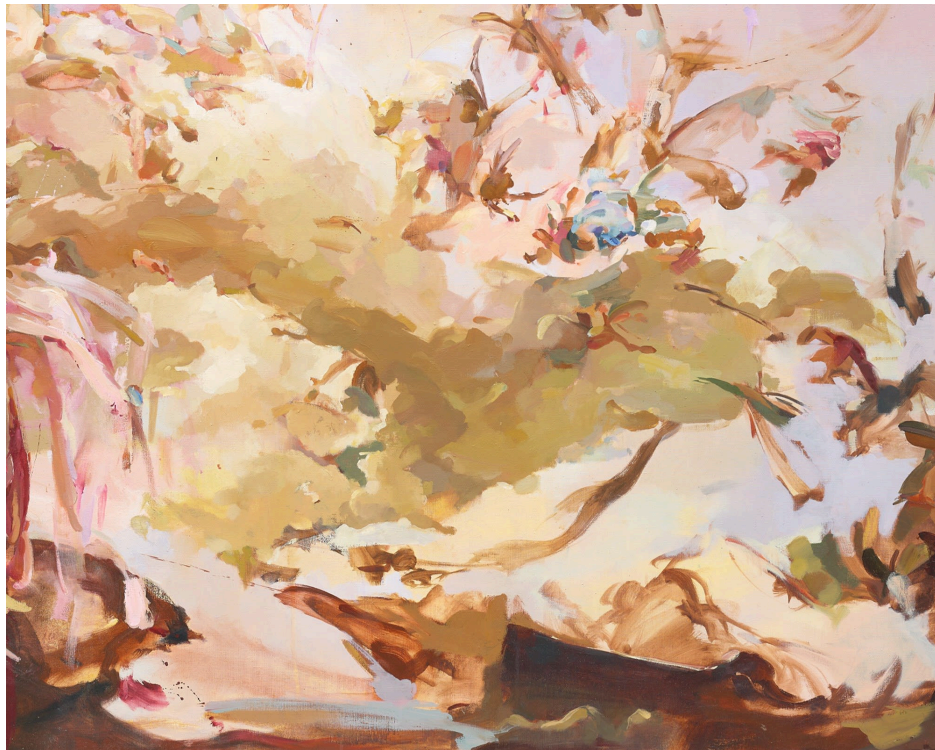


# 20th Century & Contemporary Art Evening Sale

London Auction / 30 June 2022 / 4pm BST

Sale Interest: 35 Lots



[View Sale](#)



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[Conditions of Sale \(NFT\)](#)



PHILLIPS

# 20th Century & Contemporary Art Evening Sale

London Auction / 30 June 2022 / 4pm BST

Sale Interest: 35 Lots

Auction 30 June 2022 4pm BST

## Auction Location

30 Berkeley Square, London, United Kingdom, W1J 6EX

## Sale Designation

When sending in written bids or making enquiries please refer to this sale as UK010422 or 20th Century & Contemporary Art Evening Sale.

## Absentee and Telephone Bids

tel +44 20 7318 4045

[bidslondon@phillips.com](mailto:bidslondon@phillips.com)

## Contemporary Art Department

Kate Bryan

Head of Evening Sale

+44 7391 402741

[kbryan@phillips.com](mailto:kbryan@phillips.com)

Olivia Thornton

Head of 20th Century & Contemporary Art,  
Europe

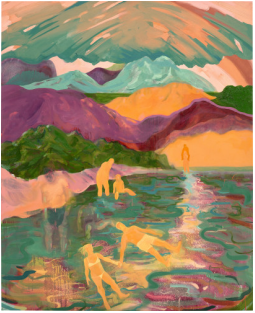
+44 20 7318 4099

[othornton@phillips.com](mailto:othornton@phillips.com)

## 20th Century & Contemporary Art Evening Sale

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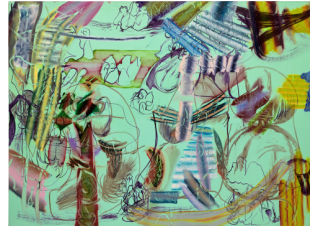
Sale Interest: 35 Lots



1  
**Antonia Showering**  
*We Stray*  
Estimate £40,000 — 60,000



2  
**Shara Hughes**  
*Wavy Navy*  
Estimate £250,000 — 350,000



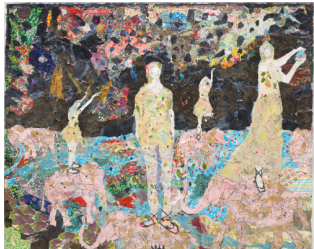
3  
**Lauren Quin**  
*Numbness*  
Estimate £50,000 — 70,000



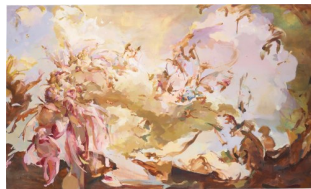
4  
**Caroline Walker**  
*Afters*  
Estimate £60,000 — 80,000



5  
**Tschabalala Self**  
*Carmo*  
Estimate £120,000 — 180,000



6  
**María Berrío**  
*The Riders II*  
Estimate £150,000 — 200,000



7  
**Flora Yukhnovich**  
*Moi aussi je déborde*  
Estimate £250,000 — 350,000



8  
**Simone Leigh**  
*Clarendon*  
Estimate £800,000 — 1,200,000



9  
**Louise Bourgeois**  
*Couple*  
Estimate £450,000 — 550,000



10  
**Michelangelo Pistoletto**  
*Ragazza in minigonna / Ragazz...*  
Estimate £1,800,000 — 2,200,000

## 20th Century & Contemporary Art Evening Sale

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11  
**Cy Twombly**  
*Untitled*  
Estimate  
£3,000,000 — 4,000,000



12  
**Nicolas de Staël**  
*Marine*  
Estimate  
£1,700,000 — 2,200,000



14  
**Stanley Whitney**  
*May Day*  
Estimate  
£400,000 — 600,000

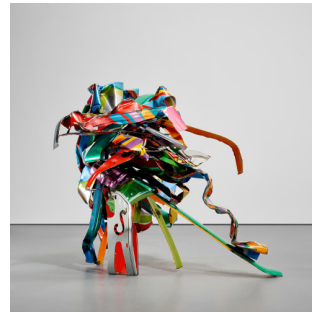


15  
**Ouattara Watts**  
*N° 1 For Miles*  
Estimate  
£80,000 — 120,000



16  
This lot is no longer available.

17  
**George Condo**  
*Black Jack Sally*  
Estimate  
£700,000 — 1,000,000



18  
**John Chamberlain**  
*Ramwater Sweets*  
Estimate  
£150,000 — 200,000



19  
**Katharina Grosse**  
*Ohne Titel*  
Estimate  
£120,000 — 180,000



20  
**Philippe Parreno**  
*Untitled (Interior Cartoons)*  
Estimate  
£200,000 — 300,000

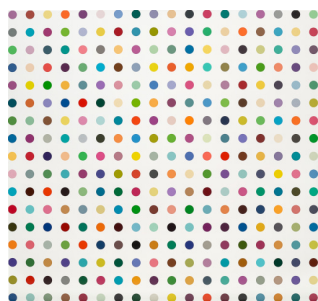


## 20th Century & Contemporary Art Evening Sale

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21  
**Günther Förg**  
*Untitled*  
Estimate  
£200,000 — 300,000



22  
**Damien Hirst**  
*Furfuryl Mercaptan*  
Estimate  
£400,000 — 600,000



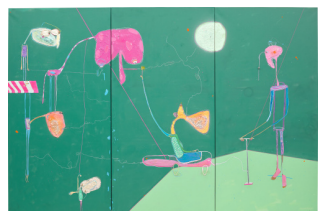
23  
**Damien Hirst**  
*Untitled AAAAA*  
Estimate  
£350,000 — 450,000



24  
**Andy Warhol**  
*Electric Chairs*  
Estimate  
£200,000 — 300,000



25  
**Robert Nava**  
*Maybe Metatron*  
Estimate  
£80,000 — 120,000



26  
**Rafa Macarrón**  
*Machaquito*  
Estimate  
£100,000 — 150,000



27  
**Damien Hirst**  
*Beautiful Tropical, Jungle Painti...*  
Estimate  
£270,000 — 350,000



28  
**Carmen Herrera**  
*Stanzas*  
Estimate  
£280,000 — 350,000



29  
**Luc Tuymans**  
*Candy Container*  
Estimate  
£250,000 — 350,000



30  
**Salman Toor**  
*Three Men with Trays*  
Estimate  
£250,000 — 350,000

## 20th Century & Contemporary Art Evening Sale

London Auction / 30 June 2022 / 4pm BST



31  
**Issy Wood**  
*Not Turned On*  
Estimate  
£100,000 — 150,000



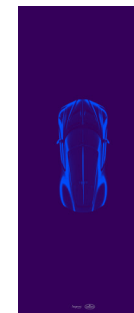
32  
**Anna Weyant**  
*Bath Time*  
Estimate  
£80,000 — 120,000



33  
**Amoako Boafo**  
*Bailike*  
Estimate  
£350,000 — 450,000



34  
**Emmanuel Taku**  
*My Brother's Keeper*  
Estimate £30,000 — 50,000



35  
**Asprey Bugatti**  
*La Voiture Noire*  
Estimate  
Estimate On Request

## 20th Century & Contemporary Art Evening Sale

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1

### **Antonia Showering**

*We Stray*


signed and dated 'Antonia Showering. A Showering. 2020' on the overlap

oil on linen

160 x 130 cm (62 7/8 x 51 1/8 in.)

Painted in 2020.

**Estimate**

£40,000 — 60,000 

[Go to Lot](#)



*'My paintings try and explore how memory works through stacking lots of recollections on top of one another.'* —Antonia Showering

Executed in dreamy washes of ochre, plum, and teal tones that seem at once tied to the cyclical patterns of the seasons, and to build a world that exists strangely outside of time, *We Stray* is a work of intense narrative power by young British artist Antonia Showering first presented as part of her online exhibition *Introductions* with White Cube in 2020. Depicting an idyllic mountain landscape with figures bathing and floating weightlessly across the still waters of a lake, *We Stray* brings together key elements of Showering's practice, bridging the personal and the universal in its treatment of memory, time, and the deep emotional connections that we forge with both people and places. Recalling Paul Gauguin's evocative blend of fantasy and reality, Showering's paintings 'swell with human emotion, and the criss-crossed paths of chance meetings and missed connections, as stories within stories unfold.'<sup>i</sup>



Paul Gauguin, *Day of the God (Mahana no Atua)*, 1894, The Art Institute of Chicago, Illinois. Image: Art Institute of Chicago, Helen Birch Bartlett Memorial Collection, 1926.198

## On Painting and Repenting

Built up in velvety layers of oil paint, Showering's paintings play with the parallels between her practice and the workings of memory itself, the ways in which neither are one thing alone but are instead composites, added to and overlaid over time. As Showering explains, the mountain landscape that reappears across her works is itself an amalgamation: anchored in her childhood memories of her Swiss grandmother's home, but not specific to any one geographic site, it allows her to merge meaningful locations in the creation of these shifting emotional landscapes. Similarly, drawn from her family and those she has loved, her figures do not reflect a physical likeness, but record the impressions of deeply felt feelings and desires. Disarmingly intimate and pervaded by a poignant nostalgia, in this manner Showering balances emotional depth with an interpretative openness, endowing her figures with an ambiguity that 'reminds me of when several people recall an event and how much they all differ from each other.'<sup>ii</sup>

*'I see the canvas as a physical space where feelings of belonging or displacement, love or loneliness, intergenerational memory, superstitions and regrets can be turned into something visual and shared with the viewer.'* —Antonia Showering

Creating complex narrative structures for her paintings to operate within, Showering's distinctive approach to her materials and application of paint reproduces the more mutable aspects of memory in compelling ways. After sealing her stretched linen canvases with rabbit glue prepared the night before, Showering approaches the surface intuitively, drawing out forms in her broad and fluid application of oil paint, allowing these compositional elements to suggest themselves in a way that mirrors shifting patterns of thought. Figures and forms emerge and recede within these landscapes, making powerful use of the *pentimento* process whereby paint is applied and removed in a highly fluid mode of overworking and undoing that takes its name from the Italian 'pentirsi' (to repent).





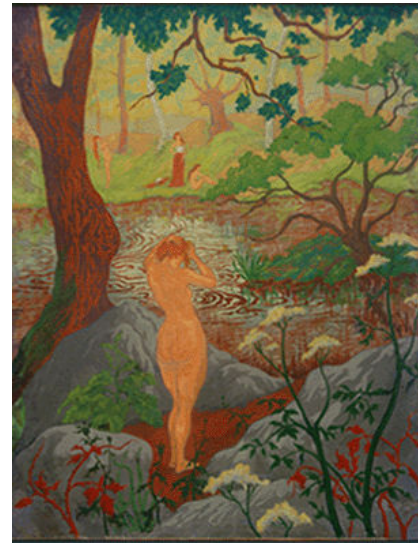
Detail of the present work

As the artist describes: 'My process is quite transient, in that imagery is constantly shifting, a couple embracing could become a mountain range, figures interlocking could later become the ripples in a lake.'<sup>iii</sup> This liquidity is immediately apparent in *We Stray*, evident in Showering's treatment of oil paint and the ephemerality of her figures appearing to melt into the landscape they are set within.

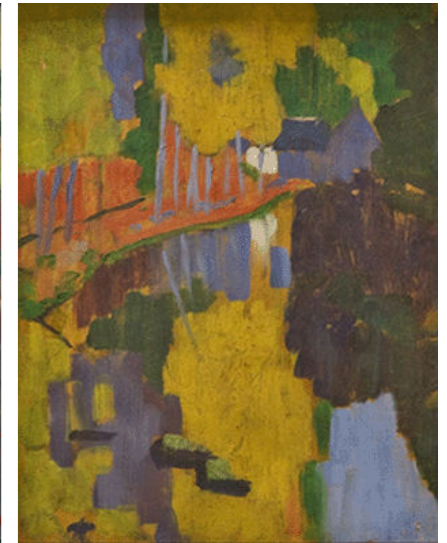
Stylistically recalling the dreamlike landscapes of contemporary artists Hurvin Anderson and Peter Doig, Showering's fluid sense of line and chromatic intensity also daws close comparison with Paul Gauguin's expressive tonalities and the spaces opened in his canvases between fantasy and reality. In their belief that art should operate not as a faithful depiction of nature or the Impressionistic rendering of its effects, but as synthesis of universal metaphor and personal symbology created by the artist, Showering's paintings resonate most profoundly with the late 19th century *Les Nabis* group. Combining Paul Sérusier's emotive use of simplified forms and direct, unmodulated colour with Paul Ranson's reimagining of the classical motif of bathers, *We Stray* maintains the same tension exploited by *Les Nabis* artists between the depiction of a scene and our awareness of it as artifice.

Making visual connections between the qualities of water and the shifting patterns of thought, this recurring motif also restores a sense of lost innocence or vulnerability to her figures, the artist

explaining that it 'feels as if lakes, ponds, and rivers are spaces where we are allowed to become infants again, even if just for a moment.'<sup>iv</sup> Operating in the space between the concrete and the ephemeral, remembering and forgetting, Showering's paintings speak to the emotional power of memory and its persistence.



[LEFT] Paul Ranson, *Nu se coiffant au bord de l'étang*, 1897, Private Collection. Image: akg-images  
[RIGHT] Paul Sérusier, *The Talisman*, 1888, Musée d'Orsay, Paris. Image: Heritage Images / Fine Art Images / akg-images



## Collector's Digest

- Since completing her MFA at the Slade School of Fine Arts in 2018, Antonia Showering has been steadily gaining critical attention, participating in multiple group exhibitions and selected for a range of awards and residencies including Bloomberg New Contemporaries in 2019, 'The Great Women Artists Residency' at Palazzo Monti, Brescia in 2018, and the 2018 Henry Tonks Award.
- After announcing her representation by Timothy Taylor Gallery last year, Antonia Showering presented her first solo exhibition *Antonia Showering: Mixed Emotion* with the gallery in early 2022.

Video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zhV7hMiflUY>

**Antonia Showering**

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Inside The Artist's Studio with Antonia Showering | Art on a Postcard

<sup>i</sup> Louise Benson, 'Antonia Showering: "I Think My Dog Was an Artist in a Previous Life"', Elephant, 31 January 2022, online.

<sup>ii</sup> Antonia Showering, quoted in Maria-Theresia Mathisen 'Artists to Watch in 2021' Lux Magazine, [online](#).

<sup>iii</sup> Antonia Showering, quoted in 'Antonia Showering on Her Practice and How She's Finding the Current Creative Climate', The Cass Art Blog, 2021, [online](#).

<sup>v</sup> Antonia Showering, quoted in Maria-Theresia Mathisen 'Artists to Watch in 2021' *Lux Magazine*, [online](#).

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**Provenance**

White Cube, London

Acquired from the above by the present owner

**Exhibited**

London, White Cube, *Introductions | Antonia Showering*, 18 August - 3 September 2020 (online exhibition)

## 20th Century & Contemporary Art Evening Sale

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2

### Shara Hughes

*Wavy Navy*

signed, titled, inscribed and dated '56 x 48 "Wavy Navy" 2015 SHARA HUGHES NYC' on the reverse  
oil, acrylic and enamel on canvas  
142.2 x 121.9 cm (56 x 48 in.)  
Executed in 2015.

Estimate

£250,000 — 350,000 ±

[Go to Lot](#)





*'Everyone knows what a landscape looks like—there is an entire tradition of painting that informs our expectations. I wondered how I could take something that is seemingly so known and make it mine, while still getting all the satisfaction of painting, and the history of painting, in one' —Shara Hughes*

Unfolding in a dizzying play of colour and pattern, *Wavy Navy* balances pictorial complexity with a striking simplicity and immediacy that has become a hallmark of American artist Shara Hughes' vibrantly imaginative landscapes. Included in her 2015 exhibition *Far Out* at the American Contemporary in New York, the present work represents a pivotal moment in her practice as she shifted her focus from interior subjects to the expansive, otherworldly landscapes which garnered her immediate critical acclaim. Rhythmic and mesmerising, Hughes structures her composition here through a series of sharply juxtaposed passages of energetically rendered pattern executed in jewel-like hues of cobalt blue, turquoise, and Verdigris green offset by splashes of magenta and golden yellow. Creating a powerful sense of fluidity and motion, Hughes' shifting perspectives and confident jumps between tighter rounded curves and longer, snaking lines speak more directly to the sensation of rushing water rather than to its visual depiction alone.

Entirely imaginative creations, Hughes' riotous landscapes incorporate natural and recognisable motifs alongside less immediately legible elements, deftly balancing an oppositional pull between representation and abstraction that reflects our more complex and ineffable psychological landscapes. As the artist explains: '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.'<sup>ii</sup>



Detail of the present world

## Hughes and the Modernist Landscape

Demonstrating a robust engagement with early modernist aesthetics, Hughes' kaleidoscopic landscapes have drawn favourable comparison to the intensely saturated hues and gestural application that characterised the Fauvist landscapes of André Derain, Henri Matisse, and Maurice de Vlaminck, infused with the darker psychological elements evident in key examples of German Expressionism. Primarily interested in capturing the emotional response to a landscape rather than an accurate depiction of observable reality, the intensely dynamic canvases of Ernst Ludwig Kirchner offer a particularly compelling art historical precedent for Hughes's project here, especially evident in his vertiginous and highly saturated mountain scenes. Nevertheless, as critic Roberta Smith has been quick to point out, Hughes does not simply apply these art historical lessons in her canvases, but generates a vital contribution to contemporary art as she 'combines these historical traditions with current ones [...] There are plenty of nods to historical precedents, and yet Ms. Hughes's paintings look spontaneous and unaffected, as if, paradoxically, she has done no homework at all'.<sup>iii</sup>





Ernst Ludwig Kirchner, *The Waterfall*, 1919, Private Collection. Image: Heritage Images / Fine Art Images / akg-images

Operating like a window onto an imaginary, open world, the surface of *Wavy Navy* is alive with its wonderfully ambiguous shifting forms and textures stacked tightly against the picture plane. Inventive and intuitive, Hughes works quickly in bursts of inspiration, using pure, unmodulated colour in a range of mediums including oil, enamel, acrylic, and spray paint as a means of bringing ‘the viewer into the painting, not just through images, but by mark-making and different types of materials.’<sup>iv</sup> In her wonderfully agile treatment of line, saturated palette, and flattening of form, Hughes creates a sense of the transparency and luminosity that we might associate with stained glass – a form fittingly taken up by a range of modern masters including Henri Matisse, Marc Chagall, and, more recently, David Hockney. In [discussing her practice](#), and especially in her

approach to landscape, Hughes draws a similar comparison herself: ‘Back to the window-into-a-world thing, I like the viewer to be aware of where the edges are. I’m conscious of letting you know where you should step in and where you should stop [...] as though you are walking through a door or a big window.’ Rather than asking us to look passively through the window, Hughes asks that we cross the threshold with her, into worlds of pure colour and light.



Marc Chagall, Central window from *American Windows*, 1966, Art Institute of Chicago. Image: The Art Institute of Chicago / Art Resource, NY / Scala, Florence, Artwork: © ADAGP, Paris and DACS, London 2022

## Collector's Digest

- Well-established through a series of smaller exhibitions with galleries on both sides of the Atlantic, it was her inclusion in the 2017 Whitney Biennial that garnered Hughes major international attention.

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• Since her first solo show in 2007 at Rivington Arms, New York, Hughes has been showing steadily in galleries across the US and Europe for nearly 15 years. Already this year Hughes has been the subject of solo exhibitions at FLAG Art Foundation, New York and Kunstmuseum Luzern, Switzerland. In 2021 she exhibited internationally, with shows at the Yuz Museum, Shanghai; Contemporary Art Museum St. Louis; Garden Museum, London; Aspen Museum of Art, Colorado; and Le Consortium, Dijon, France.

• Her works are included in the permanent collections of the Dallas Museum of fine Art, the Foundation Louis Vuitton, Paris; Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York; Denver Museum of Art; and the Whitney Museum of American Art, New York.

<sup>i</sup> Shara Hughes, quoted in Katie White, 'Landscapes opened a whole new world for me', *Artnet News*, 17 August 2020, [online](#).

<sup>ii</sup> Shara Hughes quoted in: Emily Steer, 'Shara Hughes Uses Painting to Reflect the Turbulent Human Mind', *Elephant*, 16 March 2020, [online](#).

<sup>iii</sup> Roberta Smith, 'What to See in New York Art Galleries This Week: Shara Hughes', *New York Times*, 15 June 2017, [online](#).

<sup>iv</sup> Shara Hughes, quoted in Gesine Borchardt and Barry Swabsk, *Shara Hughes*, Berlin, 2022, p. 113.

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#### Provenance

Grieder Contemporary, Küsnacht

Private Collection, Austria (acquired from the above)

#### Exhibited

New York, American Contemporary, *Shara Hughes: Far Out*, 26 March – 26 April 2015 (titled as *Navy Wavy*)

Küsnacht, Grieder Contemporary, *Abstract Horizons*, 29 August – 17 October 2015

## 20th Century & Contemporary Art Evening Sale

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3

### Lauren Quin

#### *Numbness*

signed, titled and dated 'L. Quin "Numbness" 2019' on the reverse

oil on canvas

128.3 x 176.2 cm (50 1/2 x 69 3/8 in.)

Painted in 2019.

#### Estimate

£50,000 — 70,000 ±

[Go to Lot](#)





*'There's just so much detail that fizzles out when you're seeing a photo of it [...] I wanted to make something that couldn't really be encapsulated by an image.'*

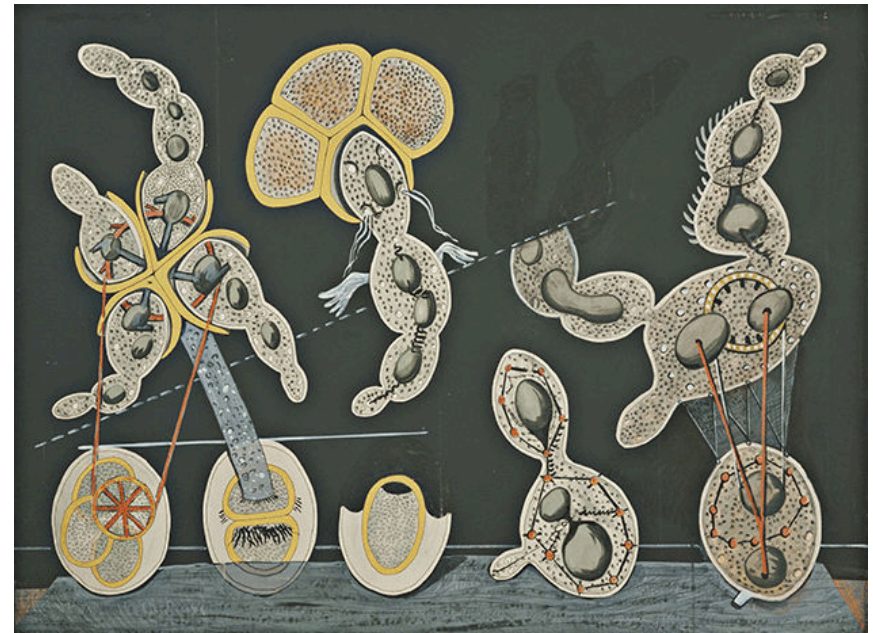
Moving vertiginously between densely layered passages and more open areas of flat, peppermint green ground, *Numbness* is a work of remarkable painterly confidence and skill from one of Los Angeles' most in demand young artists, Lauren Quin. Painted in the same year as her graduation from the prestigious Yale School of Fine Art in 2019 and exhibited shortly after its execution in her first solo show in her hometown *If It Were A Snake It Would Have Bit Me*, it clearly demonstrates the hallmarks of Quin's electrifying visual language, combining intense chromatic juxtapositions and a dizzying array of helter-skelter lines and psychedelic knots that spiral out across its surface.



Detail of the present work

## Primordial Soup

Recalling the fluid, biomorphic forms that animated British Surrealist Grace Palithorpe's strange scenes of microbial and vegetal life and Max Ernst's fascination with the microscopic and the cellular, Quin's paintings take on microbial proportions. Appearing to twist, move, and multiply before our eye like bacteria under a microscope, the animated forms and overlaid marks of *Numbness* return us to the very beginning of amoebic life, quivering into being. As her gallery - Friends Indeed - have noted, 'Drawing from a pool of the unformed and the entropic, Quin renders shapes caught in a process of emergence or recession. Parts grow out of other parts. And like bacteria, material starts to infect and invade. Her mark-making implies a passage between or network among dimensions that generate sensuality and movement.'<sup>i</sup>



Max Ernst, *The Gramineous Bicycle Garnished with Bells the Dappled Fire Damps and the Echinoderms Bending the Spine to Look for Caresses*, 1920-21, The Museum of Modern Art, New York. Image: The Museum of Modern Art, New York/Scala, Florence, Artwork: © ADAGP, Paris and DACS, London 2022

At once seeming to embrace the speed and over-saturation of our hyper-connected, digital age and to re-entrench the primacy of more traditional painterly techniques, *Numbness* combines speed and slowness, its compositional complexity only revealing itself through time spent in front of its impressive expanse. Densely layered, Quin's paintings are gradually built up through drawing and the application of gradients, centered around the manipulated tubular forms that she has become so associated with. In this early example of her work, we can see Quin experimenting with the flexibility and malleability of these shapes, appearing here in concentrated clusters that girder the composition, leading Quin directly to the more all-over treatment that her more recent paintings apply.

