, *Max Ernst Maximiliana, die widerrechtliche Ausübung der Astronomie*, Munich, 1974, p. 78 (illustrated)

Ursula Lindau, *Max Ernst und die Romantik. Unendliches Spiel mit Witz und Ironie*, Cologne, 1997, no. 94, pp. 182, 190 (illustrated, p. 183)

*Schriftenreihe der Max Ernst Gesellschaft. Band I*, Brühl, 2005, p. 88 (illustrated)

Werner Spies, Sigrid Metken, Günter Metken and Jürgen Pech, eds., *Max Ernst OEuvre-Katalog. Werke 1964-1969*, Cologne, 2007, no. 4043, p. 101 (illustrated)