The strikingly organic quality of these tubular forms works on a technical as well as visual level, the artist etching into the still-wet surface of her canvases with butter knives or medical spoons dipped in turpentine, revealing the layers of paint below and creating contrasting, overlaid ripples that vibrate across the canvas. Highly energetic, the densely patterned surface radically disrupts the viewer's perspective in a manner that recalls the compositional complexity of Albert Oehlen's 'computer paintings', and the layered multimedia landscapes of Laura Owens and fellow



contemporary artists Sarah Sze and Avery Singer.



[Left] Albert Oehlen, *U.D.O. 14*, 2001-2005, Galeria Juana De Aizpuru, Madrid. Image: Album/Scala, Florence, Artwork: © Albert Oehlen. All Rights Reserved, DACS 2022 [Right] Detail of the present work

Initially taking on the appearance of digital collage, Quin's careful use of gradient motifs seem to reference computer tools and image-making. However, her methods are in fact remarkably analogue, involving drawing, scratching, systematic mark-making, and a form of trace mono-printing whereby the surface of the work is gently pressed onto an ink-covered pane of glass, staining the carved line drawings. Alongside this internal interplay of etched, printed, and painted layers that Quin likens to naturally occurring moiré patterns, her tendency to work on multiple paintings at once generates a profound sense of organic growth that moves beyond the picture's edge, closely binding these works together through their shared biomorphic structure. Involving repetition and contrast, Quin's process creates a mutable sense of space within her canvases as her layers open, collapse, and pull apart. As Quin herself describes: 'I'm constantly trying to change the range of depth in my paintings; it's like the painting falls off the edges, and I keep moving into the centre. That's how I know that a painting is finished—when I reach that point where you feel everything is flying at you and you're just moving through it.'<sup>ii</sup>

### Collector's Digest

• Just this year, Lauren Quin has been the subject of significant critical attention, with works recently acquired by prestigious institutions including the Institute of Contemporary Arts, Miami,

the Walker Arts Centre, Minnesota, and the X Museum in Beijing.

• Quin opened her first European solo show *Bat's Belly* at Loyal Gallery Stockholm in June 2021 and presented her second solo exhibition of works at Friends Indeed Galley in San Francisco in July. She has also contributed to important group shows with Blum & Poe, Los Angeles and Downs and Ross in New York.

• Quin was awarded her BFA from the School of the Art Institute of Chicago in 2015 and earned her MFA from Yale School of Art in 2019.

<sup>i</sup> 'Lauren Quin', artist biography, Friends Indeed Gallery, [online](#).

<sup>ii</sup> Lauren Quin, quoted in Stephanie Eckardt, 'In the Studio With Lauren Quin, the Painter Doing Abstraction Her Own Way', *W Magazine*, 8 July 2001, [online](#).

### Provenance

Real Pain Fine Arts, Los Angeles

Private Collection

Acquired from the above by the present owner

### Exhibited

Los Angeles, East Hollywood Fine Art, *Lauren Quin: If It Were A Snake It Would Have Bit Me*, 29

June – 28 July 2019

## 20th Century & Contemporary Art Evening Sale

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4

### Caroline Walker

#### *Afters*


signed, titled and dated 'AFTERS' Caroline Walker  
2016' on the reverse

oil on linen

180 x 270 cm (70 7/8 x 106 1/4 in.)

Painted in 2016.

#### Estimate

£60,000 — 80,000 

[Go to Lot](#)



*'My paintings are formalised fictions concerned with the strange or ambiguous which can arise in the everyday and the banal. They explore the notion of disappointed expectations and a kind of faded grandeur of what could have been.'* —Caroline Walker

Strikingly cinematic in its compositional balance, luminously saturated palette, and charged narrative power, *After* captures the tensions between public and private, ambiguity and the everyday that energises Scottish artist Caroline Walker's most compelling paintings. Executed on a commanding scale and depicting a woman resting across an elegantly curved metal-framed sofa, a stiletto and watermelon slice casually discarded on the floor beside her, the atmosphere is languorous and intimate, Walker capturing a moment of stillness and solitude that falls between the day's activities.

Drawn to painting women since she was a young child, Walker takes these quiet moments of unguarded honesty, often of women at work or in their domestic environments, and transforms them into studies in contemporary feminine interiority, carefully blending the eerie stillness of Vilhelm Hammershøi, the voyeuristic frisson of Edward Hopper's lonely visions of mid-century urbanity, and the understated intimacy of Pierre Bonnard's portraits.



Edward Hopper, *Room in Brooklyn*, 1932, Museum of Fine Arts, Boston. Image: © 2022 Museum of Fine Arts, Boston. All rights reserved / The Hayden Collection, Charles Henry Hayden Fund / Bridgeman Images, Artwork: © Heirs of Josephine Hopper/ Licensed by Artists Rights Society (ARS) New York/ DACS, London 2022

In this respect, the architectural settings of her paintings also take on special significance, at once framing her subjects and standing in for the intimate boundaries 'between public behaviour and private space' that Walker's paintings ask us to explore.<sup>i</sup> More complex in its compositional arrangement than it might at first appear, *After* plays with this spatial ambiguity, taking as its setting the shaded outdoor terrace of a glamorous Palm Springs home, the rigid geometry of the concrete floor and structure of the building acting as both framing device and as a means of amplifying questions of agency, observation, and the politics of looking that characterises the *Palm Springs* series to which this work belongs. Caught between the house and the lawn, the terrace occupies a space between inside and outside that is strangely representative of Walker's own position, and the careful balance of intimacy and intrusion that she maintains in her

exquisitely handled paintings.



Installation shot of the present work included in *The Racquet Club*, GRIMM Gallery, Amsterdam, 2016. Image: Noortje Knulst. Courtesy of the Artist and GRIMM, Amsterdam | New York, Artwork: © Caroline Walker. All rights reserved, DACS 2022

## Palm Springs

First developed as a playground for Hollywood's rich and famous in the 1920s, Palm Springs quickly became synonymous with an ideal of American wealth, beauty, and glamour, compounded by the concentration of architecturally innovative and airy modernist houses complete with floor-to-ceiling windows, manicured lawns, and inviting turquoise pools immortalised in Slim Aaron's photographs of the mid-century jet-setting elite. As a man-made desert oasis, Palm Springs is at once artificial and alluring, occupying a space between reality and fantasy that holds particular power for Walker, and formed the conceptual focus of the *Palm Springs* series, first presented in her 2016 exhibition *The Racquet Club* with GRIMM Gallery, Amsterdam.



Slim Aarons, *Poolside Gossip*, 1970. Image: Slim Aarons/Stringer/Getty Images

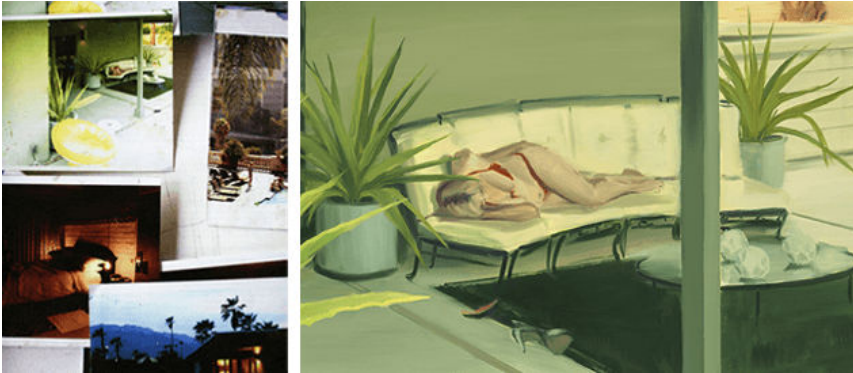
Boasting Hollywood royalty Humphry Bogart, Errol Flynn, and Lana Turner amongst its members, the Racquet Club was first opened as an exclusive private tennis club in 1934. A notorious spot known for its glamorous excess, The Racquet Club eventually fell into disrepair before being demolished in the twilight years of the 20th century, a story of faded grandeur particularly well-suited to Walker's interest in the intersections of femininity and glamour and the gap between our ideas of paradise and the banality of its everyday reality. Reimagining this space, and the people who might occupy it, Walker meticulously builds her nuanced narratives through a combination of real and imagined locations, found imagery, memory, and the carefully staged photoshoots that are central to her practice.

## Photographic Time and Slow Looking

Just as Pierre Bonnard and Edgar Degas both engaged with new photographic technologies as a way of advancing their painterly experiments and the 'bold, sometimes apparently off-kilter compositions that suggest fleeting moments of day-to-day existence and of people captured off-guard going about their daily activities', Walker too makes sophisticated use of these tools in her practice.<sup>ii</sup> Placing us in the position of the unseen observer, Walker's awkwardly elevated



perspectives and cropped angles create the impression of a fleeting glance or snapshot, compositional strategies developed directly from these staged photographs which she then works up into pencil drawings and oil sketches.



[Left] Photograph of Caroline Walker's source material. Artwork: © Caroline Walker. All rights reserved, DACS 2022 [Right] Detail of the present work

Although, as Walker explains, her paintings often include 'something you have to look through or past to get to the subject of the work [...] like a voyeur I suppose, looking in on others' lives', these architectural obstacles are not simply formal devices, but introduce a vital sense of distance between us and the private worlds we are intruding upon that is as temporal as it is spatial.<sup>iii</sup> Creating a very deliberate tension between the photograph's sense of fleeting immediacy and the much slower process of painting, Walker ensures that our eye has to travel that much further to reach the reclining woman cocooned within the layers of luminous green at the centre of the present work. Connecting inside and outside, reality and fantasy, *After* is a work deeply interested in the art historical legacies of representing women, and of the processes and politics of looking itself, although Walker makes sure we never intrude too far.

## Collector's Digest

- Since graduating from her MA with the Royal College of Art in 2009, Walker has been the subject of several solo exhibitions internationally, including *Janey* at Ingleby Gallery, Edinburgh in 2020, *Women's Work* at the Midlands Art Centre, Birmingham in 2021, and the forthcoming exhibition at K11 in Shanghai in November 2022.

- Following her exhibition *Caroline Walker: Birth Reflections* held at Fitzrovia Chapel, London in the early months of 2022, Walker's latest solo show, *Lisa*, at Stephen Freidman Gallery presented a deeply intimate series of portraits documenting her sister-in-law's journey through the first months of motherhood.

- Walker's works are included in a number of prominent public collections, including the National Museum of Wales in Cardiff, The UK Government Art Collection, London, and Kunstmuseum in The Hague.

i Caroline Walker in conversation with Marco Livingstone, in Caroline Walker, *Caroline Walker: Picture Window*, London, 2018, p. 249.

ii Marco Livingstone, 'A Painter of Modern Life', Caroline Walker and Marco Livingstone, *Caroline Walker: Picture Window*, London, 2018, p. 11.

iii Caroline Walker, quoted in 'Caroline Walker: Windows' interview for Studio Roodenburch Courtesy of KM21, The Hague, 2021, [online](#).

## Provenance

GRIMM Gallery, Amsterdam

Acquired from the above by the present owner

## Exhibited

Amsterdam, GRIMM Gallery, *The Racquet Club*, 2 September - 9 October 2016

## Literature

Caroline Walker and Marco Livingstone, *Caroline Walker: Picture Window*, London, 2018, pp. 228-229, 305 (illustrated)

## 20th Century & Contemporary Art Evening Sale

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5

### Tschabalala Self

*Carma*

fabric, linen, Flashe acrylic and pastel on canvas

182.9 x 121.9 x 7.5 cm (72 x 47 7/8 x 2 7/8 in.)

Executed in 2016.

**Estimate**

£120,000 — 180,000 ±

[Go to Lot](#)



Video: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fULvwEmll\\_Y](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fULvwEmll_Y)

*'I hope to correct misconceptions propagated within and projected upon the Black body [...] My subjects are fully aware of their conspicuousness and are unmoved by the viewer. Their role is not to show, explain, or perform but rather 'to be.' In being, their presence is acknowledged and their significance felt.'* —Tschabalala Self

Composed of fantastically vibrant contrasts of block blues, earthy tones, and a joyfully patterned sunflower fabric rhythmically arranged against a marigold ground, *Carma* is an immediately arresting and strikingly three dimensional portrait by American artist Tschabalala Self, one of her few works to incorporate padding in the construction of her figure here. Included in Self's first solo exhibition in the United Kingdom hosted by Parasol Unit in 2017, *Carma* is a commanding example of the artist's highly expressive and inventive approach to materials and figuration for which she has become so well known. Combining textiles, acrylic, vinyl paint, and pastel, Self deconstructs and refashions the Black female body here, exposing and amplifying certain historically entrenched ideas or fantasies related to Black femininity and sexuality that continue to persist in contemporary attitudes.

Dominating the large-scale composition, the woman here turns dramatically back over her shoulder to face the viewer directly, her dynamism and agency challenging assumed power dynamics operating between viewer and subject. Playing with ideas related to the performance of gender and voyeurism, Self's multi-dimensional woman exudes confidence and self-possession here, defining herself on her own terms. A woman who meets our gaze, but is not constrained by it, she belongs to Self's panoply of characters who delight in their exaggerated features, 'fully aware of their conspicuousness and are unmoved by their viewers [...]' In being, their presence is acknowledged and their significance felt.<sup>21</sup>

Video: <https://www.youtube.com/embed/rSLAVo2xPas?start=314>

Tschabalala Self discusses her artistic process with Dr. Ziba Ardalan for Parasol Unit ahead of her 2017 exhibition

## Building an Image

In describing her practice, Self frequently returns to the idea of her images as built constructions, encapsulating both the nature of their execution and more complex notions of identity formation. Readymade elements that introduce diverse textures, forms, and colours, Self's cutting, shaping, and stitching together of fabrics draws profound parallels to the complex intersections of our own histories and sense of selfhood.



Faith Ringgold, *Jo Baker's Birthday*, 1993, Saint Louis Art Museum, Missouri. Image: © Saint Louis Art Museum / Museum Minority Artists Purchase Fund / Bridgeman Images, Artwork: © Faith Ringgold / ARS, NY and DACS, London 2022

Charged with autobiographic significance, the materials that she uses include hand-printed and sewn scraps of found textiles, pieces of her own canvases cut up and recombined, and – most poignantly – pieces of patterned fabric that had belonged to her mother. An avid sewer during her lifetime, Self's mother amassed an enormous collection of patterned fabrics, a resource that the artist turned to after her death. Deftly interweaving the personal with the political, Self draws on her own life and the entrenched associations of textiles to women and 'women's work' in order to create highly charged objects that eloquently explore attitudes to race and gender in the 21st century. In this respect, her highly textured paintings recall Faith Ringgold's painted story quilts,



and their powerful combination of personal narratives, politics, and history – an artist who Self cites as a particular formative influence growing up in Harlem.

Like her contemporary, Mickalene Thomas, Self approaches the intersections of gender, sexuality, and representation head on, using a wide variety of materials to problematise questions of representation and ‘opening up new paths into thinking about Black life.’<sup>ii</sup> As the artist explains: ‘The fantasies and attitudes surrounding the Black female body are both accepted and rejected within my practice, and through this disorientation, new possibilities arise. I am attempting to provide alternative, and perhaps fictional explanations for the voyeuristic tendencies towards the gendered and racialized body; a body which is both exalted and abject’.



[Left] Mickalene Thomas, *Qusuquzah, une très belle négresse 1*, 2011, San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, California. Image: San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, Purchase, by exchange, through a gift of Peggy Guggenheim / Bridgeman Images, Artwork: © ARS, NY and DACS, London 2022 [Right] Detail of the present work

## Collector's Digest

• Having exhibited works in major international art centres including London, New York, Berlin, and Los Angeles, Tschabalala Self was the subject of a major solo exhibition in 2020 – her largest to date – at the Institute of Contemporary Arts, Boston. Her work is currently included in the group exhibition *Women and Change* at the Arken Museum in Denmark and in *The Condition of Being*

*Addressable* at the Institute of Contemporary Arts in Los Angeles.

• Examples of her work can be found in the collections of the Rubell Museum, Miami, the Astrup Fearnley Museum, Oslo, the Baltimore Museum of Art, and Institute of Contemporary Art, Boston, as well as the Los Angeles County Museum of Art, Museum of Contemporary Art Los Angeles, and Hammer Museum, Los Angeles. New York institutions include the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum and the New Museum.

• Phillip's introduced Tschabalala Self to auction in our 20th Century & Contemporary Art Evening Sale in March 2019.

<sup>i</sup> Tschabalala Self, quoted in ‘Tschabalala Self’, artist website, [online](#).

<sup>ii</sup> Ruth Erickson, quoted in Robin Pogrebin, ‘With New Show, Tschabalala Self Explores Black American Identity’, *New York Times*, 2 November 2020, [online](#).

## Provenance

T293, Rome

Acquired from the above by the present owner in 2016

## Exhibited

Brooklyn, BRIC, *Look up here, I'm in heaven*, 30 June – 14 August 2016

London, Parasol Unit Foundation for Contemporary Art, *Tschabalala Self*, 17 January – 12 March 2017, pp. 70–71 (illustrated)

Glasgow, Tramway, *Tschabalala Self*, 3 June – 20 August 2017

Dublin, Irish Museum of Modern Art, *Desire: A Revision from the 20th Century to the Digital Age*, 21 September 2019 – 22 March 2020, p. 54 (illustrated)

Prato, Centro Per L'Arte Contemporanea Luigi Pecci, *Protext! When Fabric Becomes Manifesto*, 24 October 2020 – 14 March 2021 (installation view illustrated, p. 122)

## 20th Century & Contemporary Art Evening Sale

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PROPERTY OF AN ESTEEMED AMERICAN  
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6

**María Berrío**

*The Riders II*

signed, titled and dated 'the Riders II. 02/12 Maria  
Berrío.' on the reverse

mixed media collage on canvas  
121.9 x 152.4 cm (47 7/8 x 60 in.)  
Executed in 2012.

**Estimate**

£150,000 — 200,000 ±

[Go to Lot](#)

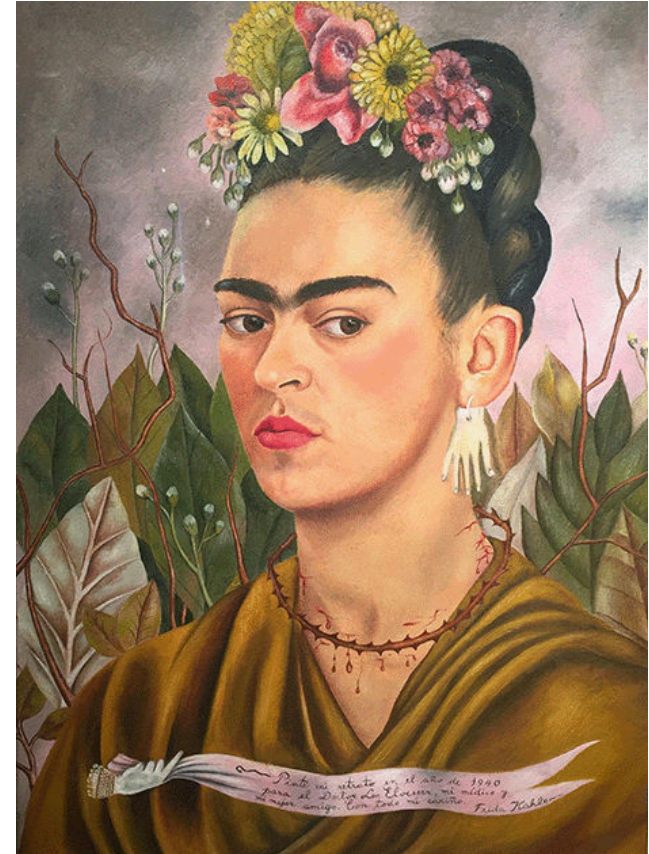


*'My work grapples with the ambiguous and unknowable aspects of life. I hope that the beauty in the work allows you to see the beauty in the difficult and gives you a reason to try.'* —María Berrío

Based in Brooklyn, Colombian artist María Berrío's large-scale collaged canvases offer compellingly beautiful scenes suffused with a sense of magic and musicality, lending them a dream-like quality as ephemeral and delicate as the materials used in their execution. Highly typical of her artistic process, the variegated surface of *The Riders II* is built up in layers of carefully cut pieces of delicate handmade and brightly coloured Japanese paper to which the artist has added touches of acrylic, watercolour, and gold leaf, creating a sense of movement and harmony especially well-suited to the subject here.

## Dream and Reality

Fantastical and whimsical in equal measure, *The Riders II* depicts an idyllic scene of prelapsarian bliss, the titular riders perfectly at one with the abundant natural world and the marvellous creatures they share it with. Set against the shifting blue band of the river behind them, four statuesque figures balance elegantly on the backs of playful pink elephants, stretching to reach the abundant flora and fauna from the canopy above them. Blending the real and the imaginary, Berrío synthesises a range of art historical influences, touching especially on a legacy of Latin American Surrealism pioneered by the likes of Frida Kahlo and Leonora Carrington, who demonstrated a similar interest in the rich interconnectedness of women to abundant natural and animal worlds, and myth.



Frida Kahlo, *Self-Portrait Dedicated to Dr Eloesser*, 1940, Private Collection. Image: Album / Alamy Stock Photo, Artwork: Banco de México Diego Rivera Frida Kahlo Museums Trust, Mexico, DF/DACS 2022

Drawing on memories of the luscious mountain world rich with plants and animals of her native Bogotá alongside memories of the stories that her grandparents told her, Berrío's work takes on compelling narrative dimensions that seamlessly weave the fantastic into the everyday, filtered through layers of time and memory in a manner that critics and the artist herself have likened to the workings of Magical Realism and the writings of Gabriel García Márquez and Isabel Allende. Just as the artist must filter her own experiences through a layers of time and memory, she finds herself similarly drawn to 'South American folktales and symbolism because they are created by people seeking order, meaning, and hope [...] to understand life and create meaning.'<sup>i</sup>



An accomplished storyteller herself, Berrío draws on Latin American literary history as much as the global craft traditions developed historically by communities of women in these staggeringly complex paper assemblages. As with the processes involved with traditional quilt-making, Berrío's use of multiple textures and fragments speaks eloquently to ideas around memory, dream, and narrative, and the peculiar way in which her works seem capable of 'cutting through time and the unconscious' in a manner that recalls the languid scenes of Henri Rousseau's exotic canvases.<sup>ii</sup>



Henri Rousseau, *Paysage exotique (Exotic Landscape)*, 1910, Norton Simon Museum, Pasadena. Image: Bridgeman Images

Included in Berrío's exhibition *Of Dreams and Hurricanes* presented at Praxis International Gallery in New York in 2012, *The Riders II* shares in the kaleidoscopic richness that has become so characteristic of the artist's work. Gently breaking down distinctions between figure and ground, a sense of intricately fractured pattern moves fluidly through the composition, recalling the complex details, heightened palette, and undulating forms of Gustav Klimt's most absorbing and immersive works. Advocating a kind of magical thinking, Berrío's fusion of narrative, fantasy, and allegory in

here is consistent with the artist's distinctive mode of worldbuilding, and her creation of utopian spaces populated primarily by female figures who 'are imaginary but intimately felt', at once closely connected to nature and capable of transcending this material realm.<sup>iii</sup>

*'The women who inhabit my paintings are embodied ideals of femininity [...] These are the women I want to be: strong, vulnerable, compassionate, courageous, and in harmony with themselves and nature.'* —María Berrío



[LEFT] Gustav Klimt, *Die Mädchen (The Girls)*, 1913, Narodni Galerie, Prague, Czech Republic. Image: akg-images [RIGHT] Detail of the present work

As well as Klimt's stunningly detailed and dream-like compositions, Berrío's intricate, paper-based works also recall the individuated dots of pure colour used to such powerful optical effect in Pointillism, the Neo-Impressionist movement spearheaded by Georges Seurat and Paul Signac in the late 1880s. Balanced lightly on the backs of the elephants here, the figures in *The Riders II* nod playfully to Seurat's 1891 *La Cirque*, moving the action from the closely contained and artificial space of the ring to a more expansive, natural environment that recall the intense chromatic juxtapositions of Henri Cross' Arcadian scenes. Visually recalling Cross's own mosaic of brushstrokes, Berrío's intricate paper patchworks have more recently taken this allusion a step further, her designs reimaged in the fourteen glass, ceramic, and enamel mosaic installations now permanently installed at Fort Hamilton Subway Station, Brooklyn. Layered with colourful patterns and folkloric imagery, in these mosaics Berrío wanted to focus on the idea of the journey itself as a space of infinite possibility, beauty, and magical potential.



Henri Edmond Cross, *L'air du soir* (Evening Air), 1893, Musée d'Orsay, Paris. Image: Bridgeman Images

## Collector's Digest

- Awarded the prestigious Joan Mitchell Fellowship in 2021, Berrío's work can be found in major international institutions, including the Philadelphia Museum of Fine Arts, the Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, and the Yuz Museum, Shanghai.
- Testifying to the artist's meteoric rise to critical acclaim, Berrío received a solo presentation with Victoria Miro Gallery at Frieze Los Angeles this year, on the heels of her major survey debut *María Berrío: Esperando mientras la noche florece* (Waiting for the Night to Bloom) mounted at the Norton Museum of Art in West Palm Beach in 2021.
- Berrío's work is currently on view as part of the highly anticipated group exhibition *Women Painting Women* at The Modern Art Museum of Fort Worth, Florida.

<sup>i</sup> María Berrío, quoted in Amanda Quinn Olivar, *Curator*, July 2019, [online](#).

<sup>ii</sup> Adrian Horton, 'Like magical realism: María Berrío on her surreal collages', *The Guardian*, 20 June

2021, [online](#).

<sup>iii</sup> María Berrío, quoted in Amanda Quinn Olivar, *Curator*, July 2019, [online](#).

## Provenance

Praxis International Art, New York

Acquired from the above by the present owner

## Exhibited

New York, Praxis International Art, *Of Dreams and Hurricanes*, 9 February - 17 March 2012



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7 ♦

**Flora Yukhnovich**

*Moi aussi je déborde*

oil on linen

130 x 220 cm (51 1/8 x 86 5/8 in.)

Painted in 2017.

**Estimate**

£250,000 — 350,000 ♦

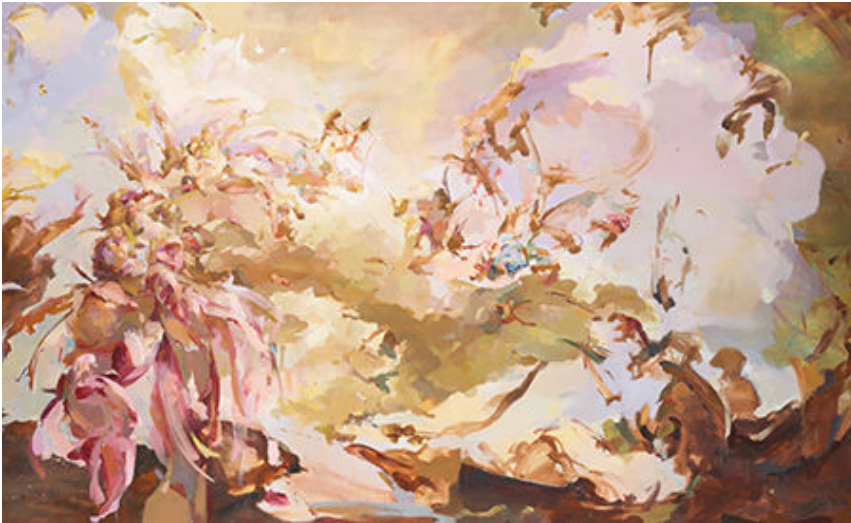
[Go to Lot](#)





*'The idea of fluidity of form feels like a very painterly concept to me, a bit like creating seemingly solid figures out of wet paint.'* —Flora Yukhnovich

Unfolding in ebullient waves of creamy whites, rose pinks, and dusky lavender tones *Moi aussi je déborde* is an energetic expression of young British artist Flora Yukhnovich's immediately recognisable blend of Rococo aesthetics and contemporary cultural references. Placing notions of femininity and questions surrounding female sexuality, pleasure, and the male gaze at its centre, the present work playfully draws together classical mythology, 20<sup>th</sup> century French feminist theory, and the excessive femininity associated with the paintings of Jean-Honoré Fragonard, François Boucher, and Giovanni Battista Tiepolo in its dynamic arrangements of colour and form.



Detail of the present work

## Rococo and Excessive Femininity

Slipping between figuration and abstraction, Yukhnovich's highly fluid treatment of oil paint captures the sheer pleasure taken by the artist in her medium. As the artist has described 'there is something corporeal about paint [...] the way a painterly gesture can talk about the physical experience of touch in a visceral way, breaking down the distance between the viewer and work.'<sup>i</sup> Executed in 2017, the same year as her pivotal graduate show at City & Guilds London School of

Art, *Moi aussi je déborde* is highly expressive of this mutability and tactility. Evidencing the young artist's technical skill and painterly confidence, it captures an important early moment in the consolidation of her practice, refracting the keen sense of 'the materiality of paint: how it could describe flesh and fleshiness' garnered from her early portraiture training at the Heatherly School through an experimentally rigorous framework developed during her time at City & Guilds.<sup>ii</sup>

Capturing the fluctuations of the body, Yukhnovich's gestural brushstrokes and experimental approach to form revitalise the drama and eroticism of the Rococo, recalling what Ewa Lajer-Burchard has described as the 'bold composition, gestural panache, expressive range, and chromatic brilliance' attributed to Fragonard and his mentor, Boucher.<sup>iii</sup> Incorporating certain compositional elements and references to these Rococo masters - notably nods to the foaming waves, winged putti, and whirling ribboned elements that dominate Boucher's 1740 *Le triomphe de Vénus* that were themselves reinterpreted in Fragonard's *La naissance de Vénus* a decade later - *Moi aussi je déborde* belongs to a body of work concerned with reclaiming feminine excess and frivolity on strictly feminist terms.



Francois Boucher, *Le triomphe de Vénus* (*The Triumph of Venus*), 1740, Nationalmuseum, Stockholm.  
Image: Cecilia Heisser / Nationalmuseum, Stockholm

## Dark Continents and Laughing Medusas

First presented at Yukhnovich's 2017 solo exhibition with Brocket Gallery, *Moi aussi je déborde* brings these elements of her practice into sharp relief, refracting Rococo erotics through a language of radical feminism. Translating into English as 'Me too, I overflow', the title of the present work quotes directly from Hélène Cixous' 1975 essay, *The Laugh of the Medusa* (*Le rire de la Méduse*), a foundational text of French feminist theory. Introducing Cixous' central concept of *écriture féminine*, the essay advocates for a radically embodied mode of writing that moves beyond the patriarchal structures of language that have historically limited and controlled women's self-expression. Cixous writes: 'I wish that women would write and proclaim this unique empire so that other women, other unacknowledged sovereigns, might exclaim: I, too, overflow [*Moi aussi je déborde*]; my desires have invented new desires, my body knows unheard songs. Time and again, I, too, have felt so full of luminous torrents that I could explode – explode with forms much more beautiful than those which are put up in frames and sold for a stinking tune.'<sup>iv</sup>



Jean-Honoré Fragonard, *La Naissance de Vénus*, 1753-55, Musée Grobet-Labadié, Marseille

Forcing a critical reflection on how the excessive femininity of the Rococo could be reclaimed as a powerful mode of writing from the body, references to Cixous and to feminist theory recur through the titles presented in the 2017 exhibition, from *Le rire de la Méduse* itself, to references to Sigmund Freud's notion of women's sexuality as that 'dark continent' of psychology. At once celebrating and problematising art historical representations of femininity and female desire, *Moi aussi je déborde* stages a joyous reclamation of desire from 'an 18<sup>th</sup> century male gaze to a thoroughly contemporary notion of feminine pleasure and ownership.'<sup>v</sup>

Like Venus herself, emerging from the sensually churning, frothing waves in Fragonard's later composition, Yukhnovich's forms remain open and fluid, never ossifying or solidifying, but maintaining an essential emphasis on process and becoming that draws a formal comparison to Dorothea Tanning's stunningly prismatic mid-century compositions. It is perhaps for this reason that Venus has remained such an important touchstone for the artist, forming the focus of her most recent solo exhibition *Thirst Trap* with Victoria Miro earlier this year, her canvases overflowing with 'new desires' and 'unheard songs', as Cixous might put it.



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Dorothea Tanning, *Ignoti nulla cupido*, 1960, Galerie Gianna Sistu, Paris. Image: Adagp Images, Paris, / SCALA, Florence, Artwork: © ADAGP, Paris and DACS, London 2022

## Collector's Digest

- Since her graduation from City & Guilds of London Art School in 2017, Yukhnovich has exhibited at Brocket Gallery and Parafin in London, GASK - the Gallery of the Central Bohemian Region, Czech Republic, the Jerwood Gallery, Hastings; Blenheim Walk Gallery, and Leeds Arts University.

- Earlier in 2022, the artist was awarded her first solo exhibition at Victoria Miro in London, and is currently preparing for an exhibition of new works responding to the collection at The Ashmolean, Oxford to be opened later this year.

- As a result of her breakout shows with Brocket Gallery and Parafin, Yukhnovich's work is now housed in important UK collections including the [Government Art Collection](#).

<sup>i</sup> Flora Yukhnovich, quoted in *Flora Yukhnovich: Fête Galante* (exh. cat.), The Blenheim Walk Gallery, Leeds, 2020, n.p.

<sup>ii</sup> Flora Yukhnovich, quoted in 'Interview // Through the Langugae of the Rococo: In Conversation with Flora Yukhnovich', *Immediations Postgraduate Journal*, No. 17., 2020, [online](#).

<sup>iii</sup> Ewa Lajer-Burcharth, *The Painters Touch: Boucher, Chardin, Fragonard*, New Jersey, 2018, p. 177.

<sup>iv</sup> Hélène Cixous, 'The Laugh of the Medusa', in Keith Cohen and Paula Cohen, trans., *The Signs Reader*, Chicago, 1983, pp. 279-97.

<sup>v</sup> Catriona McAra, 'Flora Yukhnovich: Millennial Rococo', *Flora Yukhnovich: Sweet Spot*, London, 2019, p. 7.

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## Provenance

Brocket Gallery, London

Acquired from the above by the present owner

## Exhibited

London, Brocket Gallery, *Flora Yukhnovich*, 6 December 2017 - 7 January 2018



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8

**Simone Leigh**

*Clarendon*

terracotta, coloured porcelain, India ink and epoxy

43.2 x 45.7 x 22.9 cm (17 x 17 7/8 x 9 in.)

Executed in 2015.

**Estimate**

£800,000 — 1,200,000 £

[Go to Lot](#)



Video: <https://www.youtube.com/embed/Uzcjp-tFf44>

*'I am charting a history of change and adaptation through objects and gesture and the unstoppable forward movement of Black women.'* —Simone Leigh

A stunning and deeply affecting portrait of a young, Black woman, her head crowned in tightly inlaid black roses, *Clarendon* is an exquisite example of American artist Simone Leigh's investigation into Black history and femininity. Developing her practice across sculpture, video, performance and social engagement for over two decades, Leigh has synthesised European sculptural experiment with the traditional West African and Native American ceramic traditions, her sensitive, sensual forms carving out a space to explore the complexity of Black female subjectivity, and to challenge stereotypes associated with African art. Working directly with her own hands rather than outsourcing the production of her sculptures, Leigh's figures present a touching tribute to the generations of manual labour performed by Black men and women before her, the 'result of her hand present in all stages of the process of making is that the works are extremely resonant in person [...] every detail, every surface, translates to works that are at once personal and human.'<sup>i</sup>

## Clarendon County

Referencing a hugely significant moment in 20th century American history and the struggle for Civil Rights, the title of the present work takes its name from Clarendon County in South Carolina, where the fight against school segregation first took shape in the late 1940s. Situated in the heart of the cotton belt, Clarendon County was strictly segregated according to Jim Crow laws, with a White minority owning the majority of land and enjoying privileged access to basic resources. Refusing to fund buses for Black students, sixty one poorly equipped schools were scattered throughout the county designed for young Black students. Often simple, small wooden structures with no running water or electricity, these schools stood in sharp contrast to the impressive red brick buildings complete with science laboratories and playing fields provided for the education of White children.



Demonstrators picket in front of a school board office protesting segregation of students, 1963. Part of a Picture Story entitled "Why They Marched" about the March on Washington. Image: RBM Vintage Images / Alamy Stock Photo

After their initial request for a school bus to be provided for local Black children who were forced to cover large distances to and from school everyday was ignored, the parents of Clarendon County began to push for greater legal rights, putting forth a petition demanding the immediate integration of the County's schools. Undertaking extensive psychological evaluation to support the case, it became devastatingly clear that forced segregation caused immeasurable damage to these young children's sense of their self-worth and identity.

*'I am of the opinion that all of the legal guideposts, expert testimony, common sense*

PHILLIPS

*and reason point unerringly to the conclusion that the system of segregation in education adopted and practiced in the state of South Carolina must go and go now. Segregation is per se inequality.* '—Judge J. Waites Waring

The first lawsuit in the country to challenge segregation in schools as unconstitutional, the events in Clarendon County and the fortitude shown by members of the community set the foundations for the 1954 Supreme Court ruling against racial segregation in public schools, and are directly connected to the violet protests in Arkansas when the 'Little Rock Nine' arrived for their first day at the newly integrated school. In her presentation of the bust of a young, Black girl, Clarendon engages deeply with these ideas, the beautiful, tenderly rendered roses that make up the sculpted forms of the young girl's hair here poignantly empathising the flourishing of youth, and the role of education in helping children grow to reach their full potential.

## A Question of Form

*'In Western cultures there is a stated separation between style and substance; there is an idea of the object and the decoration. Black aesthetics deny this separation.'*  
—Simone Leigh

Executed with exquisite smoothness and radiating a palpable luminosity in its sleek, pewter-black finish, *Clarendon* is highly typical of Leigh's sculptural language, the figure's radically simplified face radiating quiet dignity, grace, and resilience. As Sharifa Rhodes-Pitts has observed, 'Though without eyes, they are not without affect. How many emotions can be read from the tilt of a chin, the slope of a nose, and the many varieties of coiffure styled from hundreds of miniature hand-rolled porcelain rosettes?'<sup>ii</sup>

Originally trained as a ceramicist, Leigh's education combined Western techniques with those more specific to the traditional approaches practiced in West and South Africa, notable here in her innovation combination of materials and incorporation of certain vernacular elements familiar to African sculpture. In her elongated treatment of smooth, polished forms, Leigh draws on a legacy of modernist experiment best exemplified by Constantin Brancusi's lyrical abstraction. However, where Brancusi's figures embody a kind of mute ideal, Leigh's figures still speak volumes, touching a history of the social silencing of Black women, but gesturing towards a powerful self-sufficiency, presenting themselves to the viewer as 'self-possessed, looking inward, contemplating and thinking things that I cannot fathom' [...] sentinels holding space for a culture that is very much in the making, a culture in which whiteness is neither the centre nor the frame'<sup>iii</sup>



[Left] Constantin Brancusi, *Mademoiselle Pogany* [I], 1912, Philadelphia Museum of Art. Image: © Philadelphia Museum of Art / Gift of Mrs. Rodolphe Meyer de Schauensee, 1933 / Bridgeman, Artwork: © ADAGP, Paris and DACS, London 2022 [Right] Ghanian Memorial Head, c.18th to 19th century, Dallas Museum of Art. Image: Courtesy Dallas Museum of Art

## Collector's Digest

- The focus of significant critical attention since her pivotal solo exhibition at the New Museum in New York in 2016, Simone Leigh has been the subject of several major exhibitions at prestigious institutions including the Hammer Museum in Los Angeles, and the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum in New York.
- This year, Leigh made history as the first Black woman to represent the United States at La Venezia Biennale, where she was awarded the much-coveted Golden Lion for her presentation in the Arsenale.
- Leigh will open her first museum survey at Boston's Institute of Contemporary Art in 2023.

Video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QvTfeqnY5rs>

Simone Leigh: Sovereignty at the US Pavilion



**Simone Leigh**

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<sup>i</sup> Eva Respini, quoted in 'Artist Simone Leigh Reveals Her Plans for the Venice Biennale, Including a Major Symposium of Black Thinkers and Makers', *Artnet News*, 8 December 2022, [online](#).

<sup>ii</sup> Sharifa Rhodes-Pitts, 'Simone Leigh: For Her Own Pleasure and Edification', in (exh. cat.), New York, *The Hugo Boss Prize 2018: Simone Leigh, Loophole of Retreat*, 2019, n.p.

<sup>iii</sup> Helen Molesworth, 'Art is Medicine', *Artforum*, March 2018, [online](#)

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**Provenance**

Tilton Gallery, New York

Acquired from the above by the present owner in 2015

## 20th Century & Contemporary Art Evening Sale

London Auction / 30 June 2022 / 4pm BST



9

### Louise Bourgeois

#### *Couple*


fabric and hanging piece in aluminium, glass and wood  
vitrine

figure 43.2 x 16.5 x 15.2 cm (17 x 6 1/2 x 5 7/8 in.)

overall 193 x 61 x 61 cm (76 x 24 x 24 in.)

Executed in 2002.

#### Estimate

£450,000 — 550,000 

[Go to Lot](#)



*'...only sewing will restore me to a balance. Everyone approves of my sewing men and women and myself too. My memory is moth-eaten full of holes.'* —Louise Bourgeois

Presenting two, soft pink bodies gently pressed against one another, heads inclined into each other's shoulders as they hang, suspended in space, *Couple* is a tender portrait of intimacy and attachment by renowned French artist Louise Bourgeois. A stunning example of her mature soft sculptures that were recently celebrated in *Louise Bourgeois: The Woven Child* - a major late-career survey of the artist's textile work at London's Hayward Gallery - the work is a rare example of a hanging couple in pink towelling fabric, a blue sister work belonging to the Easton Foundation included in the landmark show.

Highly evocative, the soft and perishable pink bodies are poignant reminders of our own vulnerability, in physical as well as emotional terms, speaking powerfully to the human desire for touch and closeness. Appealing to our most visceral sense, by using familiar fabrics that we are used to feeling against our skin in this manner, Bourgeois 'activates a dimension of haptic sensation and tactile association that opens up our encounter beyond a purely visual engagement.'<sup>i</sup> Hanging the embracing couple delicately inside the glass vitrine, Bourgeois amplifies this sensation further, removing the couple from us to float eternally, the only beings in their private universe of two.



Louise Bourgeois with *Eye to Eye* (1970) in 1990. Image: Sipa US / Alamy Stock Photo, Artwork: © The Easton Foundation/DACS, London and VAGA at Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York

## Woven Women

Growing up in an artisanal household surrounded by fabrics and textiles thanks to her parent's business as tapestry restorers and dealers, the medium of sewing, stitching, and weaving, and the tactility of fabric is particularly charged with biographical and psychological significance in the case of Bourgeois. Already in her 80s when she embarked on this final chapter of her long and highly celebrated career, Bourgeois' return to needles and thread is highly significant, signalling a 'pivot in her art away from the father and toward the mother', and a profound reflection on themes of



motherhood, trauma, loss, and repair.<sup>ii</sup>

*'When I was growing up, all the women in my house were using needles. I've always had a fascination with the needle, the magic power of the needle. The needle is used to repair the damage. It's a claim to forgiveness. It is never aggressive, it's not a pin.'*  
—Louise Bourgeois

Connecting ideas of reparation and the act of sewing with the maternal, Bourgeois' privileging of textiles at once drew on a long-established association with modes of craft as 'women's work', as well as a more personal sense of emotional and psychological repair. Weaving its own complex metaphors, while the fragment indicates pain and loss, the suturing together of these different components indicates the capacity for repair, speaking powerfully to our desire for wholeness – both in ourselves, and in our romantic partnerships.

Bourgeois first introduced fabric into her work in 1991 with *Cell I*, the architectural structure that heralded the start of one of her most significant series. Featuring a low metal bed covered in fabric quilted together from old pillow cases and postal bags inside its caged frame, *Cell I* highlights the indivisibility of the autobiographic from the act of sewing for the artist, the refashioned bedclothes embroidered with phrases from her diaries. Engaged in an endless cycle of weaving and repair, the spider would ultimately become Bourgeois' most potent and iconic motif after 1994, directly linking ideas of stitching and restoration with the figure of her mother in her series of steel sculptures. As the artist elucidated: 'I came from a family of repairers. The spider is a repairer. If you bash into the web of a spider, she doesn't get mad. She weaves and repairs it.'<sup>iii</sup>

Drawing comparisons between Bourgeois' mature fabric works and Dorothea Tanning's compellingly contorted soft sculptures, Linda Nochlin draws attention to the gendered dimensions of this practice, the soft, stitched forms particularly well-suited to 'concerns both feminine and geriatric' as both women explored questions of ageing, the female body, and the unconscious in their mature textile work.<sup>iv</sup>



Dorothea Tanning, *Nue couché*, 1969 – 70, Tate Gallery, London. Artwork: © ADAGP, Paris and DACS, London 2022

## Couples

Central to Bourgeois' oeuvre, the motif of the couple allowed the artist to explore complex questions related to attachment, abandonment, desire, self and other, especially charged in the soft sculptures that she first embarked on in the 1990s. Traveling through a turbulent emotional landscape, the couples are contorted into a range of passionate unions, tender embraces, and painful estrangements. Having undertaken a decades long period of intensive psychoanalysis herself, Bourgeois would have been well aware of the implications of such repetitious behaviour, her compulsive stitching of these figures a defence against her own fears of abandonment, deeply rooted in the childhood trauma of her father's infidelity and betrayal – not only of her mother, but felt keenly by the young Louise.

*'... the relation of one person to his surroundings is a continuing preoccupation. It*

*can be casual or close, simple or involved, subtle or blunt. It can be painful or pleasant. Most of all it can be real or imaginary. This is the soil from which all my work grows.* —Louise Bourgeois

In this respect, the metaphorical connections drawn between sewing and emotional repair are especially amplified in Bourgeois works focused on the couple motif. A mode of healing emotional trauma, stitching emerges as ‘a subtle form of communication and an attempt at atonement, where the gesture and labour involved can evoke complex feelings – among them guilt and gratitude – in another person. For Bourgeois, the act of reparation was a defence against fragmentation and disintegration, and sewing a way to ward off feelings of abandonment or separation – an attempt to keep things whole’ that speaks poetically to the shifting dynamics of our personal relationships.<sup>v</sup>

The motif of the embracing couple has a long and distinguished art historical lineage, taking in the passionate exuberance of Auguste Rodin’s young lovers, and Constantin Brancusi’s touching union of indivisible figures and the tribal artefacts and fetishes that Bourgeois was drawn to. However, in leaving the seams and sutures visible in *Couple*, Bourgeois highlights the painful persistence of our emotional scars and exposes the fallacy of the idea self as a self-contained whole, a theme developed in her print collaboration with British artist Tracey Emin.



[Left] Pablo Picasso, *The Embrace*, 1903, Musée de l'Orangerie. Image: Bridgeman Images, Artwork: © Succession Picasso / DACS, London 2022, [Right] Constantin Brancusi, *The Kiss*, 1907, Hamburger Kunsthalle, Hamburg, Germany. Image: Bridgeman Images, Artwork: © ADAGP, Paris and DACS, London 2022

The threads of Bourgeois’ own biography are woven across the varied body of work that makes up her incredible seventy year career, a fact that is nowhere more apparent than in the fabric sculptures of her late work which draw so closely on her personal relationships, her reflections on ageing and the body, and to intimacy and vulnerability. Placing the body and the emotional burden it carries at the centre of these highly affecting works, Bourgeois finds the universal in the highly personal, treating the body, as Rachel Cusk has elegantly put it, ‘as alternately a public interface and a site of intimate memory, a duality she seeks to resolve through the memorialising capacity of fabrics and clothes.’<sup>vi</sup>

Video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xjQ14Xx6r3Q>

Writer Deborah Levy discusses the work and legacy of Louise Bourgeois

## Collector’s Digest

- Since her death in 2010, interest in Louise Bourgeois’ work has only intensified, with several major retrospectives of her work mounted at Tate Modern in London, the Musée Art Moderne, Centre Pompidou in Paris and the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum in New York in recent years.
- Central to her oeuvre, Bourgeois’ fabric works have been the focus of exhibitions at the Hayward Gallery in London and the Kunsthalle Bielefeld.
- Couples feature heavily across these fabric works, presented in a variety of poses. Significant examples include a sister work in the blue fabric belonging to the Easton Foundation in New York, as well as larger examples in the permanent collections of the Tate Gallery in London and the National Galleries of Scotland in Edinburgh.

<sup>i</sup> Ralph Rugoff, ‘Mechanisms of Ambiguity and Sensation: The Late Fabric Sculptures of Louise Bourgeois’

<sup>ii</sup> Philip Larratt-Smith, *Louise Bourgeois: Freud’s Daughter*, London, 2021, p. 112.

<sup>iii</sup> Louise Bourgeois, quoted in Spider’, in Frances Morris, ed., *Louise Bourgeois*, (exh. cat.), London, 2007, p. 272.

<sup>iv</sup> Linda Nochlin, ‘Old-Age Style : Late Louise Bourgeois’, in *Women Artists: The Linda Nochlin Reader*, ed., by Maura Reilly London, 2015, p. 387.

<sup>v</sup> Julienne Lorz, ‘Acts of Reparation: Spiders, Needles and Cels in the Work of Louise Bourgeois’, in *Louise Bourgeois: The Woven Child*, (ex. cat.), London, 2022, p. 35.

<sup>vi</sup> Rachel Cusk, ‘The Fabricated Woman’, in *Louise Bourgeois: The Woven Child*, (exh. cat.), London, 2022, p. 27.

**Louise Bourgeois**

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**Provenance**

Cheim & Read, New York

Acquired from the above by the present owner

**Exhibited**

Houston, The Margolis Gallery, *Contemporary Collections*, 22 November 2005 - 22 January 2006,  
p. 6 (illustrated)



## 20th Century & Contemporary Art Evening Sale

London Auction / 30 June 2022 / 4pm BST



10 ♦

### Michelangelo Pistoletto

*Ragazza in minigonna / Ragazza seduta per terra*

painted tissue paper with graphite and coloured pencil  
on polished stainless steel

230.2 x 120 x 2.2 cm (90 5/8 x 47 1/4 x 0 7/8 in.)

Executed in 1962-1967.

#### Estimate

£1,800,000 — 2,200,000    ⚡

[Go to Lot](#)



Video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=llwzp2Fjt4I>

*'Once you put your hand in front of one of these mirrors, your body merges with the space. You become a part of that space. This was the concept behind the Mirror Paintings from the beginning—to have the human presence feel connected to an always expanding and changing space.'* —Michelangelo Pistoletto

Executed in 1967, *Ragazza in minigonna / Ragazza seduta per terra* is an exquisite early example of Michelangelo Pistoletto's *Quadri specchianti*, or *Mirror Paintings*, that form the cornerstone of the artist's celebrated oeuvre. Created in the pivotal year that curator and critic Germano Celant coined the term 'Arte Povera', the radical avant-garde movement pioneered by Pistoletto, the present work depicts the artist's close friend Graziella Derossi sitting on the floor while the viewer, when approaching the painting, enters the figure's space, engendering a dynamic oscillation between illusion and reality, reflection and perception. Testifying to its historic significance, *Ragazza in minigonna / Ragazza seduta per terra* featured in the artist's first action piece, *La fine di Pistoletto (The End of Pistoletto)*, at the Piper Pluriclub, Turin on March 6, 1967, as well as Pistoletto's landmark exhibition at the Palais des Beaux-Arts, Brussels the following month and documenta 4, Kassel in 1968. In 2010, the present work was included in the artist's first major American survey, *Michelangelo Pistoletto: From One to Many, 1956-1974*, at the Philadelphia Museum of Art.



The present work installed at the Piper Pluriclub during *La fine di Pistoletto (The End of Pistoletto)*, Turin, March 6, 1967. Photograph by Renato Rinaldi. Courtesy of Derossi Associati, Turin.

*'When I realized that someone like Pollock, although he attempted to transfer life onto canvas through action, did not succeed in taking possession of the work, which continued to escape him, remaining autonomous, and that the presence of the human figure in the painting of Bacon did not succeed in rendering a pathological vision of reality, I understood that the moment had arrived to make the laws of objective reality enter the painting.'* —Michelangelo Pistoletto

An ongoing series begun in 1962 and the artist's most acclaimed body of work, the *Mirror Paintings* emerged out of a series of self-portraits Pistoletto created between the late 1950s and early 1960s after seeing the first exhibition of Francis Bacon's work in Italy at the Galleria Galatea, Turin in 1958. In 1961, after seeing his own reflection in the black ground of his self-portrait, 'the objectivity of it brought me into a new way of looking at portraiture, as well as pictorial space,' the artist recalled. 'You find yourself in an unusual space between the picture, the mirror, and the world around the picture and the mirror. These are all realities which surround you. For me, objectivity means finding a way to integrate these realities.'<sup>i</sup> Thus, the subject of Pistoletto's *Mirror Paintings* as *Ragazza in minigonna / Ragazza seduta per terra* would not become the

depicted figure nor the viewer, but the question of realities and the ever-changing present as seen through 'portraits of interactions [...] as a changing portrait of society.'<sup>ii</sup> As Pistoletto explained, 'The true protagonist was the relationship of instantaneousness that was created between the spectator, his own reflection, and the painted figure, in an ever-present movement that concentrated the past and the figure in itself to such an extent as to cause one to call their very existence into doubt: it was the dimension of time itself.'<sup>iii</sup>



Michelangelo Pistoletto, *Il presente-Uomo di fronte*, 1961. Romilda Bollati Collection, Milan.

For his first *Mirror Paintings* comprising *Ragazza in minigonna / Ragazza seduta per terra*, Pistoletto used his close circle of friends as his photographed models, frequently choosing to photograph his subjects in profile or from the back to keep his figures unidentifiable. Seeking to create 'a more visually harmonious relationship between depicted subject and the reflections in the polished steel', the artist enlarged the photograph to life size and traced the image of the figure into a monochromatic rendering with black paint and pencil onto tissue paper (*velina*).<sup>iv</sup> The *velina* was then flipped over and adhered to the stainless-steel surface—resulting in a reversed orientation of the figure's pose from the photograph—after which painted color was applied to the tissue-paper rendering. The present work, as well as other early examples from the series, distinguish themselves from Pistoletto's *Mirror Paintings* created after 1971, when the artist changed his process by replacing the *velina* with a silkscreened image on the mirrored surface.



The artist and Alessandro Lacirasella holding the photographic enlargement used for the *velina* figure for the creation of the present work, Cittadellarte-Fondazione Pistoletto, Biella, 2009. Photographed by Suzanne Penn.

By integrating viewers into the space of the work itself, a fundamental concept that pervades



Pistoletto's practice, *Ragazza in minigonna / Ragazza seduta per terra* engenders a tension between the static and dynamic, second and third dimensions, representation and reality. While the figure inhabits the world of created art or a fixed past, the viewer breaks into this realm through the portal of his or her reflected image in the mirror, thereby simultaneously challenging the notion of lived realities and spatial dimensions—both in life and in art. 'For me', Pistoletto recently expressed, 'the mirror was not only an illusionistic pathway back through the wall, back into the space of the traditional perspective or even into the material cut of Fontana and the mysterious dark space behind the canvas. It suggested a double projection, into the wall and out into the space of the viewer. In a way it integrated painting and sculpture. You could virtually walk in the space that was reflected in the painting [...] For centuries we have been projecting ourselves into the fictional space of painting. I thought it was time to have the space project out to us, to once again create space.'<sup>v</sup> Shattering the boundaries between painting and sculpture, the present work thus further invokes inquiries into perception of the self in relation to the external world. In the words of Jeremy Lewison, 'A *Mirror Painting* is a means to orientation in the world, of encouraging conscious experience of phenomena as experiences from the first person point of view, invoking perception, thought, memory, bodily awareness and social activity. It is a work of art in the world and the world in a work of art.'<sup>vi</sup>



The present work in Pistoletto's studio on via Reymond in Turin, 1967. Standing to the left is the architect of the Piper Pluriclub, Piero Derosi. Also reflected in the painting are Paolo Bressano and Graziella Derosi (the painting's subject). Photograph by Paolo Bressano. Courtesy of Cittadellarte-Fondazione Pistoletto, Biella.

<sup>i</sup> Michelangelo Pistoletto, quoted in Michael Auping, 'Society and Surface: Two Interviews with Michelangelo Pistoletto,' in Katharine Burton, ed., *Michelangelo Pistoletto: Mirror Paintings*, Ostfildern, 2011, p. 64.

<sup>ii</sup> Michelangelo Pistoletto, quoted in Michael Auping, 'Society and Surface: Two Interviews with Michelangelo Pistoletto,' in Katharine Burton, ed., *Michelangelo Pistoletto: Mirror Paintings*, Ostfildern, 2011, pp. 65-66.

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- iii Michelangelo Pistoletto, *The Minus Objects* (exh. cat.), Galleria La Bertesca, Genoa, 1966, n.p.
- iv Suzanne Penn, “The Complicity of the Materials” in Pistoletto's Paintings and Mirror Paintings, in *Michelangelo Pistoletto: From One to Many, 1956-1974*, exh. cat., Philadelphia Museum of Art, 2010, p. 149.
- v Michelangelo Pistoletto, quoted in Michael Auping, ‘Society and Surface: Two Interviews with Michelangelo Pistoletto’, in Katharine Burton, ed., *Michelangelo Pistoletto: Mirror Paintings*, Ostfildern, 2011, p. 67.
- vi Jeremy Lewison, ‘Looking at Pistoletto/Looking at Myself’, In Katharine Burton, ed., *Michelangelo Pistoletto: Mirror Paintings*, Ostfildern, 2011, p. 33.
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#### Provenance

Galerie Ileana Sonnabend, Paris  
 The Helga and Walther Lauffs Collection, Germany (acquired from the above in 1968 at documenta 4, Kassel)  
 David Zwirner, New York (acquired from the above in 2008)  
 Acquired from the above by the present owner in 2010

#### Exhibited

Turin, Piper Pluriclub, *La fine di Pistoletto*, 6 – 9 March 1967  
 Brussels, Palais des Beaux-Arts, *Michelangelo Pistoletto*, 4 April – 7 May 1967, no. 40 (titled as *Jeune fille assise par terre*)  
 Cologne, Galerie Rudolf Zwirner, *Michelangelo Pistoletto*, May 1967 (illustrated on the exhibition invitation)  
 Paris, Galerie Ileana Sonnabend, *Michelangelo Pistoletto*, 12 December 1967 – 13 January 1968  
 London, Institute of Contemporary Arts, *The Obsessive Image 1960-1968*, 10 April – 29 May 1968, no. 75, p. 65 (titled as *Jeune fille en mini-jupe*)  
 Kassel, Museum Fridericianum, Orangerie, Karlsruhe and Galerie an der Schönen Aussicht, *documenta 4*, 27 June – 6 October 1968, vol. I, no. 3, pp. 234-235 (illustrated; Galerie Ileana Sonnabend, Paris, 1967 installation view illustrated; titled as *Donna seduta in mini gonna*)  
 Krefeld, Kaiser Wilhelm Museum, on loan 1968 – 2008  
 Krefeld, Museum Haus Esters, *Die Sammlung Lauffs I*, 4 March – 29 April 2001, pp. 5, 15 (illustrated; titled as *Ragazza in minigonna*)  
 New York, David Zwirner and Zwirner & Wirth; Zurich, Hauser & Wirth, *Selections from the Collection of Helga and Walther Lauffs*, 1 May – 26 July 2008  
 New York, David Zwirner and Zwirner & Wirth, *Minimal and Conceptual Art in Europe from the Collection of Helga and Walther Lauffs*, 5 November 2008 – 7 January 2009  
 Philadelphia, The Philadelphia Museum of Art; Rome, MAXXI – Museo Nazionale delle Arti del XXI Secolo, *Michelangelo Pistoletto: From One to Many, 1956-1974*, 2 November 2010 – 26 June 2011, no. 46, pp. 151, 240-241, 377 (illustrated)  
 Tel Aviv Museum of Art, *Red over Yellow: A Selection from a Private Collection*, 21 June – 2 December 2017, pp. 22, 24, 87, 64 (illustrated, p. 25)

## Literature

Paul Wember, *Kunst in Krefeld: Öffentliche und private Kunstsammlungen*, Cologne, 1973, pl. 105, pp. 171, 241 (illustrated; titled as *Ragazza in minigonna*)

Gerhard Storck, *Sammlung Helga and Walther Lauffs im Kaiser Wilhelm Museum Krefeld: Amerikanische und europäische Kunst der sechziger und siebziger Jahre*, Krefeld, 1983, no. 271, p. 236

*Michelangelo Pistoletto*, exh. cat., Museu d'Art Contemporani, Barcelona, 2000 (Palais des Beaux-Arts, Brussels, 1967 installation view illustrated, p. 32)

Marco Farano, Maria Cristina Mundici and Maria Teresa Roberto, *Michelangelo Pistoletto. Il varco dello specchio. Azioni e collaborazioni*, Turin, 2005, p. 64 (Piper Pluriclub, Turin, 1967 installation view illustrated, p. 15)

Alexandra Whitney, ed., *The Helga and Walther Lauffs Collection. Volume I*, Göttingen, 2009, p. 106 (illustrated, p. 107; Zwirner & Wirth, New York, 2008 installation view illustrated, p. 108)

Alexandra Whitney, ed., *The Helga and Walther Lauffs Collection. Volume II*, Göttingen, 2009, no. 206, fig. 13, pp. 56, 168-169 (illustrated; Piper Pluriclub, Turin, 1967 installation view illustrated; Palais des Beaux-Arts, Brussels, 1967 installation view illustrated; Galerie Ileana Sonnabend, Paris, 1967 installation view illustrated)

Alain Elkann, *La Voce di Pistoletto*, Milan, 2013, p. 149 (illustrated)



## 20th Century & Contemporary Art Evening Sale

London Auction / 30 June 2022 / 4pm BST



PROPERTY FROM A DISTINGUISHED PRIVATE  
COLLECTION

11

**Cy Twombly**

*Untitled*

signed, inscribed and dated 'Cy Twombly Rome 1962'  
lower left

lead pencil, wax crayon, coloured pencil and oil on  
canvas

79.5 x 100 cm (31 1/4 x 39 3/8 in.)

Executed in 1962.

**Estimate**

£3,000,000 — 4,000,000 ±

[Go to Lot](#)



*'Each line now is the actual experience with its own innate story [...] a synthesis of feeling, intellect etc. occurring without separation in the impulse of action.'* —Cy Twombly

Combining a sense of narrative drama with a highly sophisticated pictorial architecture, this untitled work from 1962 is a powerful demonstration of the uniquely calligraphic and gestural visual language first developed by Cy Twombly in the 1950s and 60s. At once turbulent and carefully balanced, the sharply staccato graphite marks animating the left side of the canvas give way to rounder, rapidly executed bursts of crimson, peach, and rose tones, resolving in the tighter curled forms concentrated to the right. Highly energetic in its all-over treatment, Twombly maintains a striking sense of airy lightness in the present work which nevertheless still carries with it the weight of European cultural history. Enigmatic and allusive, Twombly's inclusion of textual fragments related to Roman gods Mars and Venus offer a narrative anchor in this respect, drawing on associations with Ovid's *Metamorphoses* and the passionate indiscretions of the Gods.

Highly representative of Twombly's so-called 'Baroque' paintings from this period, *Untitled* is charged with a palpable Dionysian energy, testament to Twombly's deep engagement with classical antiquity and the manner in which his works 'reveal the fragmentary parables deeply embedded in modern consciousness, a fine seam separating the fractious worlds that exist simultaneously within us, in our vain longing for antiquity and our sense of a paralyzed, alien contemporaneity.'<sup>i</sup>

### La Dolce Vita:

*'I like the idea of scratching and biting into the canvas. Certain things appeal to me more. Also prehistoric things, they do that scratching.'* —Cy Twombly



Robert Rauschenberg, contact sheet showing portraits of Cy Twombly, 1952, printed ca. 1980. Artwork: © Robert Rauschenberg Foundation/VAGA at ARS, NY and DACS, London 2022

Following in the footsteps of a long tradition of artists and writers, Twombly first found himself in Rome in 1952 with his friend and fellow Black Mountain College student Robert Rauschenberg. Completely overawed by the weight of history and its persistence in the fabric of the modern city, he enthusiastically explored the ancient ruins and monuments he found there, an exciting period of discovery recorded in a tender series of photographs taken by Rauschenberg. The juxtaposition of ancient and modern, and the sense of the past's penetration into the present had an instant and pronounced effect on the young artist, compounded by an archaeological excavation of a Roman bath in Morocco that Twombly was able to experience first-hand. As he excitedly recounted in one letter 'My painting has changed a great deal. I have hundreds of sketches to use for paintings'

ideas that he rapidly developed with regards to technique, colour, and materials on his return to Rome in early 1953.<sup>ii</sup> As his notebooks detail, this was the period where 'CHALK WHITE' first emerged as a tone of particular significance, along with the shades of 'orange, faded sienna' and dusty browns that are all employed to such effect here.<sup>iii</sup>

## The Writing on the Wall

While the Eternal City presented itself compellingly to Twombly as an overwritten record of the collision and ongoing negotiation between ancient and modern, the incorporation of Twombly's distinctive graphic marks into his canvases has another, even more direct touchstone in the ancient forms of overlaid graffiti that he found scrawled over the gritty surfaces of Roman ruins. Bringing the ancient and the contemporary into direct dialogue, these layers of graffiti 'offered for Twombly a palimpsest of past, present and future; layered, intertwined and interpenetrating each other like archaeological strata.'<sup>iv</sup> In this sense, while clearly fascinated with the sensual drama of antiquity and mythology, these paintings and their cryptic references are also rooted in a celebration of the very human need to create and communicate – to leave a record of our presence.

SEP



[LEFT] Graffiti on outside wall of Temple of Vesta or Hercules Victor, 2nd century BC, Rome. Image: © Archivio J. Lange / © NPL - DeA Picture Library / Bridgeman Images [RIGHT] Detail of the present work

## From the Classical to the Baroque:

While Twombly began to incorporate these elements into his canvases immediately after his first trip to Rome, it was after his permanent move to the palatial seventeenth century apartment in the *centro storico* in 1960 when this more immediate and visceral pictorial language really began to

crystallise. Flooded with light and air, the new residence also allowed Twombly to shift from the more concentrated compositions of the 1950s into larger, lighter, and more ambitious compositions that stage the artist's deep engagement with classicism, mythology, and art history as much as the gritty reality of everyday life in the Italian capital. As Kirk Varnedoe vividly describes: 'Walking from home to studio, Twombly passed not only through the august Rome of the Caesars and the Baroque popes, but also through this environment of coarsely vital contemporary existence. The tense balance in the works between a light-filled exaltation and a pungently darker sense of human physicality, embraces something of both the grandeur and decadence of the city.'<sup>v</sup>



'Roman Classic Surprise', photographs of Twombly's Rome apartment by Horst P. Horst for *Vogue*, 1966. Image: Horst P Horst/Condé Nast/Shutterstock

## Mars and Myth

Written in the artist's distinctive sloping script, we can clearly make out the names 'Mars' and 'Venus' here, a reference to the trysting lovers described in Ovid's *Metamorphoses*. Goddess of Love, fertility, and beauty, Venus occupied an important place in Twombly's mythological framework, his cycles of works focused on the theme exploring symbolic images of physicality, passion, seduction and carnal yearning.<sup>vi</sup> As is typical of Twombly's work, these mythological figures are not represented in any immediately recognisable form, but 'as primary dynamics of colour and gesture, as energised powers.'<sup>vii</sup> In her adulterous liaison with the God of War, Apollo, Venus embodies sensuality, the pursuit of pleasure, and the power of sexual desire, a subject particularly well-suited to the fleshy tones of Twombly's palette and the intense physicality of his execution here as energetic loops and violently expressive scribbles capture the passionate drama of the scene with a typically Dionysian energy.

*'Even the Sun that rules the world was captive made of Love. My theme shall be a love-song of the Sun.'* —Ovid, *Metamorphoses*



Sandro Botticelli, *Venus and Mars*, c.1485, The National Gallery, London. Image: © The National Gallery, London/Scala, Florence

Lending itself well to the narrative-driven emphasis of mythological painting, the dramatic moment of the lovers' discovery by Venus' husband Vulcan has a rich art historical foundation, the subject having been treated by the likes of [Joachim Wtewael](#), [Jacopo Tintoretto](#), Johann Rottenhammer, Alexandre Charles Guillemot, and [Francois Boucher](#). For Renaissance artist Sandro Botticelli, the story also had considerable potential as an allegory for love's triumph over war. Asking us to consider the repetitive and reiterative nature of myth itself, Twombly plays with its creative and interpretative potential as 'narratives about the genesis of all things, about gods and

ancestors, constantly reshaped by tradition and passed on to future generations.'<sup>viii</sup>

<sup>i</sup> Heiner Bastian, ed., *Cy Twombly: Catalogue Raisonné of the Paintings, 1948-1960*, Vol. I, Munich 1992, p. 21.

<sup>ii</sup> Cy Twombly in a letter to Lesley Cheek, quoted in Nicholas Cullinan, 'Notes on Painting', *Twombly and Poussin: Arcadian Painters* (exh. cat.), London, 2011, p. 30.

<sup>iii</sup> Cy Twombly, quoted in Nicholas Cullinan, 'Notes on Painting', *Twombly and Poussin: Arcadian Painters* (exh. cat.), London, 2011, p. 31.

<sup>iv</sup> Nicholas Serota, *Cy Twombly: Cycles and Seasons* (exh. cat.), London, 2008, p. 74.

<sup>v</sup> Kirk Varnedoe, *Cy Twombly: A Retrospective* (exh. cat.), New York, 1994, p. 36.

<sup>vi</sup> Heiner Bastian, ed., *Cy Twombly: Catalogue Raisonné of the Paintings, 1948-1960*, Vol. I, Munich 1992, p. 29.

<sup>vii</sup> Demosthenes Davvetas, 'The Erography of Cy Twombly', *Artforum*, April 1989, online.

<sup>viii</sup> Katharina Schmidt, 'Immortal – and Eternally Young: Figures from Classical Mythology in the Work of Nicolas Poussin and Cy Twombly', *Twombly and Poussin: Arcadian Paintings*, (exh. cat.), London, 2011, p. 65.

### Provenance

Plinio de Martiis, Galleria La Tartaruga, Rome

Ovidio Jacorossi, Rome

Studio Casoli, Milan

Private Collection

Eyes Wide Open: an Italian Vision, Christie's, London, 11 February 2014, lot 60

Private Collection, Los Angeles

Acquired from the above by the present owner

### Literature

Heiner Bastian, ed., *Cy Twombly: Catalogue Raisonné of the Paintings, Volume VII Addendum*, Munich, 2018, no. 17, p. 39 (illustrated)



## 20th Century & Contemporary Art Evening Sale

London Auction / 30 June 2022 / 4pm BST



12 ♦

**Nicolas de Staël**

*Marine*

signed 'Staël' lower right

oil on canvas

60 x 81 cm (23 5/8 x 31 7/8 in.)

Painted in 1954.

**Estimate**

£1,700,000 — 2,200,000   †♦

[Go to Lot](#)

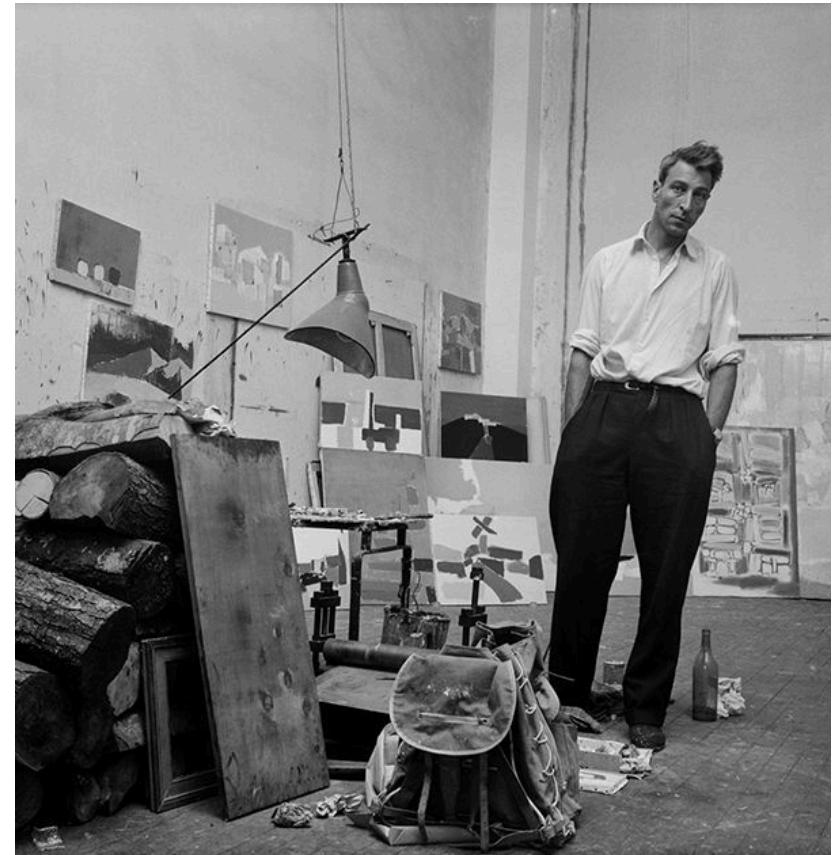


Video: <https://www.youtube.com/embed/y1uCwlqpcHk>

*'A painting must be both abstract and figurative: abstract to the extent that it is a flat surface, figurative to the extent that it is a representation of space.'* —Nicolas de Staël

In its careful balance of depth and colour, abstract textures and figurative elements, *Marine* is powerfully representative of the serenity and quiet vitality that best characterises Nicholas de Staël's pioneering visual language. Executed in 1954 at the height of his career and just one year before his tragic and untimely death, it captures the remarkable crystallisation of his artistic project, its bold reduction of the constituent parts of a coastal landscape into intersecting planes of sweeping, flatly saturated colour a confident expression of the artistic idiom that has secured his reputation as one of the most important and influential painters working in post-war France.

Refusing to occupy the position of either abstract or figurative painter absolutely, during this celebrated period de Staël vacillated between these opposing impulses, surprising his critics with the radical reintroduction of more representational elements back into compositions in 1954. Masterfully anchoring his poetic investigations into the workings of colour and form, *Marine* is a serene example of this reconciliation between abstraction and figuration, its bold geometries and subtle tonalities generating compositional harmony with confidence and lyricism.

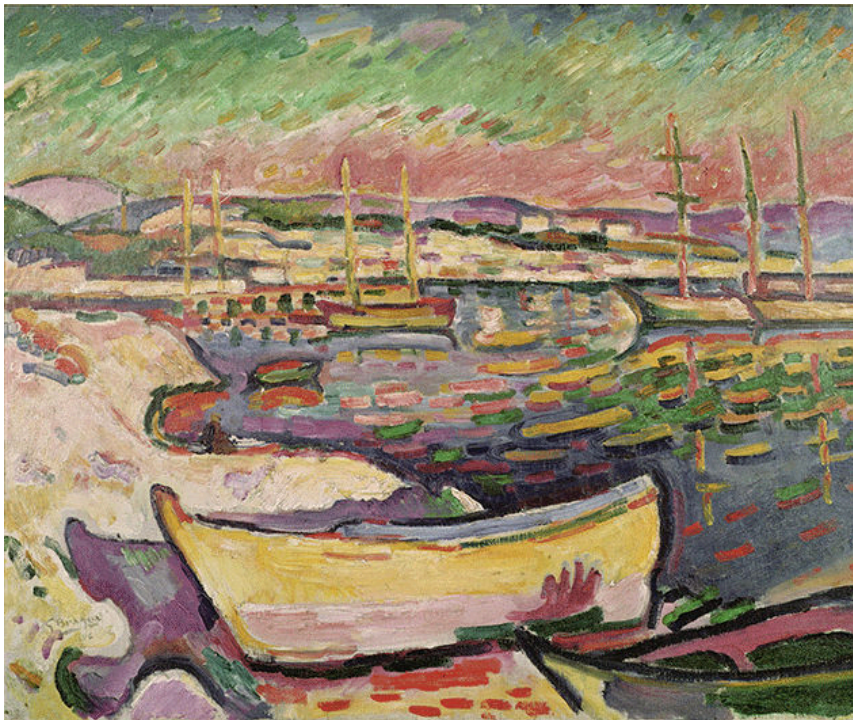


Denise Colomb, *Nicolas de Staël*, 1954. Image: Photo © Ministère de la Culture - Médiathèque du patrimoine et de la photographie, Dist. RMN-Grand Palais / Denise Colomb, Artwork: © ADAGP, Paris and DACS, London 2022

After the difficult years of the Second World War dogged by financial struggle, personal tragedy, and a relentless outpouring of work, 1950 marked a decisive turning point for the artist. Gaining increasing critical attention, Galerie Jacques Dubourg mounted a solo exhibition of his work in Paris, while in New York legendary dealer Leo Castelli included his paintings in a group exhibition at the Sidney Janis Gallery, where his work was noticed by important American collectors and critics. Following a series of exhibitions in London and Paris, by 1953 de Staël's reputation was secure with a pivotal solo exhibition with M. Knoedler & Co. in New York, leading one critic to enthuse: 'de Staël is an Abstract Impressionist in love with light and paint, which he lays on in thick

vertical and horizontal slabs as if it were butter or putty to be spread across the canvas with a trowel [...] His paintings are not only sensitive responses to light, space and mass; they exist in their own right, and their existence is secured by the artist's passionate feeling for paint and for tensions which exist only in art – on a flat, framed surface.<sup>i</sup>

References to Impressionism and artists of the early 20th century avant-garde were apt, further emphasised by de Staël's involvement with the Galerie Jacques Dubourg in Paris, and his admiration for older artists such as Georges Braque. Both represented by Paul Rosenberg in the United States, for his part Braque had been impressed after seeing de Staël's painting at a group exhibition alongside Wassily Kandinsky at the Jeanne Bucher Gallery in 1944, and the two developed a close and fruitful friendship over the following years. In its careful attention to the interactions of light, colour, and space, *Marine* certainly seems to draw on the compositional lessons of these modern masters, reimagined in his own, idiosyncratic vernacular.



Georges Braque, *Boats in the Bay*, 1906, Los Angeles County Museum of Art. Image: Bridgeman Images, Artwork: © ADAGP, Paris and DACS, London 2022

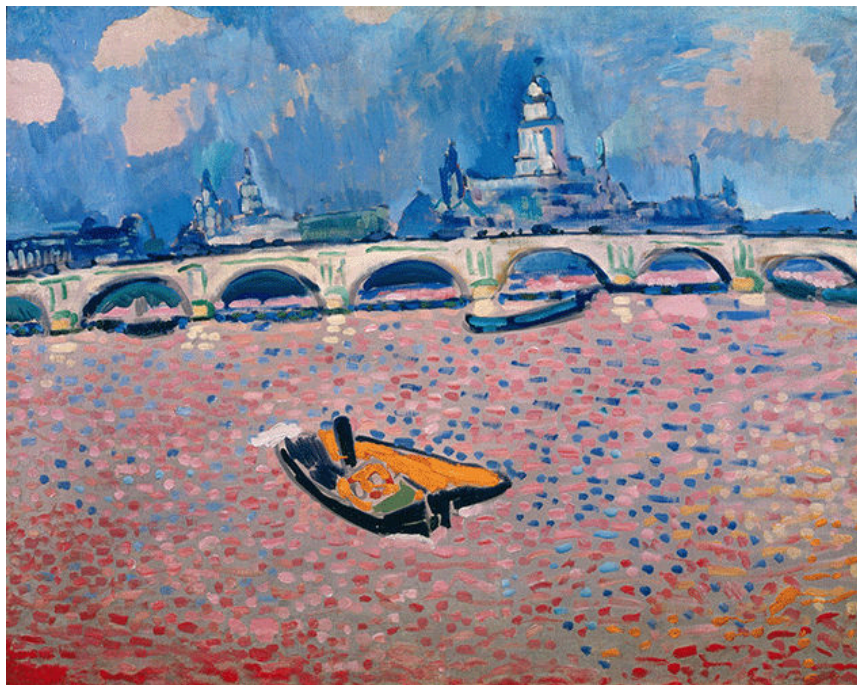
As renowned art historian and friend of de Staël Douglas Cooper describes: 'Throughout the period from the summer of 1952 to the spring of 1954, de Staël's development was rapid. His pictorial invention was harnessed to a great effort, and in everything he produced one feels the force of his originality and vitality. Gradually he simplified his method of composition until, with four or five broad areas of colour, he could evoke not merely the constituent elements of a landscape – sky, hills, buildings and a road, for example – but even a harbour with boats, a lighthouse among the dunes.'<sup>ii</sup>

Having pushed his painterly language far into abstraction, the reintroduction of figurative elements proved especially successful in his coastal scenes, the single foregrounded boat here anchoring the whole composition. Set against the vast expanse of sea and sky, the boat's simplified arrangement of curved and loosely triangular forms in strong but balanced tones of red, white, and blue achieve a masterful sense of depth and make legible the abstracted planes of colour beyond.

## Journeys Through Colour

Moving away from the spatula and thicker impastos of his earlier work, de Staël began experimenting with thinner washes of colour, 'creating a different sort of impressionistic sensation by the fluidity and immediacy of his paint.'<sup>iii</sup> Visiting the Barnes Collection during his 1953 trip to America, de Staël absorbed a great many influences, and came away with a renewed interest in the muted tonalities and extreme attention to the contrasts of light and dark used to powerful effect in Édouard Manet's canvases. Resonating in its stark simplicity, the intensification of red and blue tones offset against refined passages of white and grey here records de Staël's working through of these influences, allowing for a more nuanced sense of space and dimension, and energising the work with a remarkable emotional intensity.





André Derain, *Bridge over the Thames in London*, 1905, Musée de l'Annonciade, Saint-Tropez. Image: Bridgeman Images, Artwork: © ADAGP, Paris and DACS, London 2022

Demonstrating a remarkable sensitivity towards tonal shifts and values, the evolution of de Staël's palette during this decisive period is intimately tied to his travels across Northern Europe and down into the South of France and beyond. Visiting London for the first time in 1951, de Staël had been struck by the movement of boats and play of light on the Thames, leading to his much-acknowledged mastery of grey tones as a means of generating a stunning luminosity and fluidity that persists in the present work. Based predominately in Northern France through the 1940s and early 1950s, a trip further south and exposure to the brighter, more direct light of Le Lavandou and Marseilles clarified his painterly approach to form and colour, ushering in the final stage in his evolution as a painter and the crystallisation of boldly contrasted passages of red, white, and blue employed here.

Relocating with his family from Paris to the idyllic countryside in Ménerbes in the Autumn of 1953 after a whistlestop tour through Italy and down to Sicily, de Staël's painting quickly absorbed the saturated colours of the south. While his landscapes registered a high palette of intense ochres, reds, and greens, his meditative Mediterranean seascapes adopted a more tranquil quality

reflective of the effects of coastal light that had first captured him in 1952 when he enthused: 'light is simply flashing here, much more than I remembered. I will create scenes of sea, beach, taking its brightness to the edge if all goes well, and also of nocturnal shadows'.



[Left] Nicolas de Staël, *Summer Landscape in Le Lavandou*, 1952, Private Collection. Image: Bridgeman Images, Artwork: © ADAGP, Paris and DACS, London 2022 [Right] Nicolas de Staël, *The Boat*, 1954, National Galleries of Scotland. Image: © National Galleries of Scotland, Artwork: © ADAGP, Paris and DACS, London 2022

## Blue, White, and Red

*'For your poems, I will make a large book, and it will be in blue, white, red, because for two years I have had these colours in my head.'* —Nicolas de Staël

It was within these shifting shadows and deep, cerulean blues counterpointed against more vibrant shocks of red and white that de Staël found his last great painterly challenge in the question of luminosity, one that he would continue to develop on a trip later that summer back to Paris and the Normandy coast in canvases such as *Le Bateau* now held in the permanent collection of the National Galleries of Scotland. Distilling the distinctly flat and absorbent quality of coastal light into the intense luminosity of this restricted palette, *Marine* is a quietly powerful expression of de Staël's late work.

Collaborating with his friend, the poet René Char, on a book project in 1954 de Staël explained 'For your poems, I will make a large book, and it will be in blue, white, red, because for two years I have had these colours in my head.'<sup>iv</sup> A touching homage to the two countries that had welcomed him



as an émigré and an artist, the dominance of these tones in de Staël's canvases from this period would have a profound effect on the filmmaker Jean-Luc Godard a decade later. As well as the script's more direct references to the painter, the palette of Godard's 1965 film *Pierrot le Fou* is closely tied to de Staël's, amplifying the pictorial tensions masterfully maintained in a painting like *Marine* as a visual framework to carry the film's central conflict to its dramatic conclusion. Ending with a lingering shot out across the Mediterranean, the sun sinking beneath the horizon line, *Pierrot le Fou* emphasises the profound influence of de Staël's late work on Godard who, when pressed on the role of painting in his films surmised:

*'You ask me about painting [...] In painting, I know of no one who went further than Nicolas de Staël.'* —Jean-Luc Godard

As these important and strikingly beautiful works from the last year of his life attest to, de Staël was, in John Berger's words, 'a painter who never stopped looking for the sky' as he pioneered a new transparency in his work, generating a luminosity that remains fresh and contemporary today.<sup>vi</sup>

<sup>i</sup> J. Fitzsimmons, 'In Love with Paint', *The Arts Digest*, vol. 27, no. 12, March 1953, p. 16.

<sup>ii</sup> Douglas Cooper, *Nicolas de Staël: Masters and Movements*, London, 1961, p. 62.

<sup>iii</sup> Douglas Cooper, *Nicolas de Staël: Masters and Movements*, London, 1961, p. 63.

<sup>iv</sup> De Staël in a letter to Char dated 6 March 1954. De Staël, "Les Lettres", *Catalogue raisonné de l'œuvre peint*, Lausanne, 1997, p. 1162.

<sup>v</sup> Jean-Luc Godard, *Art Press*, No. 4, December 1984-January & February 1985, p. 12.

<sup>vi</sup> John Berger, 'A letter to Nicholas de Staël', *Le Monde diplomatique*, June 2003.

## Literature

Jacques Dubourg and Françoise de Staël, *Nicolas de Staël: Catalogue Raisonné des Peintures*, Paris, 1968, no. 764, p. 316 (illustrated)

Françoise de Staël, *Nicolas de Staël: Catalogue Raisonné de l'Œuvre Peint*, Neuchâtel, 1997, no. 830, pp. 533, 676 (illustrated)

Françoise de Staël, *Nicolas de Staël: Catalogue Raisonné of the Paintings*, Lausanne, 2021, no. 830, pp. 489, 625 (illustrated)

## Provenance

Jacques Dubourg, Paris

Mrs. Maillard, Paris

Opera Gallery, Paris

Acquired from the above by the present owner

## 20th Century & Contemporary Art Evening Sale

London Auction / 30 June 2022 / 4pm BST



14 ♦

### Stanley Whitney

*May Day*

signed and dated '2017 Stanley Whitney' on the reverse

oil on canvas

183 x 183 cm (72 x 72 in.)

Painted in 2017.

**Estimate**

£400,000 — 600,000 ±

[Go to Lot](#)



*'I always say that the colour makes the structure, the structure doesn't make the colour. I don't build a structure and then fill in the colour. I wanted to devise a structure that would give me total freedom with colour.'* —Stanley Whitney

Unifying colour, structure, space, and rhythm within its loosely gridded composition, *May Day* is an absorbing example of American artist Stanley Whitney's distinctive painterly practice. Suffused with a warm iridescence and generating an incredible sense of chromatic balance, the deceptively simple geometries at work in the compositional structure of the painting pull the eye in multiple directions at once, the artist using his characteristic grid structure to explore the spatial dimensions of colour, and of the relationships established between one hue and another. Resulting in a 'vibrating field of chromatic energy', Whitney here arranges rectangles of brilliantly bold colour horizontally, separated by slimmer vertical ribbons of tangerine, hunter green, and butter yellow.<sup>i</sup> While the unexpected juxtapositions exaggerate the distinctions between his shades in some instances, in other areas Whitney playfully disrupts the rigidity of the grid, the horizontal bands sharply framing some colours while bleeding into and softening the edges of others, generating an impression of light, air, and movement throughout.

## Beginnings

An active proponent of colour field painting since the 1970s when he first developed his characteristic colour grids, Whitney is highly articulate on the art historical influences that have shaped his practice over the years, citing Pierro del Francesco, Sandro Botticelli, Piet Mondrian, and Robert Rauschenberg amongst his influences. An early encounter with a surprising Paul Cézanne on view at the Columbus Museum of Art proved highly influential, providing instructive lessons in pictorial arrangement which Whitney spliced with the improvisational structures of jazz, and the rich sense of colour and freedom that he discovered in Morris Louis' painting.



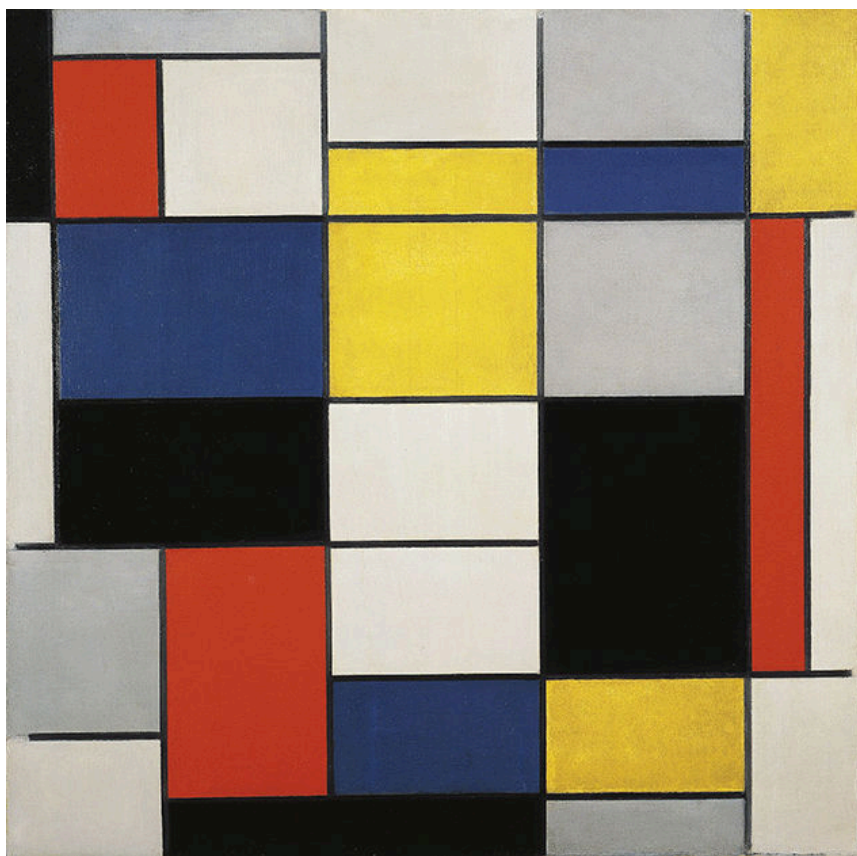
[LEFT] Paul Cézanne, *Victor Chocquet assise* (*Victor Chocquet Seated*), c. 1877, Columbus Museum of Art, Columbus, Ohio. Image: Photo Josse / Scala, Florence [RIGHT] Morris Louis, *No. 34*, 1961, Tehran Museum of Contemporary Art, Iran. Image: © Stefano Baldini / Bridgeman Images, Artwork: © ARS, NY and DACS, London 2022

## Architecture and The Eternal City

Currently enjoying a prominent solo exhibition in Venice running alongside the 59th International Exhibition of La Biennale di Venezia, Whitney often credits the time spent living and working in Italy in the 1990s as ushering in a pivotal shift in his practice. Finding himself in Rome, surrounded by the architecture of the ancient city and absorbed by the iridescent qualities of light on the stone Whitney started to develop what Louise Neri has described as the appearance of 'a tectonic, partitioned structure, in addition to it being rhythmic and dynamic.'<sup>ii</sup> More prosaically, Whitney recalls visiting the Etruscan Museum, the stacked sarcophagi leading the artist to consider the possibilities of 'stacking' colour in his paintings, realising that this would allow him to 'get to the colour immediately without having to do anything else first.'<sup>iii</sup>

*'The experience of being there, especially the ancient buildings, brought architecture into my painting. When you walk into the Roman Colosseum, you really feel, from the first brick to the last brick, how human they are.'* —Stanley Whitney

Somewhat paradoxically, the transition into the grid and the conception of colour as space liberated the artist, allowing him to reconcile two previously opposing poles in his practice or, as he described it in one interview 'something as open as Pollock but as structured as Mondrian.'<sup>iv</sup> With colour itself emerging as the organising principle in his works, Whitney reaches beyond Mondrian's grids, focusing on the shifts between colours, and the musical call and response structures generated in his compositions. Not contained by the dicta of any strict colour theory, Whitney relies on what he terms the 'magic' of colour: 'I lay a colour down and that colour calls another colour, and then it's a balancing act. You don't want to have something dominate something else, and you want to have good transitions.'<sup>v</sup>



Piet Mondrian, *Composition A*, (Large Composition A with Black, Red, Grey, Yellow and Blue), 1919-1920, Galleria Nazionale d'Arte Moderna e Contemporanea, Rome. Image: © NPL - DeA Picture

Library / Bridgeman Images

## Collector's Digest

- Born in Philadelphia in 1956, and drawing on a wealth of art historical references, Stanley Whitney has played a central role in the evolution of contemporary abstract painting.

- Examples of his works can be found in the prestigious public collections of The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York; Madazzino d'Arte Moderna, Rome; and the National Gallery of Canada, Ottawa.

- Following recent solo exhibitions at the Modern Art Museum, Fort Worth and the Studio Museum in Harlem, New York, Whitney is currently receiving widespread critical attention. His work is currently on display at Palazzo Tiepolo Passi, Venice, his solo exhibition *The Italian Paintings* running alongside the 59th International Exhibition of La Biennale di Venezia.

Video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MpapjITPmJE>

Stanley Whitney: Rhythm and Vision | Artist Spotlight | Gagosian Gallery, 2020

<sup>i</sup> Matthew Jeffrey Abrams, *Stanley Whitney*, London, 2020, p. 9.

<sup>ii</sup> Louise Neri, 'The Space Is In The Colour', *Gagosian Quarterly*, 10 April 2020, [online](#).

<sup>iii</sup> Stanley Whitney quoted in Louise Neri, 'The Space Is In The Colour', *Gagosian Quarterly*, 10 April 2020, [online](#).

<sup>iv</sup> Stanley Whitney, quoted in Alteronce Gumby, 'Oral History Project: Stanley Whitney by Alteronce Gumby' *BOMB Magazine*, 21 April 2015, [online](#).

<sup>v</sup> Stanley Whitney quoted in Alteronce Gumby, 'Oral History Project: Stanley Whitney by Alteronce Gumby', *BOMB Magazine*, 21 April 2015, [online](#).

### Provenance

Lisson Gallery, London

Acquired from the above by the present owner

### Exhibited

London, Store X The Vinyl Factory in partnership with Lisson Gallery, *Everything At Once*, 5 October – 10 December 2017, p. 137 (installation view illustrated, p. 139)



## 20th Century & Contemporary Art Evening Sale

London Auction / 30 June 2022 / 4pm BST



15

### Ouattara Watts

*N°1 For Miles*

signed, titled and dated 'N°1 FOR MILES OUATTARA  
WATTS Ouattara 1997'

oil, paper and tape on canvas

214.6 x 151.4 cm (84 1/2 x 59 5/8 in.)

Executed in 1997.

**Estimate**

£80,000 — 120,000 ±

[Go to Lot](#)



*'The basis of my work is spirituality, meditation carried by music as a motor for painting. For me, music is like the sun, it is light and energy. She puts the receptors on edge.'* —Ouattara Watts

Executed in 1997, *N°1. For Miles* is an exemplar of Ouattara Watts' acclaimed painterly practice that explores themes of spirituality, music, and universalism through his unique brand of Pan-Africanism. In the present work, Watts collages the cover of the 1965 album 'My Funny Valentine: Miles Davis in Concert' over a painted pattern of black-and-white squares set against an expansive field of green and orange field, uniting the disparate elements into a coherent whole with a red cross that runs through the composition. Nodding to some of his greatest artistic and musical influences, *N°1. For Miles* arrives to auction amidst the artist's critical rise on the international art scene with a recent show at Karma, New York this past April and his new representation by Almine Rech announced in May 2022.

wide as his visual vocabulary—from Jean-Michel Basquiat to Pablo Picasso, Kazimir Malevich to Mark Rothko, jazz to polyphonic pygmy music, African mysticism to Egyptology—channeled through his singular sensibility and cross-cultural identity. Born in the Ivory Coast and based in New York, Watts studied at the École Nationale Supérieure des Beaux-Arts in Paris in the 1980s before moving to New York in 1989—where he is based to this day—upon the insistence of Jean-Michel Basquiat, with whom he formed a brief but pivotal friendship before the American artist's tragic death the year before. Watts and Basquiat met in January 1988 at the latter's exhibition Galerie Yvon Lambert, Paris, soon after which Basquiat would begin purchasing the artist's paintings and convince Watts to relocate to America. The two painters bonded over their shared interest in African culture, spirituality and philosophy, and music above all, and traveled together to New Orleans where Basquiat showed Watts the voodoo museum and jazz festival, which would have a profound impact on the artist and materialises in *N°1. For Miles*.



Ouattara Watts in his Brooklyn studio. Image: © Robert Lakow

Best known for his large-scale canvases that incorporate found objects and photographs, cryptic signs and symbols, and painterly vibrancy, Watts draws inspiration from a range of influences as



Jean-Michel Basquiat, *Trumpet*, 1984. Image: Adagp Images, Paris / Scala, Florence, Artwork: © The Estate of Jean-Michel Basquiat / ADAGP, Paris and DACS, London 2022

*'His paintings are sonorous, they make noise, they generate rhythms but they also produce silence, contemplation, meditation. As do the musicians that the painter listens to.'* —Gaya Goldcymer

Here, the black-and-white squares in a checkerboard pattern recalls those frequently seen on the planks of West African masks symbolising the division of light and dark, good and evil, knowledge

and ignorance. Painting over the image of Miles Davis, Watts appears to render him with an elongated headdress and beard as if to situate the jazz icon as an ancient Egyptian deity. Embodying the three M's that curator Stéphane Vacquier posed to characterise Watts' art—'the Music, the Medium, the Matter'—the present work also captures how the act of painting is critical to the artist's programme.<sup>i</sup> 'Body to body, with the painting, always with music in the ear or in the head, Ouattara paints. He paints and paces his gesture as the composer and the musician punctuate their cadences,' as Gaya Goldcymer observed. 'The paintings of Ouattara unfold like immense parchments where images are drawn, they are read like immense partitions where are written silences, quarters of silences, pauses, triples and quadruple quavers. As many signs that are as many sounds. It is this link that one experiments when one is faced with the paintings of Ouattara: the unwavering link between image and sound, between figure and rhythm, between grapheme and colour'<sup>ii</sup> In *N°1 For Miles*, splashes of white paint echo improvised syncopation, while the stretch of red vibrates a sonorous ring that reverberates throughout the composition.



Kazimir Malevich, *Red Cross on Black Circle*, 1920-1927. Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam. Image: © Fine Art Images / Bridgeman Images

Watts' incorporation of a red band recalls the influence of Kazimir Malevich on the artist's work. 'Malevich had a huge effect on me; he is one of the artists who helped me spiritually. There is something beyond religion,' the artist explained. 'My influences come from around the world. The very notion of African spirituality is what helped me.'<sup>iii</sup> The present work epitomises Watts' words, as the green-and-orange ground recalls the colors of the Ivory Coast flag, while his inclusion of the red cross at once further recalls other flags of the world and materialises the notion of universalism so paramount to the artist's practice. As Watts expressed, 'My vision is not bound to a country or a continent; it extends beyond borders and all that can be found on a map. While I use identifiable

pictorial elements to be better understood, this project is nevertheless about something much wider. I am painting the Cosmos.'<sup>iv</sup>

### Collector's Digest

- Watts' work resides in institutional collections around the globe, including the Museum of Modern Art, New York, Smithsonian National Museum of African Art, Washington, D.C., Berkeley Art Museum and Pacific Film Archive, and the Hood Museum of Art, Dartmouth College, Hanover, among others.
- The artist's world record was recently achieved in May 2022 in New York at \$781,2000, soaring and surpassing 14 times over the previous record set in 2019.

<sup>i</sup> Stéphane Vacquier, quoted in Jean-Paul Sportiello, 'Ouattara Watts, the voodoo child of painting at the Rebeyrolle space in Eymoutiers' ('Ouattara Watts, l'enfant vaudou de la peinture à l'espace Rebeyrolle d'Eymoutiers'), *Le Populaire*, July 6, 2019.

<sup>ii</sup> Gaya Goldcymer, 'Ouattara: Master of Fire,' trans. Jonathan Taïeb, in *Ouattara Watts: Before Looking at This Work, Listen to It*, (exh. cat.), Galerie Cécile Fakhoury, Abidjan, 2019, [online](#).

<sup>iii</sup> Ouattara Watts, quoted in Olivia Anani, 'Ouattara Watts: Interview,' *Something We Africans Got*, no. 6, November 2018.

<sup>iv</sup> Ouattara Watts, quoted in Thomas McEvilley, *Fusion: West African Artists at the Venice Biennale*, (exh. cat.), The Museum for African Art, New York, 1993, p. 81.

### Provenance

Private Collection (acquired directly from the artist)  
Acquired from the above by the present owner



## 20th Century & Contemporary Art Evening Sale

London Auction / 30 June 2022 / 4pm BST



PROPERTY OF A EUROPEAN COLLECTOR

17

### George Condo

*Black Jack Sally*

signed and dated 'Condo 06' upper left; signed and dated 'Condo 06' on the reverse  
oil on canvas

165.1 x 152.4 cm (65 x 60 in.)

Painted in 2006.

Estimate

£700,000 — 1,000,000 £

[Go to Lot](#)



*'I wanted to capture the characters of these paintings at the extreme height of portraiture [...] in that static moment of chaos – and to picture them as abstract compositions that are set in destitute places and isolated rooms.'* —George Condo

Executed in a bold palette dominated by sharp chromatic contrasts and a compositional arrangement as confident as it is confrontational, George Condo's *Black Jack Sally* is a paradigmatic example of the artist's twinned concepts of artificial realism and psychological cubism, and of his unique contribution to the tradition of portraiture. Drawing on a range of art historical and pop culture references that swerve masterfully between Baroque theatricality, Cubist experimentation, and expressionistic verve, Condo's wildly inventive portraits are also strangely liberated from these principles. Not bound to the depiction of physical likeness, his unmistakable figures are instead characterised by exaggerated overbites, bulging eyes, and sharp-edged, violently fractured faces, coalescing like 'fragments of a convention, filtered through the artist's memory and imagination.'<sup>i</sup>

Taking the titular card dealer as its protagonist here, Condo touches on a long tradition of allegorical painting in which certain themes, subjects, or symbolically charged objects are used in the composition as a way of encouraging or satirising moral or spiritual concerns. Usually employed as a warning against the temptations of gambling and the vices of alcohol and lustful liaisons, these paintings reflected the cultural and moral values of their day, a vivid mode of commentary that Condo develops, not in order to moralise, but as a means of capturing a psychological portrait of our times.



Georges de la Tour, *La Triche avec l'As de Trèfle*, (*The Cheat with the Ace of Clubs*), c.1630-34, Kimbell Art Museum, Fort Worth, Texas. Image: © Kimbell Art Museum / Bridgeman Images

## Butlers and Blackjack

Over the course of an impressive forty-year career, Condo has continually refined his cast of invented and often recurring characters who belong to what critic Jennifer Higgie has aptly described as 'a ribald world of crazed, comic engagement, theatrical illogic and a furious indifference to conventional niceties.'<sup>ii</sup> By the mid-1990s, Condo had developed the pictorial vocabulary employed to such startling effect in *Black Jack Sally*, creating his beloved species of 'antipodal beings.'<sup>iii</sup> Often taking on the menial roles of butler, maid, chauffeur, or janitor, this strange cast of characters allowed Condo to visually expose the tensions between the composed face a subject might have to present to the world, and the more complex internal feelings shifting beneath the surface, embodying 'the despair, the heartache, the love and the happiness' of any of us.<sup>iv</sup>

*'It's what I call artificial realism. That's what I do. 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

Although card players are a well-established motif in art historical terms, the frontal presentation of the titular subject here, as well as the fractured waistcoat and bowtie of her casino uniform and the broad swell of green baize that rises between us and her firmly situates 'Black Jack Sally' as one of Condo's 'private mythology of cultural types' - a character who carries the weight of our contemporary cultural condition with her in much the same way as Otto Dix had employed his own card players in 1920.<sup>v</sup> While viscerally reflecting the physical reality of industrial warfare on the bodies of returning German soldiers, Dix's grotesque figures also explore the collective cultural trauma of the First World War in a way that resonates with Condo's own notion of psychological cubism.



Otto Dix, *The Skat Players*, 1920, Nationalgalerie, SMPK, Berlin. Image: Scala, Florence/bpk, Bildagentur fuer Kunst, Kultur und Geschichte, Berlin, Artwork: © 2022 DACS

## Condo's Psychological Cubism

An American artist deeply invested in the traditions of European painting, Condo developed the concept of psychological cubism as a way to describe a mode of portraiture which allowed for the simultaneous representation of these multiple internal states. Elucidating the concept in one interview Condo explained: 'Picasso painted a violin from four different perspectives at one moment. I do the same with psychological states. [...] Like glimpsing a bus with one passenger howling over a joke they're hearing down the phone, someone else asleep, someone else crying - I'll put them all in one face.'<sup>vi</sup>





Pablo Picasso, *Weeping Woman*, 1937, National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne. Image: National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne / Bridgeman Images, Artwork: © Succession Picasso / DACS, London 2022

While art historical references accumulate across Condo's canvases, Picasso remains a key touchstone for the artist, *Black Jack Sally* recalling the earlier artist's own, [Cubist card-players](#) in its subject matter and fracturing of form, as well as his later portraits of his lover and muse, the photographer Dora Maar. Painted against the backdrop of the Spanish Civil War and the genesis of *Guernica* - Picasso's monumental treatment of human cruelty and suffering, the iconic *Weeping Woman* series pushed the formal principles of Cubism into new, emotionally charged territory further amplified by Condo's psychological cubism. Referencing the *Weeping Woman*'s lurid contrasts of greens, yellows, reds and patches of purple, *Black Jack Sally* combines vulnerability and monstrosity, compassion and existential horror with astonishing facility.

As Condo has suggested, 'painting needs to transform in order for it to become interesting for each and every generation [...] Liberated by what has come before', and in his own radical expansion of the possibilities of portraiture he has paved the way for a broad range of contemporary artists including John Currin, Dana Shutz, Nicole Eisenman, and Lisa Yuskavage, amongst others.<sup>vii</sup>

## Collector's Digest

- Since his major international travelling mid-career survey *Mental States* in 2011, Condo has continued to exhibit widely, representing the United States at the 2013 and 2019 International Art Exhibition La Biennale di Venezia.

- More recently, the artist was honoured with his largest show to date in Asia, held at the Long Museum, Shanghai in 2021.

- Now represented by Hauser & Wirth, his paintings are held in important international collections including the Museum of Modern Art, New York and the National Gallery of Art, Washington D.C., amongst others.

<sup>i</sup> Allesandra Montezuma Soberg, quoted in Ralph Rugoff, 'Imaginary Essay', *The Imaginary Portraits of George Condo*, New York, 2002, p. 6.

<sup>ii</sup> Jennifer Higbie, 'Time's Fool', *Frieze*, 5 May 2007, [online](#).

<sup>iii</sup> Ralph Rugoff, 'The Mental States of America', *George Condo: Mental States*, exh. cat., London, 2011, p. 16.

<sup>iv</sup> George Condo, quoted in Ralph Rugoff, 'The Enigma of Jean Louis', *George Condo, Existential Portraits: Sculpture, Drawings, Paintings 2005/2006*, Berlin, 2006, p. 13.

<sup>v</sup> Holland Cotter, 'A Mind Where Picasso Meets Looney Tunes,' *The New York Times*, January 27, 2011, [online](#).

<sup>vi</sup> George Condo, quoted in Stuart Jeffries, 'George Condo: I was delirious. Nearly died.', *The Guardian*, 10 February 2014, [online](#).

<sup>vii</sup> George Condo, quoted in Ralph Rugoff, 'The Enigma of Jean Louis', *George Condo, Existential Portraits: Sculpture, Drawings, Paintings 2005/2006*, Berlin, 2006, p. 13.

p. 7.

## Provenance

Private Collection, New York

Acquired from the above by the present owner



## 20th Century & Contemporary Art Evening Sale

London Auction / 30 June 2022 / 4pm BST



18

### John Chamberlain

#### *Ramwater Sweets*

painted, stainless and chromium-plated steel

101.6 x 114.3 x 91.4 cm (40 x 45 x 35 7/8 in.)

Executed in 2002.

#### Estimate

£150,000 — 200,000 ±

[Go to Lot](#)



*'The definition of a sculpture for me is stance and attitude. All sculpture takes a stance. If it dances on one foot, or, even if it dances while sitting down, it has a light-on-its feet stance.'* —John Chamberlain

Energetic, playfully animate, and strikingly anthropomorphic, *Ramwater Sweets* is a particularly vibrant example of American sculptor John Chamberlain's ability to transform inert everyday materials into dynamic sculptural assemblages. Always highly experimental in his approach to materials, the self-proclaimed 'recyclist' first started working with wrecked automobile parts in 1957, forging a careful balance between the gestural immediacy of Abstract Expressionism, Minimalism's emphasis on industrial fabrication, and the vibrancy of Pop that he would continue to refine over an impressive six-decade career. Executed in 2002, the attractively sized *Ramwater Sweets* is highly characteristic of Chamberlain's most compelling work, its distinctive candy-coloured ribbons of twisted and folded chromium plated steel producing the voluminous sense of form and highly expressive dynamism for which he is most revered.

## Futurism and Forms in Motion

*'Every material has a different density, different weight [...] In finding your place in sculpture, you need to find the material that offers you just the right resistance. As it turns out, car metal offers me the correct resistance so that I can make a form—not overform it or underform it.'* —John Chamberlain

Ranking amongst some of the most iconic sculptural works of the post-war period and distilling something quintessentially American in his adoption of repurposed automobile parts, Chamberlain's careful balance of rhythm and movement and the expressive plasticity of his practice also draws on a long tradition of European sculpture. Strikingly beautiful, the crenulated surfaces of *Ramwater Sweets* generate a remarkable fluidity that recalls the folded drapery and dramatic intensity of Gian Lorenzo Bernini's high Baroque masterpieces, combined with a sense of machinic form and explosive energy developed by the Italian Futurists at the dawn of the 20th century.



[Left] Gian Lorenzo Bernini, *L'Estasi di Santa Teresa* (*Ecstasy of St Teresa of Avila*), 1647-1652, Santa Maria della Vittoria, Rome. Image: NPL - DeA Picture Library / Bridgeman Images [Right] Umberto Boccioni, *Forme uniche della continuità nello spazio* (*Unique Forms of Continuity in Space*), 1913, Museo del Novecento, Milan. Image: akg-images / De Agostini Picture Lib. / G. Cigolini

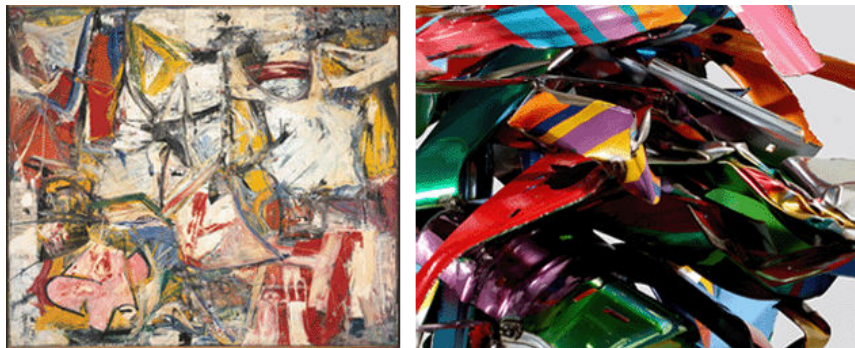
Although Chamberlain does not celebrate or fetishize the automobile in quite the same way as his Futurist forebears, his commitment to it as a material rooted in 20th century modes of production certainly resonates with the aims and interests of the Italian Futurists. As in Umberto Boccioni's defining symbol of the Machine Age, *Forme uniche della continuità nello spazio*, Chamberlain's sculptural assemblages speak to the ways in which technology permeates the body, and of sculpture's privileged ability to respond to this, a point emphasised with Chamberlain's inclusion in the recently opened group exhibition *Future Bodies from a Recent Past – Sculpture, Technology, and the Body since the 1950s* held at the Museum Brandhorst in Munich. For Chamberlain, as for Boccioni, a core conceptual problem of sculpture lies in not only in how to extract intense physicality and sense of kinetic energy from static form, but of how to address sculpture's disruptive relationship to the space surrounding it, artfully managed in the smaller-scale *Ramwater Sweets*.

## Chromium Plated Colour

Although Chamberlain did expand his repertoire to include a range of other materials including plexiglass and galvanised steel, his sculpted automobile parts remain his most immediately

recognisable and beloved works. An integral part of Chamberlain's practice, colour was initially dictated by these prefabricated materials sourced from local scrapyards, although when he returned to the automobile with renewed focus in the 1970s, the artist began adding colour to the twisted junk metal as we can see in *Ramwater Sweets*. Sandblasting the original paintwork from the metal, Chamberlain juxtaposed a variety of vivid pastel hues and bright primary colours against bare areas of polished chrome. Firmly committed to colour throughout his career, the artist explained 'I never thought of sculpture without colour. Do you see anything around that has no colour? Do you live in a world with no colour? [...] All sculpture had colour, even if it was rust colour or just dull green or something'.<sup>i</sup>

For Chamberlain, colour was also intimately linked to the kind of dynamic energy he wanted to capture in his sculptural works, reflected both in the active chemical reactions occurring between his materials, and the synergy between movement, gesture, and colour typically associated with Abstract Expressionist painting. It is on these grounds that Chamberlain is often identified as the first artist to extend the painterly experiments of mid-century Abstract Expressionists such as Jackson Pollock and Willem de Kooning into three dimensions, developing a pioneering mode of three-dimensional collage bursting with energy and expressive plasticity.



[Left] Willem de Kooning, *Gotham News*, 1955, Albright-Knox Art Gallery, Buffalo. Image: Albright Knox Art Gallery/Art Resource, NY/Scala, Florence, Artwork: © Willem de Kooning Revocable Trust/ARS, NY and DACS, London 2022 [Right] Detail of the present work

• Over the years major retrospectives of Chamberlain's work across a range of media including photography, film, sculpture, and painting have been held at the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum in New York, and the Museum of Contemporary Art in Los Angeles. Since his death in 2011, Chamberlain has been the subject of several solo exhibitions, the most recent of which has been Hauser & Wirth's *John Chamberlain: Reclaimed*, which opened in Zurich in March 2022.

<sup>i</sup> John Chamberlain, in Phyllis Tuchman, 'An Interview with John Chamberlain', *ArtForum*, February 1972, [online](#).

#### Provenance

Acquired directly from the artist by the present owner

#### Collector's Digest

• Internationally renowned for his twisted metal sculptures and experiments with other industrial materials, examples of John Chamberlain's work can be found in the permanent collections of the Art Institute of Chicago, the Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden in Washington D.C., the Museum of Modern Art in New York, and the Tate Collection in London.

## 20th Century & Contemporary Art Evening Sale

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19

**Katharina Grosse**

*Ohne Titel*


inscribed and dated '2016 2016/1109 290x193' on the reverse

acrylic on canvas

290 x 193 cm (114 1/8 x 75 7/8 in.)

Painted in 2016.

**Estimate**

£120,000 — 180,000 

[Go to Lot](#)





*'Am I a painter? Am I a sculptor? I don't know. I'm talking to the world while painting on it, or with it, or in it.'* —Katharina Grosse

Internationally renowned for her monumental and deeply immersive site-specific installations featuring broad interlocking jets of acid-bright colour sprayed directly onto a seemingly limitless array of natural and architectural surfaces, German artist Katharina Grosse continues to challenge our perceptions of space, colour, and embodiment through her radical practice. Possessing an exceptional vitality and confidently executed on an enormous scale, *Ohne Titel* is energised by the same wide, sweeping arcs of jarring, vividly hued paint carefully balanced against passages of evocative blank space that characterises Grosse's work across a range of different environments. Strikingly dynamic, the present work pushes way beyond the limits of the canvas, transforming the flat, two-dimensional surface into a series of complex folds and dramatic, pulsing crenulations, contorting our sense of space as pure colour and form collide.

Video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IGmP-66Yyiw>

Katharina Grosse Interview: On the Edge of Something Else, Louisiana Channel, 2021.

## Embodied Colour

Born in Freiberg, Germany in 1961, Grosse studied at the prestigious Kunstakademie Düsseldorf, where she also held a teaching post for some years. During this time, she was able to experiment with the unconventional approaches to painting that would come to define her practice. At once removing the hand of the artist and engaging her body more directly in her work, by 1998 Grosse had abandoned the paintbrush in favour of the industrial spray gun and foam stencil, formalising an approach that she had first developed playfully in childhood:

*'As a child, I would play a game with myself where before I got up, I had to first erase the shadows on the wall. I invented an invisible paintbrush to paint over the shadows of the windowsill or the lamp of whatever was there.'* —Katharina Grosse

Extending the physical range of her body dramatically, the spray-gun allowed Grosse to move intuitively through the sprawling, site-specific installations that she first received international recognition for, a tool particularly well suited not only for the size of these works, but of the artist's desire to break down boundaries between inside and outside in the formation of new worlds. As she described in one early interview: 'I do not have a vision. I am the vision. [...] The inside and the outside coexist. What appears in the image field is not subordinate to existing reality, it constitutes that reality. I don't interpret reality; I understand reality as a performative activity that generates

itself newly and differently, again and again.'<sup>i</sup>

Maintaining a close dialogue to these larger works, Grosse returned to the canvas for her pivotal first solo exhibition with Gagosian Gallery in 2017, the present work belonging to the network of interconnected suites of untitled paintings produced in advance of the show. Since then, Grosse has regularly exhibited her monumental canvases alongside these larger-scale installations, staging complex interactions between the two as she explores the body's relationship to space and environment, privileging embodied sensation over acts of seeing alone.

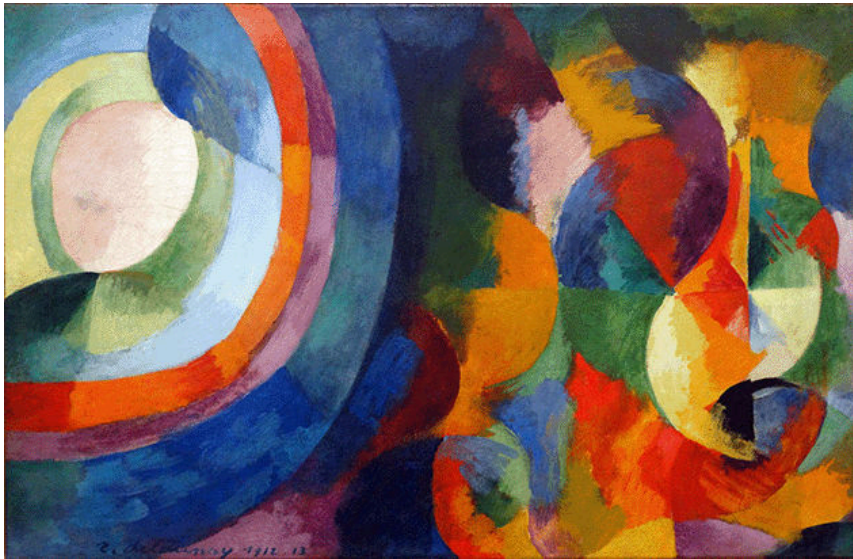


Installation view of Katharina Grosse, *Is It You?* Baltimore Museum of Art. Image: Mitro Hood / Baltimore Museum of Art, Artwork: © DACS 2022

## Legacies of Abstraction

Highly articulate on the relationship between the body, colour, and feeling, Grosse belongs to an illustrious history of abstract painting produced by women that includes the pioneering spiritual symbolism of Hilma af Klint's canvases, and the forcefully dynamic interlocking planes of contrasted and complimentary colour used to such powerful effect by Sonia Delaunay-Turk. Like Grosse, Delaunay-Turk was interested in the immediacy of colour, and of the ways in which it engages the body actively in producing new ways of seeing and feeling. Building on the laws of

simultaneous contrasts developed by the 19th century chemist Michel Eugène, Delaunay-Turk and her husband Robert Delaunay explored the ways in which prismatic contrasts of primary and secondary colours produced different optical effects within the eye itself, prefiguring Grosse's own desire to create a painterly language 'that has bodily contact, that addresses the entire bodily intelligence and can resonate in every fibre of our being.'<sup>ii</sup>



Robert Delaunay, *Circular Forms, Sun, Moon*, 1912, Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam. Image: akg-images / WHA / World History Archive

Experienced sensorily rather than analytically in this manner, colour can be registered within our bodies as both disruptive and disorientating, a force that Grosse confidently exploits in the present work's structural complexity as passages of darker red and green tones are forcefully counterpointed by vibrant streaks of cadmium red, vivid turquoise, and lemon-yellow. Creating a synchronicity that draws it close to the rhythms, repetitions, and juxtapositions of musical form, the present work is a striking example of Grosse's celebration of painting's non-linear possibilities, moving us instead around, within, and beyond its surface.

In its gestural qualities, complex layering, and radical extension of an immersive, all-over approach, Grosse's practice is frequently referred to as a contemporary renegotiation of the principles developed by mid-century Abstract Expressionists Jackson Pollock, Cy Twombly, and Janet Sobel. Wildly expansive and spatially complex, Grosse's prismatic vision has been hugely

informative to the painterly languages developed across the large scale-works of emerging artists such as Lauren Quinn and Sarah Sze, pushing a language of abstraction into the 21st century.

## Collector's Digest

- Known for her major, site-specific installations, Grosse has previously produced in-situ works for the South London Gallery in 2017, Fort Tilden and Rockaway Beach in 2016, and The Hamburger Bahnhof in 2016.
- In addition to site-specific installation *APOLLO APOLLO* for the Espace Louis Vuitton Venezia where it will remain open alongside the 59th International Exhibition of La Biennale di Venezia, Grosse has recently unveiled a second project for the Fondation Luis Vuitton in their Paris space as part of the exhibition *La Couleur en fugue* which opened in May.
- Examples of Grosse's work are housed in important institutional collections including the Musée d'Art Moderne, Centre Pompidou, The Kunsthaus in Zurich, and The Museum of Modern Art in New York, amongst others.

i Katharina Grosse, quoted in Ati Maier, *Bomb Magazine*, 1 April, 2011, [online](#).

ii Katharina Grosse, quoted in Anna McNay, 'My Eyes are My Most Important Tools', *Studio International*, 12 December 2020, [online](#).

## Provenance

Gagosian Gallery, New York

Acquired from the above by the present owner

## Literature

Louise Neri, Okwui Enwezor, Dan Cameron, Katharina Grosse and Isabelle Graw, *Katharina Grosse*, New York, 2018, p. 94 (illustrated, p. 95)

## 20th Century & Contemporary Art Evening Sale

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PROPERTY FROM A DISTINGUISHED PRIVATE DUTCH  
COLLECTION

20

**Philippe Parreno**

*Untitled (Interior Cartoons)*

wax and wick, in 22 parts

each 175.3 x 20.3 x 20.3 cm (69 x 8 x 8 in.)

Executed in 2013.

**Estimate**

£200,000 — 300,000    £

[Go to Lot](#)



*'I was wondering why it was that objects are often celebrated, but exhibitions of objects are not [...] So it seemed like using birthday candles here would be a good way of addressing that question.'* —Philippe Parreno

Working across a vast range of media encompassing sculpture, drawing, performance, and film internationally recognised French-Algerian artist Philippe Parreno explores our relationship to objects – including the conceptual possibilities of the exhibition as an immersive object rather than a series of individual, passively consumed items. Frequently explained with reference to ‘relational aesthetics’ over the years Parreno has extended his practice across a series of notable shows including the radical transformation of the Palais de Tokyo in 2013, and Tate Modern’s Turbine Hall in 2016, treating ‘each as a studio where I can invent things.’<sup>i</sup> Central to his artistic project are ideas of the construction of space and of our body’s relation to it, of the blurred boundaries between fiction and reality, and the notion of duration – a philosophical concept related to our experience of time – and consciousness that his celebrated series of candle works speaks to on several levels.

While the candle is an object that diminishes in size over time as the wick burns down and the wax melts away, the birthday candle takes on an extra dimension as a privileged object in its ability to mark the passage of time from one year to the next. Standing metonymically in for the year that has passed, we use candles to visually represent important milestones in our lives, a common and easily communicated practice that Parreno engages across these works. Numbered according to the artist’s age at significant moments in his life, they are a discrete celebration of memory and personal history, as the artist has highlighted in relation to a 2010 iteration of the work now held in the collection of the Fondation Louis Vuitton. As the artist explains:

*'I made those candles to celebrate the anniversary of my relationship with the Esther Schipper Gallery in Berlin, a long-lasting one, since I left art school, so I made those giant candles to evoke the association of an artist with his gallery, again a way of showing that things do not just happen, they are made to happen, through dialogue.'*  
—Philippe Parreno

Although presented in a museum space, these candles refer to an event that occurred in the world beyond the gallery walls, ‘deframing memory’ as it collapses the space between the event and the object’s record of it. Inviting participation with the viewer, the candles encourage us to reevaluate our relationship to time, memory, and the nature of reality. Carved into their instantly recognisable corkscrew shape and finished in an assortment of bright, primary colours, *Untitled (Interior Cartoons)* are especially charged reminders of childhood, an association further emphasised by their cartoon-like appearance and exaggerated scale in relation to us. In this manner past, present, and future are brought into dynamic, mutually formative relations as the candles – rooted in the time of their own production – encourage viewers to draw out their own childhood memories within the constantly unfolding present moment. These performative, durational, and

participatory elements are also embedded in the works themselves: presented stacked closely together in the corner of a room, ‘one can light them at will. They can perform again, potentially.’

Video: <https://youtu.be/bKWCleDvZyY?t=301>

Philippe Parreno discusses his candle works with Jean Max Colard for Fondation Louis Vuitton

Collaboration and creative exchange lie at the heart of Parreno’s art practice, and his work inspires generative connections with a diverse range of artists ranging from Marcel Duchamp to his mentor and collaborator Daniel Buren. While Duchamp’s recontextualisation of everyday items into Dada Readymades certainly chimes with Parreno’s ability to encourage a radical reconsideration of our relationship to our environment and the objects within it, Buren’s complication of the relationships between art, the viewer, and the space they both exist within is recorded in Parreno’s own, pioneering practice. In terms of the durational, performative, and material considerations at play in the present work, we might also be reminded of Urs Fischer’s wax sculptures, ephemeral works that centralise questions of transience and transformation. Much like Fischer’s monumental installation exhibited in the rotunda of the newly opened Bourse de Commerce – Pinault Collection in Paris, *Untitled (Interior Cartoons)* transcend language in their directness and universality, giving weight to Parreno’s observation that ‘I think the problem of art is form, and [form] is a complicated thing to do. Form is not an object, it is a moment of attention.’<sup>ii</sup>





Urs Fischer, *Untitled*, 2011, Bourse de Commerce - Pinault Collection, Paris. Image: Hemis / Alamy Stock Photo, Artwork: © Urs Fischer

## Collector's Digest

- Born in Algeria in 1964, Philippe Parreno lives and works in Paris.
- In addition to his films including the widely distributed *Zidane: A 21st Century Portrait*, Parreno has mounted major exhibitions in New York, London, Berlin, Shanghai, Tokyo, and Paris. His work belongs to major international collections including the Pompidou, Guggenheim Museum, the Los

Angeles County Museum of Art, The Museum of Modern Art

- Documenting Francisco de Goya's late *Black Paintings*, Parreno's new film is currently on display at the Fondation Beyeler, Basel, to coincide with their current Goya exhibition.

<sup>i</sup> Philippe Parreno, quoted in Heather Corcoran, 'Philippe Parreno explains the process behind some of his most important works', *Time Out*, 1 July 2015, [online](#).

<sup>ii</sup> Philippe Parreno, quoted in Van Badham, 'Philippe Parreno: "To apply art to political resistance is always a bit complicated"', *The Guardian*, 8 December 2016, [online](#).

### Provenance

Pilar Corrias, London

Acquired from the above by the present owner

### Exhibited

Rotterdam, Museum Boijmans Van Beuningen, *In scene gezet*, 7 February 2015 – 28 February 2016

## 20th Century & Contemporary Art Evening Sale

London Auction / 30 June 2022 / 4pm BST



21

### Günther Förg

#### *Untitled*

signed, inscribed and dated '64/90 Förg 90' on the reverse

acrylic on lead on wood

180 x 109.9 cm (70 7/8 x 43 1/4 in.)

Executed in 1990, this work is recorded in the archive of Günther Förg as no. WVF.90.B.0826.

We thank Mr. Michael Neff from the Estate of Günther Förg for the information he has kindly provided on this work.

#### **Estimate**

£200,000 — 300,000    £

[Go to Lot](#)



*'I like very much the qualities of lead – the surface, the heaviness [...] I like to react on things, with the normal canvas you often have to kill the ground, give it something to react against.'* —Günther Förg

A towering figure of German post-war painting, Günther Förg's multidisciplinary oeuvre is characterised by incessant experimentation in a range of mediums, encompassing photography, painting, sculpture and the less traditional approach to materials that we see here. Stunning in its sense of compositional balance and chromatic harmony, *Untitled* belongs to the artist's iconic series of *Lead Paintings* from the 1980s, whose investigations of colour and pictorial representation became landmarks in a history of abstraction.

Referencing the Colour Field techniques of artists such as Mark Rothko, Barnett Newman and Clyfford Still, Förg's *Lead Paintings* use the tactile, physical qualities of the metal to help create a dense and textured canvas, the paint itself becoming highly expressive of these material qualities and endowing the works with an almost architectural dimension. First wrapping the lead sheets over wood, Förg then applied acrylic to the surface, allowing the scratches and imperfections of the metallic ground to become fixed in the paint. The geometric patterning of the work exists side by side with a hazy, ambiguous figuration created through this fibrous and layered brushwork, whilst the minimalist composition unleashes a vivid interplay of inky blues and ferrous rusts. The colours themselves take on the heavy, dense quality of the lead, which lends further richness to their tone and vibrancy. This sense of a finely poised tension established between expression and composition characterises the series as a whole, and is exquisitely realised here.



Lead Paintings installed at Günther Förg - A Fragile Beauty, Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam, 26 May - 14 October 2018. Artwork: © Estate Günther Förg, Suisse / DACS 2022

*'one could say quite concretely that the composition of my lead pictures is anonymous whereas the manner in which they have been painted is expressive.'* —Günther Förg

The juxtaposition of rust elements of the painting with the almost monochromatic blue band reveals a playful subversion of the traditional oppositions of ground and figure – what might at first sight seem a simple gestural abstraction of colour and line gradually reconciles as a landscape of sorts, a burnt umber desert rolling out beneath a night sky, the horizontal brush strokes evoking the movement of the wind and the shimmering life within. Such a 'free abstract statement' allows the viewer to, in Förg's words, 'sense a figure [that is] not explicitly a figure'.<sup>i</sup> Indeed, the interdependence of contrasting abstracted elements is key to Förg's enigmatic works, and is redolent of a Gestalt theory of ground and figure, where neither is perceptible without the presence of the other. Engaging with the aesthetic legacy of modernism and Rothko's inversion of the relationships between figure and ground, Förg nevertheless resists the more metaphysical dimensions of Rothko's practice, anchoring his compositions in more formal concerns. Using colour intuitively and without relying on strict principles of symmetry, the present work is bisected horizontally into two zones of contrasted colour, the blue band standing out prominently against the lead ground, sensuously raw and distilling painting into its pure essence.



Mark Rothko, *Red, Orange, Orange on Red*, 1962, Saint Louis Art Museum, Missouri. Image: © Saint Louis Art Museum / Funds given by the Shoenberg Foundation, Inc. / Bridgeman Images, Artwork: © Kate Rothko Prizel and Christopher Rothko / DACS 2022

The neat separation of the two colours recalls the rigour and formality of minimalist composition, yet the deep tones created here suffuse the lead's metallic heaviness with hints of gleaming light. These two contradicting yet mutually invigorating energies masterfully showcase the artist's distinctive command of compositional and chromatic balance, as well as his desire to explore a 'clarity of form with an expressionist handling.'<sup>ii</sup> However, where minimalist artists have focused on the reduction and simplification of form, Förg's emphasis is placed instead on achieving painterly texture and depth, extending his predecessors' spatial investigations through uncalculated gestures and incongruous material juxtapositions. As a result, 'colours emerge, the

paintings become more open, and even the material's arbitrary elements in the patina become part of the picture'.<sup>iii</sup>

### Collector's Digest

- A master of German contemporary art, examples of Günther Förg's work now reside in the permanent collections of The Museum of Modern Art, New York, and the Tate Modern, London.
- After his first solo exhibition with Rüdiger Schöttle Gallery, Munich, in 1980, Förg continued to exhibit widely throughout his life, including major solo shows at the Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam, the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, and the Fondation Beyeler, Basel.
- More recent posthumous exhibitions include the 2021 'Constellations of Colour' with Galerie Max Hetzler in London and Hauser & Wirth's presentation of Grid Paintings in Los Angeles in 2021, his first solo exhibition in the city.

Video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YLSRpRP1lpl>

Günther Förg: A Fragile Beauty, Stedelijk Museum

<sup>i</sup> Günther Förg quoted in, David Ryan, 'Talking Painting: Interview with Günther Förg Karlsruhe', 1997, [online](#).

<sup>ii</sup> Günther Förg quoted in, David Ryan, 'Talking Painting: Interview with Günther Förg Karlsruhe', 1997, [online](#).

### Provenance

Mikael Andersen Gallery, Copenhagen

Private collection, Denmark

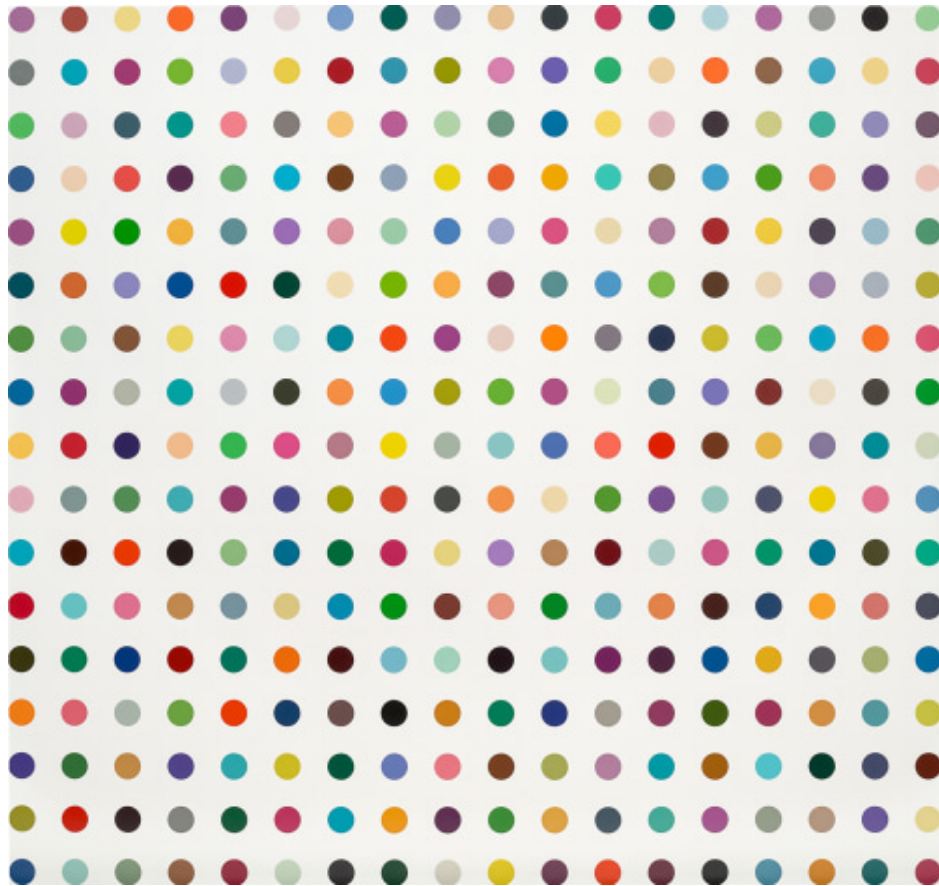
Hauser & Wirth, Zürich

Acquired from the above by the present owner



## 20th Century & Contemporary Art Evening Sale

London Auction / 30 June 2022 / 4pm BST



22

### Damien Hirst

#### *Furfuryl Mercaptan*

signed 'D Hirst' on the stretcher  
household gloss on canvas  
251.5 x 266.7 cm (99 x 105 in.)  
Executed in 2004-2011.

#### Estimate

£400,000 — 600,000

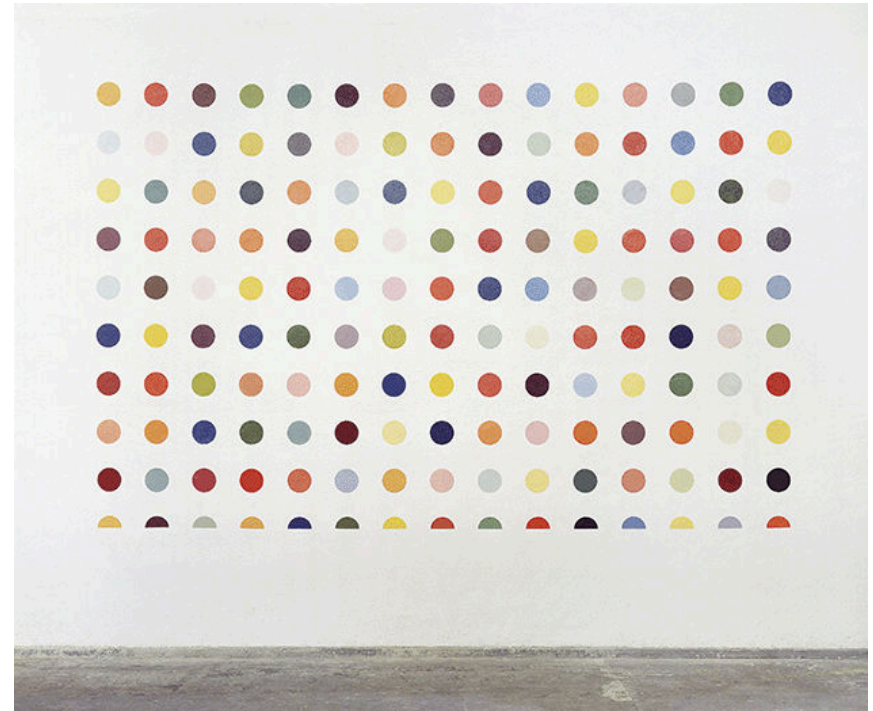
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*'I once said that the spot paintings could be what art looks like viewed through an imaginary microscope.'* —Damien Hirst

Now spanning over a quarter of a century, Damien Hirst's highly celebrated series of meticulously rendered *Pharmaceutical Paintings* have come to define the British artist's prodigious output. Bridging the sense of order, primacy of the grid, and focus on scientific modes of categorisation that we find in the *Medicine Cabinets* with the exuberant and joyful approach to colour taken in his *Spin Paintings*, *Furfuryl Mercaptan* is a colossal and kaleidoscopic expression of Hirst's broader series of *Spot Paintings*, to which the *Pharmaceutical* works belong, perfectly uniform in its compositional arrangement of 306 evenly spaced and uniquely coloured dots set against a brilliant white ground.

Compounding associations between his paintings and scientific endeavour, the title of works from this series are selected at random from the alphabetically arranged catalogue of drug company Sigma-Aldrich's products that Hirst first stumbled across in the early 1990s. Characterised by its bitter coffee taste, and used most often as a food flavouring agent, Furfuryl Mercaptan darkens to yellow as it stands, an appropriate selection of title for a work so interested in the properties of colour and the eye's register of it. As Hirst has enthused: 'I was always a colourist. I've always had a phenomenal love of colour [...] So that's where the Spot paintings came from—to create that structure to do those colours, and do *nothing*.'



Damien Hirst, *Row*, 1988. Image: Edward Woodman, Artwork: © Damien Hirst and Science Ltd. All rights reserved, DACS/Artimage 2022

## Spots and Pills

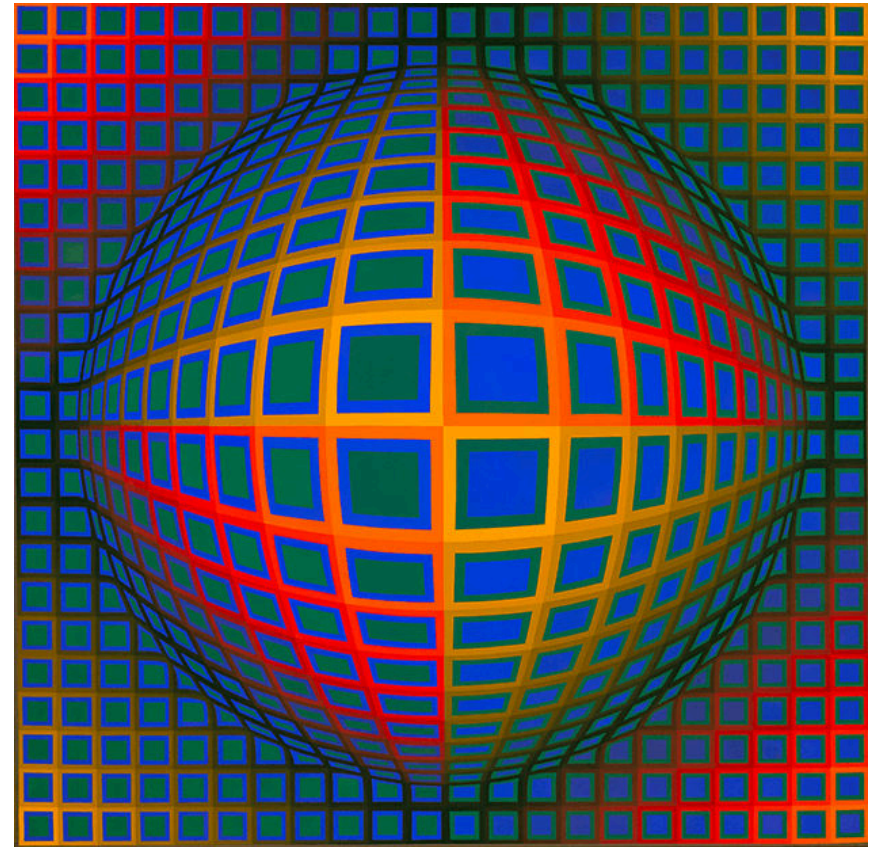
Sometimes likened to an array of different coloured pills, visualised more directly in Hirst's later cabinets, the first spots date from the very outset of Hirst's career, painted directly onto the wall of the Surrey Docks Warehouse in the final phase of the now legendary *Freeze* exhibition curated by Hirst as an undergraduate student at Goldsmith's in 1988. Just as in the innovative *Medicine Cabinets* which he first embarked on during the same year, Hirst found that he could generate infinitely variable results from the imposition of certain limitations in terms of the size and colour of his forms, their arrangement in relation to one another, and the number of spots, pills, or boxes included in each work.

Like the glass-fronted cabinet, the grid structure of the *Spot Paintings* allowed for just such a formulaic approach. Arranged with 17 uniformly sized multichromatic spots along the vertical axis

and 18 along the horizontal, *Furfuryl Mercaptan* possesses a striking sense of compositional balance and harmony. Consistent with the execution of the *Spot Paintings* more broadly, the present work is rendered in uniquely mixed hues of household paint, with no single colour appearing twice; although painted methodically by hand, Hirst was interested in the idea of the works appearing to have been executed by a machine, or ‘by a person trying to paint like a machine.’<sup>i</sup>

*‘I started them as an endless series like a sculptural idea of a painter (myself). A scientific approach to painting in a similar way to the drug companies’ scientific approach to life. Art doesn’t purport to have all the answers; the drug companies do. Hence the title of the series, The Pharmaceutical Paintings, and the individual titles of the paintings themselves [...] Art is like medicine, it can heal.’ —Damien Hirst*

As Hirst quickly discovered with one of the first spot painting’s inclusion of a black dot, the colours possessed a remarkable mutability when placed next to one another, some appearing to recede while others jumped forwards in a manner that references Bridget Riley’s and Victor Vasarely’s foundational Op Art experiments of the 1960s. However, as Hirst has always insisted, the paintings are primarily about colour and the privileged position that it holds in his practice, claiming: ‘They have nothing to do with Richterm or Poons or Bridget Riley or Albers or even Op. They’re about the urge or the need to be a painter above and beyond the object of a painting. I’ve often said they are like sculptures of paintings.’<sup>ii</sup>



Victor Vasarely, *Vega-Nor*, 1969, Albright-Knox Art Gallery, Buffalo. Image: Peter Barritt / Alamy Stock Photo, Artwork: © ADAGP, Paris and DACS, London 2022

A sophisticated presentation of the artist’s abiding interest in colour and its organisation, *Furfuryl Mercaptan* strikes a balance between art and science that has proven to be an abiding conceptual touchstone for Hirst’s practice. Marking a watershed moment in the critical recognition of the Spot Paintings, in 2012 Gagosian mounted a major solo exhibition *The Complete Spot Paintings 1986–2011* across its galleries globally, the same year that Tate Modern presented his first significant museum retrospective.

Video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Zq7WkSuTcrs>

Damien Hirst, interviewed for *Time* on the occasion of his 2012 Gagosian show

## Collector's Digest

- Coming to prominence in the late 1980s as part of the group identified by collector and gallerist Charles Saatchi as a generation of 'Young British Artists', Damien Hirst is best known for his boundary-pushing sculptures of animals submerged in formaldehyde, his series of medicine cabinets, and his celebrated *Spot Paintings*.
- Since 1998 when the artist curated his seminal *Freeze* exhibition including work from his Goldsmith's peer group, Hirst has continued to exhibit internationally, with major shows at Tate Modern in London and the Rijksmuseum in Amsterdam. Examples of his work can be found in major institutions including the Tate, London; the Hirschhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden, Washington D.C.; The Yorkshire Sculpture Park, Wakefield; and the Museum of Modern Art, New York.
- Most recently, Hirst's *Spot Paintings* have been reimagined once again with his series of *Veil Paintings*, a looser, more gestural treatment of the motif that nevertheless still adheres to the same basic principles of the foundational series as an investigation into chromatic behaviour.

i Damien Hirst, quoted in *The Complete Spot Paintings: 1986 – 2011*, London, 2012, p. 822.

ii Damien Hirst, quoted in *I Want to Spend the Rest of My Life Everywhere, with Everyone, One to One, Always, Forever, Now*, London, 1997, p. 246.

## Provenance

Gagosian Gallery, Paris

Acquired from the above by the present owner in 2012

## Literature

Other Criteria and Gagosian Gallery, eds., *The Complete Spot Paintings, 1986-2011, Damien Hirst*, London, 2013, no. 316, n.p. and p. 846 (illustrated)



## 20th Century & Contemporary Art Evening Sale

London Auction / 30 June 2022 / 4pm BST



23

### Damien Hirst

*Untitled AAAAA*

glass, painted MDF, ramin, steel, plastic, aluminium  
and pharmaceutical packaging

78 x 101.6 x 23 cm (30 3/4 x 40 x 9 in.)

Executed in 1992.

Estimate

£350,000 — 450,000

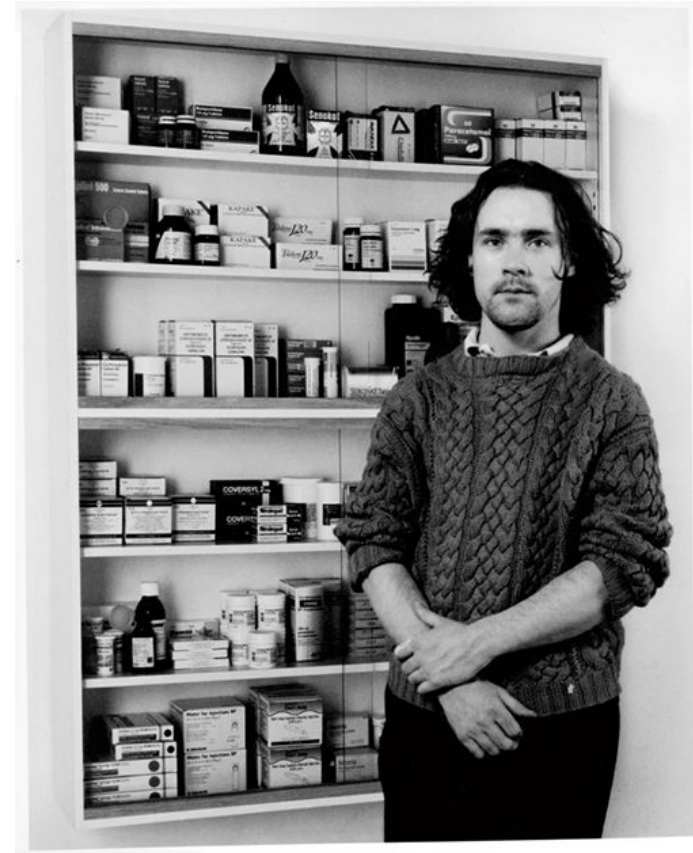
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*'Art is like medicine – it can heal. Yet I've always been amazed at how many people believe in medicine but don't believe in art, without questioning either.'* —Damien Hirst

Executed in 1992, *Untitled AAAAA* is an important early work by British artist Damien Hirst, representing not only a pivotal moment in the young artist's career, but in the history of contemporary British art. An attractively sized example of one of Hirst's celebrated *Medicine Cabinets*, it is a paradigmatic work that brings together key themes related to the body, mortality, art, and science that would go on to define his prodigious output. Conceived just as Hirst was establishing himself as the *enfant terrible* of the generation dubbed the Young British Artists, the *Medicine Cabinets* themselves are central to the Hirst *oeuvre*, laying the foundations for his later pill and diamond cabinets, guiding the investigations into colour as an organising principle that would form the basis of his celebrated *Spot Paintings*, and closely related to the iconic formaldehyde works of his *Natural History* series.

While these formaldehyde works confront us with the universal inevitability and inescapability of death, the *Medicine Cabinets* speak more directly to the fragility of our individual bodies, our fear of death and of our inextinguishable desire to preserve our lives. Or, as the artist has more glibly put it, 'You can't arrest decay but these medicine cabinets suggest you can.'<sup>1</sup> Functioning in this respect like religious icons, the cabinets play on our capacity for belief and a need to make the unseen visible, and of modern medicine's elevation to god-like proportions in its ability to protect us from death and disease.



Damien Hirst at the *No Sense of Absolute Corruption* exhibition, Gagosian Gallery, New York, 1996.  
Artwork: © Damien Hirst and Science Ltd. All Rights Reserved, DACS 2022

### Early *Medicine Cabinets*

Hirst first embarked on his *Medicine Cabinets* series in 1988 while still a student at Goldsmiths, constructing the very first cabinets *Sinner* and *Enemy* from MDF and empty packets of his grandmother's medication that she left behind after her death. Inaugurating the rebellious spirit that would come to define the Young British Artists, Hirst developed this concept for his 1989 Goldsmiths degree show across a series of thirteen cabinets titled after songs from the iconic punk

album *Never Mind the Bollocks, Here's the Sex Pistols*, explaining that 'I like it when there is more than one way of saying something, like songs on an album'.<sup>ii</sup>

*'I've always seen medicine cabinets as bodies, but also like a cityscape or civilization, with some sort of hierarchy within it. It's also like a contemporary museum of the Middle Ages. In 100 years time this will look like an old apothecary. A museum of something that's around today.'* —Damien Hirst

Clean and precise in its presentation, Hirst's earliest cabinets were imagined as ciphers for the human body, with medicines arranged schematically according to the location of the organ or part of the body they were manufactured to treat, the artist graphically explaining 'I chose the size and shape of the cabinet like a body. I wanted it to be a kind of human, like with an abdomen and a chest and guts.'<sup>iv</sup> Moving away from these more corporeal associations, Hirst adopted a more detached approach, organising the packages according to the colours used in their design, as we can see in the present work's meticulous arrangement of pills and boxes over three, smaller shelves. Conforming to the organisational principles and basic compositional harmonies of colour and form established across the wider *Medicine Cabinet* series, *Untitled AAAAA* belongs to a subset of twelve pieces, whose titles are a jocular reference to Hirst's dentist at the time - who the artist would go on to thank directly in his 1995 Turner Prize acceptance speech.



[Left] Joseph Cornell, *Pharmacy*, 1952-3, Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York. Image: © Metropolitan Museum of Art/Art Resource/Scala, Florence, Artwork: © The Joseph and Robert Cornell Memorial Foundation/VAGA, NY/DACS, London 2022 [Right] Andy Warhol, *Brillo Boxes*, 1964, The Museum of Modern Art, New York. Image: The Museum of Modern Art, New York/Scala, Florence,

Artwork: © 2022 The Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts, Inc. / Licensed by DACS, London

Hirst has likened these arrangements to the simple geometries, harmony, and seriality of Minimalism, explaining that 'I like the way that you've got all these individual elements inside a cabinet related to organs inside a body. I like the kind of Koons consumerist feel to it. And then a lot of the actual boxes of medicines are all very minimal and could be taken directly from minimalism, in the way that kind of minimalism implies confidence.'<sup>v</sup> Certainly, this confidence is immediately translated here, where the careful arrangement of medications evokes the clean, sterilised world of the pharmacy as much as the ailing body itself, an idea that Hirst would develop in the ambitious installation *Pharmacy*, now held in the permanent collection of Tate Modern. As in Joseph Cornell's earlier small series of *Pharmacy* boxes and their striking arrangement of colourful fragments of sand, shells, and newspaper, the rigidity of the grid is offset by a more ineffable, poetic dimension that conflates ideas about medicine, art, and the ephemerality of life, while also borrowing from the colourful and loud use of commodity items evoked in 1960s Pop art.

### Collector's Digest

- One of the most controversial and provocative figures of contemporary art, Damien Hirst's work has defined the YBA generation and continues to drive discussions around the role and meaning of art in the 21st century.

- First conceived in the early 1990s, Hirst's *Medicine Cabinets* rank amongst his most instantly recognisable and conceptually important series, with iconic early examples of these works held in major institutions around the world, including The San Francisco Museum of Modern Art and the Bayerische Staatsgemaldesammlungen in Munich.

- Combining the seriality and formalism of the *Spot Paintings* with the philosophical dimensions of the formaldehyde works, the *Medicine Cabinets* are central to Hirst's oeuvre. Having made their initial appearance in the artist's Goldsmiths degree show in 1989, an example of these works has been included in every major survey exhibition since and in 2010 L & M Arts in New York presented *The Complete Medicine Cabinets* alongside a collection of memorabilia related to punk band The Sex Pistols.

<sup>i</sup> Damien Hirst, quoted in Adrian Dannatt, 'Life's Like This and Then It Stops', *Flash Art*, No.

<sup>ii</sup> Damien Hirst quoted in *Damien Hirst: The Complete Medicine Cabinets*, (exh. cat.), New York, 2010,

<sup>iii</sup> Damien Hirst, quoted in Adrian Dannatt, 'Life's Like This and Then It Stops', *Flash Art*, 2

December 2016, [online](#).

<sup>iv</sup> Damien Hirst, quoted in 'Pharmaceutical Heaven', *Damien Hirst* (exh. cat.), Museo Archeologico Nazionale, Naples, 2004, pp. 105 – 106.

<sup>v</sup> Damien Hirst, quoted in Gordon Burn, *On the Way to Work*, London, 2002, p. 25.

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#### Provenance

White Cube, London

Galerie Bruno Brunnet, Berlin

Acquired from the above by the present owner

#### Literature

Damien Hirst, *I want to spend the rest of my life everywhere, with everyone, one to one, always, forever, now*, London, 1997, pp. 221, 333 (illustrated)



## 20th Century & Contemporary Art Evening Sale

London Auction / 30 June 2022 / 4pm BST

PROPERTY FROM A PROMINENT EUROPEAN  
COLLECTION

24

### Andy Warhol

#### *Electric Chairs*

each signed and dated in black ball-point pen, and  
stamp numbered 'Andy Warhol 71 053/250' on the  
reverse

the complete set of ten screenprints in colours, on  
wove paper

each 90.2 x 121.9 cm (35 1/2 x 47 7/8 in.)

Executed in 1971, this work is number 53 from an  
edition of 250 plus 50 artist's proofs in Roman  
numerals, published by Bruno Bischofberger, Zürich,  
with their copyright ink stamp on the reverse.

#### Estimate

£200,000 — 300,000 ₺



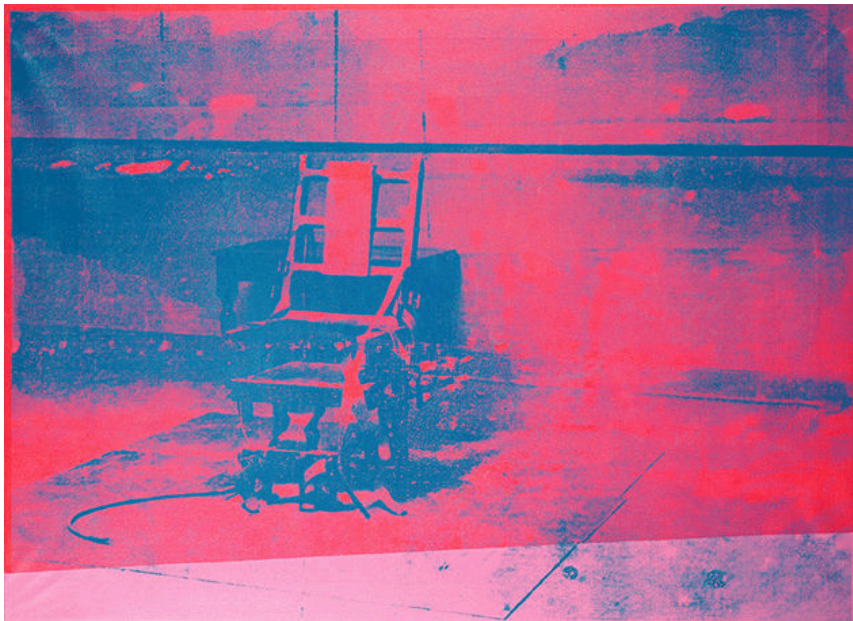
[Go to Lot](#)



*'It's enough life, it's time for a little death.'* —Henry Geldzahler

Combining seriality, repetition, and the mechanical modes of production for which he became so well-known, *Electric Chair* is a supreme illustration of the central preoccupations of Andy Warhol's definitive brand of American Pop art. Bringing the bright, bold colours of Pop into an immediate and jarring tension with its grisly subject matter, this set of 10 screenprints cut to the heart of the contradictions and repressed anxieties characterising mid-century American consciousness, and of Warhol's abiding interests in the image, celebrity, death, and tragedy.

Collapsing moments of horror into the mechanics of the spectacle and mass-production, *Electric Chair* belong to Warhol's renowned *Death and Disaster* series – a radical extension of his ambition for his Pop images to stand as 'a statement of the symbols of the harsh, impersonal products and brash materialistic objects on which America is built today.'<sup>i</sup>



Andy Warhol, *The Electric Chair*, 1966, Musée National d'Art Moderne, Centre Pompidou. Image: Bridgeman Images, Artwork: © 2022 The Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts, Inc. / Licensed by DACS, London

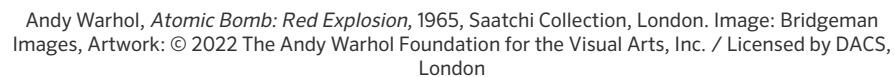
## Death and Disaster

Warhol first embarked on the *Death and Disaster* series in the summer of 1962 with the shocking *129 Die in Jet*, a monumental blow up of the front page press photograph that had announced the tragedy in the *New York Mirror* on the 4th June. As in the defining Warhol portraits of Marilyn Monroe that he started working on in the same summer following her tragic suicide, the selection and reproduction of these images is highly revealing in terms of Warhol's interests and preoccupations, and of the intersections in his mind between mass-production, celebrity, and tragedy.

Taking on challenging subjects related to suicide, car crashes, and the atomic bomb, Warhol found ample source material in appropriated images from newspapers and police photo archives, images whose inherent reproducibility was extended in his mechanical silkscreen process. Retaining certain qualities of these grainy photographs and their predisposition for mass-production, Warhol's screenprinting process also introduced an element of chance, as the artist later explained:

*'You pick a photograph, blow it up, transfer it in glue onto silk, and then roll ink across so that the ink goes through the silk but not through the glue. That way you get the same image, slightly different each time. It was all so simple – quick and chancy. I was thrilled with it.'* —Andy Warhol

As a comment on the banality of evil, our capacity for great cruelty, and our desensitisation to the image, with this series Warhol began to experiment with repetition, reproducing the images repeatedly across a canvas, giving shape to his claim that 'When you see a gruesome picture over and over again, it doesn't really have an effect.'<sup>ii</sup> This is especially well-realised in the *Death and Disaster* series, where one single cataclysmic event – a fatal car crash, state-sanctioned execution, or the dropping of the atomic bomb – is presented as a series of horrifying an inescapable repetitions.

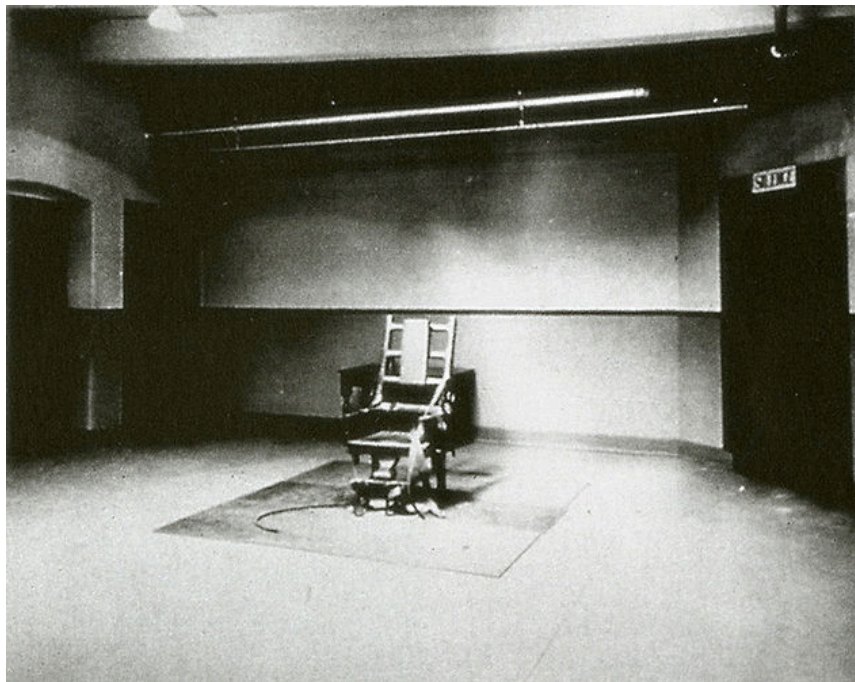


Closely connected to his images of everyday consumer items – his repeated Coca-Cola bottles, Brillo Boxes, and Campbell's Soup tins - Warhol's *Electric Chair* push the limits of Pop in their probing of the darker underside of the American psyche and it's relation to mass-production, consumption, and the spectacle. Just as the endless repetition of Monroe's promotional headshot speaks powerfully to ideas surrounding the construction and consumption of celebrity and the

Andy Warhol, *Marilyn* (light green, pink, yellow), 1967, Kupferstichkabinett - Staatliche Museen zu Berlin, Berlin. Image: Scala, Florence/bpk, Bildagentur fuer Kunst, Kultur und Geschichte, Berlin, Artwork: © 2022 The Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts, Inc. / Licensed by DACS, London



Warhol produced his first *Electric Chair* in 1964, shortly after the last executions by electrocution were conducted in New York state. Based on a haunting photograph 1953 of the death chamber in the infamous Sing Sing Prison in Ossining, New York where Julius and Ethel Rosenberg were executed after being convicted as spies for the Soviet Union in the politically charged atmosphere of the Cold War. Widely covered in the press, the case was a scandal that cut to the heart of American paranoia and anxiety during the period, leading French philosopher Jean-Paul Sartre to describe the trial as 'a legal lynching which smears with blood a whole nation', continuing 'your country is sick with fear [...] you are afraid of the shadow of your own bomb.'<sup>iv</sup>



Source for *Electric Chairs*. Artwork: © 2022 The Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts, Inc. / Licensed by DACS, London

An instrument of impersonal, industrialised execution, the action of the electric chair is open to endlessly repetitious, unemotional use, the mechanisation of death made even more harrowing due to the absence of any human element in the image. Drawing obvious connections to the screenprinting process itself, *Electric Chair* makes manifest the underside of American consumer culture, operating according to the same mechanics of reproduction that produced the Coca-Cola

bottles, Campbell's Soup tins, and the cult of celebrity that so often defines the American century.

Commanding incredible wall power, the present work belongs to the 1971 *Electric Chair* portfolio, where the more closely cropped image of the chair is repeated across ten prints in a variety of Pop-infused candy pastel tones. Widely considered to be one of Warhol's most affecting and powerful images in its quiet exposure of the horror and cruelty beneath the surface of post-war affluence and optimism, its array of 'bright pastel colours [altering] the chair's appearance into something barbaric, medieval, and absurd.'<sup>v</sup>

### Collector's Digest

- The defining artist of post-war American Pop Art, Andy Warhol's work is immediately recognisable and remains highly desirable.
- First created in 1964 as a silkscreen painting, Andy Warhol's *Electric Chair* belongs to the artist's renowned *Death and Disaster* series that he had started two years earlier.
- In 1971, Warhol created a series of colourful screenprints which replicated the initial image. The majority of the electric chair depictions are kept in major collections such as the Musée national d'art moderne, Centre Georges Pompidou, Paris. This is undoubtedly why the image is so powerful and the reason this portfolio is the best known from the *Death and Disasters* series.
- The subject of major international exhibitions at Tate Modern, London; the Whitney Museum of American Art, New York; and the Musée National d'Art Moderne – Centre Pompidou, Paris, Warhol's work is also held in the permanent collections of the most important institutions worldwide.

Video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1pcN72-4Xmk>

Death and Disaster: Vincent Fremont on Andy Warhol's Clairvoyant Vision of American Violence filmed ahead of Phillips 20th Century & Contemporary Evening Sale, November 2018, New York.

<sup>i</sup> Andy Warhol, quoted in 'New Talent USA', *Art in America*, 50, no. 1, 1962, p. 42.

<sup>ii</sup> Andy Warhol, quoted in 'What is Pop Art? Interviews with Eight Painters', *Art News*, November 1963.

<sup>iii</sup> Philip Brophy, 'Die Warhol Die', *Andy Warhol*, (exh. cat.), South Brisbane, 2007, p. 73.

<sup>iv</sup> Jean Paul Sartre, quoted in Walter Scheir, *Invitation to an Inquest*, New York, 1983, p. 254.

<sup>v</sup> Donna de Salvo, 'God Is In The Details: The Prints of Andy Warhol', in Frayda Feldman and Claudia Defendi, *Andy Warhol Prints: A Catalogue Raisonné 1962 – 1987*, New York, 2003, p. 24 – 25.



**Provenance**

Galerie Bruno Bischofberger, Zürich

Acquired from the above by the present owner

**Literature**

Frayda Feldman and Jörg Schellmann, *Andy Warhol Prints: A Catalogue Raisonné 1962-1987*, New York, 2003, no. II.74-83, p. 78 (illustrated, p. 79)

## 20th Century & Contemporary Art Evening Sale

London Auction / 30 June 2022 / 4pm BST



25

**Robert Nava**

*Maybe Metatron*

signed, titled and dated “Maybe Metatron” Nava 17’  
on the reverse

acrylic, coloured pencil and grease pencil on canvas  
203.2 x 183.3 cm (80 x 72 1/8 in.)

Executed in 2017.

**Estimate**

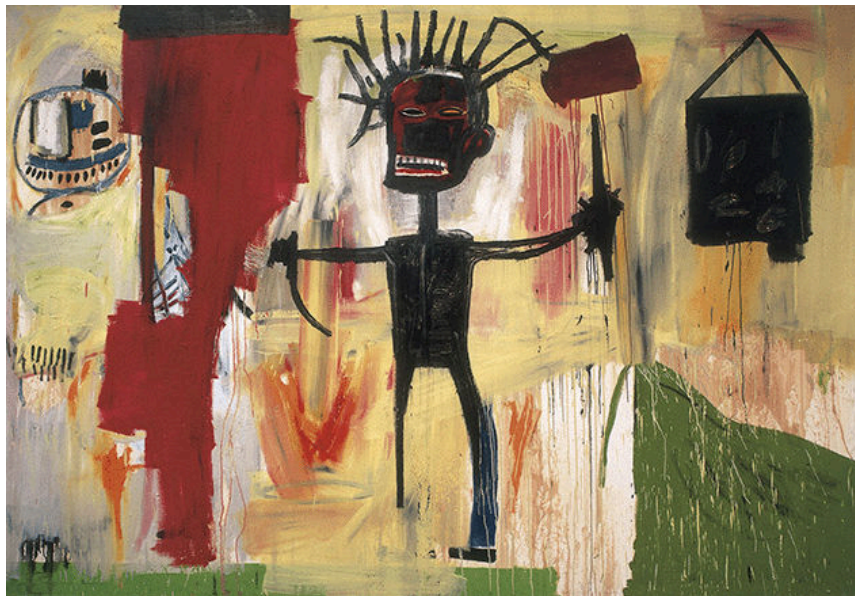
£80,000 — 120,000 ±

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*'I wanted to return to my childhood interests [...] I'm interested in a new kind of mythmaking even though there are no real stories behind them yet. It opened up a world of imagination while preserving a childlike drive.'* —Robert Nava

Combining childlike naivety and directness with a more nuanced investigation into the role played by archetypes and narrative in shaping our adult consciousness, Brooklyn-based artist Robert Nava simultaneously explores and creates his own irreverent and highly personal world of myth, monsters, heroes, and villains. Mixing folklore, children's stories, and fantasy, Nava is well-known for his cast of otherworldly figures; strange chimeras who borrow the recognisable features of sharks, lions, and rabbits, alongside a selection of more fanciful angels, dragons, knights, and witches. At once comforting and highly relatable, the artist's 'neon-lit cave paintings of cultural fixations' are highly imaginative, charged with a kinetic energy that draws frequent comparison to the gestural exuberance and narrative power of Jean-Michel Basquiat's totemic figures.<sup>i</sup>



Jean-Michel Basquiat, *Self Portrait*, 1986, Museu d'Art Contemporani de Barcelona, Spain. Image: © AISA / Bridgeman Images, Artwork: © The Estate of Jean-Michel Basquiat / ADAGP, Paris and DACS, London 2022

Nava first introduced the angel into this strange menagerie of hybrid nightmare creatures in 2017, imagined first as a hero-figure, summoned to defeat the monsters accumulating in his studio. Representing one of his earliest angels, *Maybe Metatron* is rendered in a subtly complex play of black, navy, and turquoise lines, appearing in its intentionally simplified and universally recognised form. Describing these earliest angels Nava explains: 'They were formless and pushed around, maybe with an added pair of wings and a weapon or a shield. Their stomachs were more scribbled or swirled with paint. I was in the process of developing them into an idea. I was also in a zone of making monsters [...] Angels and monsters started to have their own little battles in my studio: Which one is stronger? If angels defeat the others, then I'd paint an angel. I'd be in the studio thinking that if these monsters fought back how scary that would be.'<sup>ii</sup>

Joining the fire-breathing dragons, knights, nightmarish chimeras these angel figures quickly multiplied, becoming a central and recurring feature of Nava's visual vocabulary and forming the focus of the artist's first solo exhibition in New York, *Robert Nava: Angels* with Vito Schnabel Gallery in 2021. Making direct reference to Metatron, a celestial scribe and angel according to ancient folkloric and Kabbalistic texts, the present work highlights Nava's continuation of an art historical tradition that can be traced back as far as the 4th century. Collapsing medieval and modern in disarming ways, Nava places his angels in the company of Power Rangers and Jedi knights, bringing the Byzantine to life in his own, idiosyncratic vernacular.



[Left] Islamic portrayal of the angel Metatron (Arabic: ميخائيل) depicted in the *Daqa'iq al-Haqa'iq* (دقائق)

الحقائق "Degrees of Truths") by Nasir ad-Din Rammal in the 14th century CE, Bibliotheque Nationale de France, Paris [Right] Paul Klee, *Angelus Novus*, 1920, The Israel Museum, Jerusalem. Image: © Israel Museum, Jerusalem / Gift of Fania and Gershom Scholem, Jerusalem; John Herring, Marlene and Paul Herring, Jo Carole and Ronald Lauder, New York / Bridgeman Images

Rendered here in a subtly complex play of black, navy, and turquoise lines, the simplified but immediately recognisable form of the angel is executed with characteristic confidence, lending weight to Nava's claim that 'A scribble can have the same seriousness or weight as any other kind of mark making.'<sup>iii</sup> Highly gestural, Nava moves between spray paint, acrylic, and grease pencil as he builds his layered compositions, approaching a mode of automatic drawing in his rapidly executed works. Striking a measured balance between intuition and intention, Nava draws on the graphic legacy of artists such as Paul Klee and Jean Dubuffet, as well as a tradition of so-called 'Bad' painting identified by critic and curator Marcia Tucker in the 1970s.

Opening up a more self-reflective element in his practice, the introduction of Metatron and the other angel figures in his painting allowed Nava to complicate his mythos, encouraging a more complex moral landscape than simple binaries of good and evil. Seemingly forces for good, the capacity of angels to act more independently had consequences for how Nava would come to see the monsters in his studio, perhaps they are not all bad after all.

## Collector's Digest

- Originally from East Chicago, Robert Nava was awarded his MFA from Yale School of Fine Art in 2011 and is currently based in Brooklyn, New York.
- Since his graduation Nava has exhibited widely and has been the subject of solo shows New York, Brussels, Los Angeles, and Copenhagen. His work also belongs in the Art Institute of Chicago's permanent collection.
- Having joined Pace Gallery in 2020, Nava has already presented several international shows with the gallery, most recently celebrating the opening of *Thunderbolt Disco* in London, his first solo exhibition in the city.
- Nava had his auction debut with Phillips' [20th Century and Contemporary Art Evening Sale](#) in July 2020.

<sup>i</sup> Nate Freeman, 'Painter Robert Nava is Hated by Art-World Know-It-Alls. So Why Are Collectors Fighting For Anything From His Studio?', *Artnet News*, 19 April 2021, [online](#).

<sup>ii</sup> Robert Nava, quoted in Osman Can Yerebakan, 'Paintings can talk back to you: Robert Nava Interviewed by Osman Can Yerebakan', *Bomb Magazine*, 24 March 2021, [online](#).

<sup>iii</sup> Robert Nava, quoted in Moses Driver, 'At Vito Schnabel Gallery, Robert Nava Explores Angels in Paint', *Cultured*, 20 February 2020

## Provenance

Sorry We're Closed, Brussels

Private Collection (acquired from the above in 2018)

Christie's, London, 23 October 2020, lot 203

Acquired at the above sale by the present owner



## 20th Century & Contemporary Art Evening Sale

London Auction / 30 June 2022 / 4pm BST



26

### Rafa Macarrón

#### *Machaquito*

signed with the artist's initials, titled and dated  
'Machaquito RM 11.' lower right  
mixed media on canvas, in 3 parts  
each 196.5 x 98.5 cm (77 3/8 x 38 3/4 in.)  
overall 196.5 x 295.5 cm (77 3/8 x 116 3/8 in.)  
Executed in 2011.

#### Estimate

£100,000 — 150,000 £

[Go to Lot](#)



*'Everything depends on the power of wonder at life, from there I build my work. I am interested in each of my characters being unique, alive, and having their own soul.'* —Rafa Macarrón

Executed on an impressive scale in a carefully controlled palette of deep, forest greens counterpointed by vibrant shocks of fuchsia pink, orange, and cobalt, *Untitled* brings together a cast of Spanish artist Rafa Macarrón's fascinatingly strange characters. Characterised by their wildly distorted faces, elongated limbs, and bulbous eyes, these humanoid figures and their playful incorporation of three-dimensional elements animate and disrupt the radically simplified landscape they are set within, juxtaposing a volumetric sense of form with the extreme flatness of the ground.

## Human Dramas

Throughout the three-panel work Macarrón maintains deep chromatic and compositional harmonies that highlight the affection with which he approaches his characters, whose strangely misshapen bodies all seem to possess a unique energy and essence of their own. As the artist explains: 'The characters come out of my everyday life and I take them out of context. They could be individuals living with us. When I create them, I always like to imagine where they come from, what they do, where they go, what life they have.'<sup>i</sup>

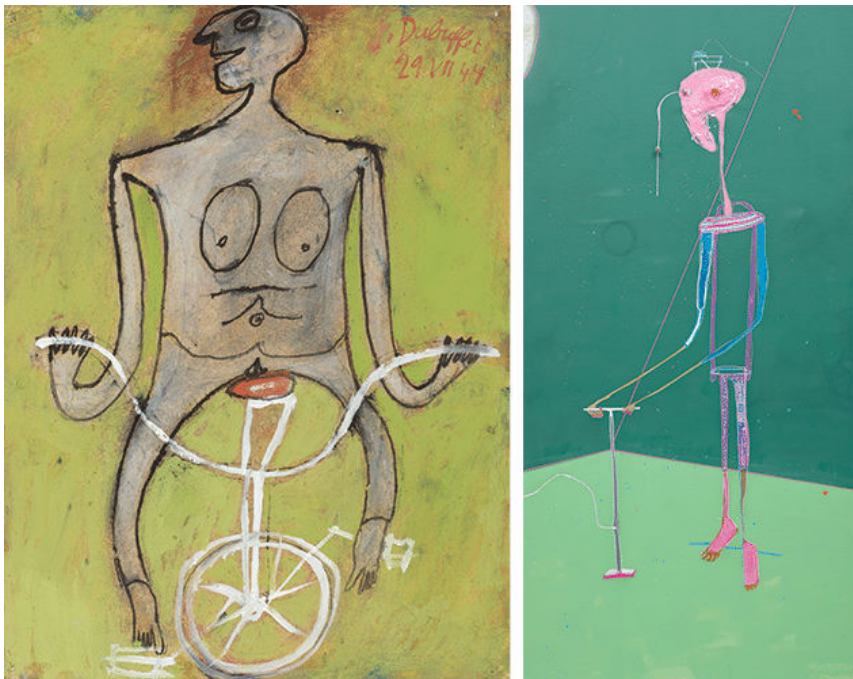


Joan Miró, *The Hunter (Catalan Landscape)*, 1923-24, The Museum of Modern Art, New York. Image: © Boltin Picture Library / Bridgeman Images, Artwork: © Succession Miro/ADAGP, Paris and DACS, London 2022

Belonging to the artist's expanding personal and immediately recognisable iconography, the economic rendering of these characters in the artist's signature graphic style positions Macarrón in a tradition of Spanish painting, drawing particular comparison to the unstructured space, bold colour contrasts, and playful sense of line evident in Joan Miró's work. Extending the cosmic vision of Miró's universe, Macarrón keeps our attention focused on the drama of being human, a searching for the transcendental in the everyday that has characterised Macarrón's approach to artmaking since his earliest childhood endeavours when he 'used to make drawings full of colour, animals or people taken out from some unknown world.'<sup>ii</sup> Grounded in these quotidian moments of contemporary life, Macarrón successfully synthesises the contemporary and the art historical, as the present work's inclusion in the 2011 group exhibition *60 Years 60 Artists Modern and Contemporary Art* at the Mystetskyi Arsenal in Kiev shortly after its execution attests to.

Drawing on a broad range of art historical and pop culture references that range from comic books and street art to Chilean Surrealist Roberto Matta and the mid-century Spanish *El Paso* group, Macarrón takes an experimental approach to figuration, describing his figures as 'born from a fantastic, surreal, and expressionist figuration. I consider them hybrid characters that are closely

related to my admiration for Dubuffet, Bonifacio, and Alfonso Fraile. My characters live in a transcended daily life, clean days, sunsets, and fresh air.<sup>iii</sup> While one character sits in small cart in the centre of the composition, reaching one, impossibly long arm up to light the cigarette hanging from the mouth of the figure towering above him, another assists with a pump, recalling Dubuffet's own scenes of everyday urban life. Revealing the marvellous in the everyday through his distinctive treatment, Macarrón presents us with a mysterious and tender drama here, the thin, silvery threads loosely connecting the characters capturing the poignant fragility inherent in everyday human connection and the spontaneous energy involved in our life as fundamentally social creatures.



Left: Jean Dubuffet, *Cyclist nue (Nude Cyclist)*, 1944, The National Gallery of Art, Washington D.C. Image: National Gallery of Art Washington, Gift of the Stephen Hahn Family Collection, 1995.48.2, Artwork: © ADAGP, Paris and DACS, London 2022 Right: Detail of the present work

A former competitive cyclist himself, Macarrón draws compelling comparisons between the two disciplines, painting offering him a similar freedom in solitude and powerful drive to push himself

further. This, coupled with his training as a physiotherapist has provided the artist with a carefully studied knowledge of human anatomy, which he directly relates to the distortion of the figure that has become so characteristic of his work. As the artist explains: 'To create my elongated figures requires knowledge and respect for anatomy. I know the structure of the body perfectly. Then, I begin to try out distortions and deformations, which I think works very well. I am able to create my own characters, each with their own soul and personality.'<sup>iv</sup>

### Collector's Digest

- Winner of the 2011 BMW Painting awards, Rafa Macarrón's work is in demand internationally as his reputation as one of Spain's most interesting emerging artists continues to grow.
  - Following the opening of his first institutional show in March 2021 at the Contemporary Art Centre of Malaga, Macarrón also presented a solo exhibition at La Nave Salinas Foundation in Ibiza. Following exhibitions of KAWS, Keith Haring, and Kenny Scharf, Macarrón is the first Spanish artist to be the focus of a solo show at the foundation.
  - Already this year Macarrón has exhibited with Nino Mier Gallery in Los Angeles, his distinctive work presented across two of their galleries.
- <sup>i</sup> Rafa Macarrón, quoted in Rom Levy, 'Artist Interview: Rafa Macarrón', *Street Art News*, 26 October 2021, [online](#).
- <sup>ii</sup> Rafa Macarrón, quoted in Rom Levy, 'Artist Interview: Rafa Macarrón', *Street Art News*, 26 October 2021, [online](#).
- <sup>iii</sup> Rafa Macarrón, quoted in Rom Levy, 'Artist Interview: Rafa Macarrón', *Street Art News*, 26 October 2021, [online](#).
- <sup>iv</sup> Rafa Macarrón, quoted in Melissa Mui, 'Rafa Macarrón Explores Shape-Shifting Characters at La Nave', *Whitewall Art*, 20 July, 2021, [online](#).

### Provenance

Private Collection, Madrid (acquired directly from the artist)  
Acquired from the above by the present owner

**Exhibited**

Kiev, Mystetskyi Arsenal, *60 Years 60 Artists Modern and Contemporary Art*, 24 November - 4 December 2011



## 20th Century & Contemporary Art Evening Sale

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PROPERTY FROM AN IMPORTANT PRIVATE  
COLLECTION

27 ♦

### Damien Hirst

*Beautiful Tropical, Jungle Painting (with pink snot)*

signed, titled and dated 'Damien Hirst Beautiful  
tropical, jungle painting (with pink snot) 1998' on the  
reverse

household gloss on canvas  
diameter 214.3 cm (84 3/8 in.)

Executed in 1998.

#### Estimate

£270,000 — 350,000 ♦

[Go to Lot](#)



Video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HwWFFhqxSCM>

*'I really like making them. And I really like the machine, and I really like the movement. Every time they're finished, I'm desperate to do another one.'* —Damien Hirst

Especially notable for its arresting, explosive energy and the kaleidoscopic contrasts of orange, pinks, greens, and blues that bring its surface to life, *Beautiful Tropical, Jungle Painting (with pink snot)* is a paradigmatic, early example of British artist Damien Hirst's celebrated *Spin Paintings* series. Capturing the energy and sense of spontaneity that characterises the series, along with themes of mechanical intervention and chance that recur across Hirst's oeuvre, the present work records the happy collision of chance and design, generating, 'a massive explosion of energy – full of life, colour and optimism.'<sup>i</sup>

## Beginnings of Beautiful

Damien Hirst embarked on the *Spin Paintings* in 1992, the same year that the prominent collector Charles Saatchi mounted the first of his infamous *Young British Artists* exhibitions, including the young artist's formaldehyde work *The Physical Impossibility of Death in the Mind of Someone Living* alongside works by Tracey Emin, Sarah Lucas, and others. Developing the concept and introducing a more participatory element, the following year Hirst and fellow YBA Angus Fairhurst set up a 'Spin Art' stall at the artist-led street art fair *A Fête Worse than Death*. Dressed as clowns with body paint applied by the iconoclastic performance artist Leigh Bowery, they invited passers-by to create their own spin paintings for one pound each.



Damien Hirst [Left] and Angus Fairhurst dressed as clowns at their spin painting stall, *A Fête Worse than Death*, Hoxton, London. Image: Guy Moberly / Alamy Stock Photo

It was in 1994 while living in Berlin that Hirst formalised the series, introducing the tondo format more commonly associated with the *Spin Paintings*, and commissioning a machine made especially for the process. Mounting his first exhibition of spin drawings in the same year, the *Spin Paintings* quickly became a central feature of the artist's practice, and approach to serial production included alongside examples from his *Spot Paintings* and iconic *Natural History* series in the *No Sense of Absolute Corruption* exhibition held at Gagosian Gallery in 1996, just two years before the execution of the present work. Over the years, the principles applied in the execution of the *Spin Paintings* have remained fundamentally the same: featuring long titles framed by the words 'beautiful' and 'picture', the artist pours a combination of variably coloured household emulsions

directly onto the rapidly rotating canvas, producing an infinite variety of vibrantly hued and uniquely patterned surfaces mobilised by the rotations of the machine.

Video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qj3Zgx0Jh9k>

Marcel Duchamp's *Anémic cinema*, 1926, The Museum of Modern Art, New York.

## The Science of Colour

Visually recalling the hypnotic spinning motion a turntable or certain fairground attractions, the works have a conceptual lineage in Dadaist Marcel Duchamp's kinetic collaborations, notably the optical effects that he generated with sculptural objects such as *Rotary Demisphere (Precision Optics)*, now forming part of The Museum of Modern Art's permanent collection in New York. However, while Duchamp's focus on the mechanised and the optical attempted to remove the hand of the artist altogether, Hirst's *Spin Paintings* retain a sense of vitality and individuality through the careful selection of paints and his direct application of them, drawing comparison to the energetic application of Jackson Pollock's poured and dripped canvases.

Composed of energetic bursts of ochre, pink, green, red, and blue that spread out across the entire surface of the large circular canvas, the composition is transformed into a dynamic and vivacious explosion of colour. Departing significantly from the meticulous and ordered application of carefully controlled pigment used in his *Spot Paintings*, with this body of work Hirst introduced a chaotic element of chance into his practice one that nevertheless remains bound by his quasi-scientific interest in colour and its effects. In this respect, the *Spin Paintings* recall Robert Delaunay's masterful circular compositions, which are equally animated in their energetic swirls of joyous colour. Like Hirst, Delaunay too grounded his colour experiments in scientific methodology, his concept of Simultaneous Contrasts drawing particularly on the theories of 19th century French chemist Michel Eugène Chevreul.



Robert Delaunay, *Rythme No. 1*, Musée de la Ville de Paris, Paris. Image: Universal History Archive/UIG / Bridgeman Images

Perfectly balancing chaos and control, *Beautiful Tropical, Jungle Painting (with pink spot)* possesses a striking vitality, emphasised somewhat by its evocative title. Although totally non-representational, the brilliance of the colour combinations here and the suggestive intersections and angles produced in its execution convey a similarly rich and beautifully tropical environment, a space within which 'colours participate in a primordial state where order and creation dissolve and disengage from the meditation of thought and representation, to become pure expression of the basic and vital gesture of painting and its mythology.'<sup>ii</sup>

## Collector's Digest

- Coming to prominence in the late 1980s as part of the group identified by collector and gallerist Charles Saatchi as a generation of 'Young British Artists', Damien Hirst is best known for his boundary-pushing formaldehyde works, his series of medicine cabinets, and his celebrated Spin and Spot Paintings.
- Hirst has continued to exhibit extensively since his first artist-curated show Freeze in 1988, with major retrospectives at Tate Modern in London and the Rijksmuseum in Amsterdam. Examples of his work can be found in major institutions worldwide including the Tate, London, the Hirschhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden, Washington D.C., The Yorkshire Sculpture Park, Wakefield, and the Museum of Modern Art in New York.
- No stranger to controversy, Hirst has announced his intention to burn works from his most recent project as part of an exhibition and public performance due to be held at his Newport Street Gallery towards the end of this year.

<sup>i</sup> Damien Hirst, quoted in 'Damien Hirst's monumental spin artwork in spectacular display at Olympics 2012 Closing Ceremony', 9 August 2012, online.

<sup>ii</sup> Mario Codognato, 'Warning Labels', in *Damien Hirst* (exh. cat.), Naples, 2004, p. 42.

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## Provenance

Jay Jopling, London

Acquired from the above by the present owner in 1999



## 20th Century & Contemporary Art Evening Sale

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### Carmen Herrera

#### *Stanzas*

signed, titled and dated "'STANZAS' "Stanzas" Carmen Herrera - 2012' on the overlap

acrylic on canvas

91.4 x 91.4 cm (35 7/8 x 35 7/8 in.)

Painted in 2012.

#### Estimate

£280,000 — 350,000 £

[Go to Lot](#)



*'For me, black is all the colours somehow. The other colours are like a decoration.'*  
—Carmen Herrera

Executed in 2012, not long after the first major museum presentation of her work in the United States held at Miami Art Central, *Stanzas* is a work of powerful compositional balance and harmony by Cuban-born American artist Carmen Herrera. Already 90 years old when she received this institutional recognition, Herrera had spent a lifetime honing her skill and singular vision, continuing to paint up to the end of her long life and ignoring the assumptions that as a woman 'You were supposed to do maternity scenes or watercolours, but not something as tough and decisive as what you do', as her friend and fellow artist Tony Bechara had surmised.<sup>i</sup>

Highly representative of Herrera's unique and arresting geometric abstraction, *Stanzas* is composed of sharply rendered, tessellating forms of boldly contrasted and perfectly poised hues of red and black, a mature work which exemplifies critic Laura Cumming's description of the artist's painting as 'euphoria kept in perfect order.'<sup>ii</sup> Emphasising structure, symmetry, repetition, and momentum, the title's reference to the formal arrangement of poetry into stanzas is equally appropriate, succinctly capturing the blend of precise craft and expressive energy, and the supreme importance placed on the exact relationship between things that both poetry and Herrera's works aspire to.



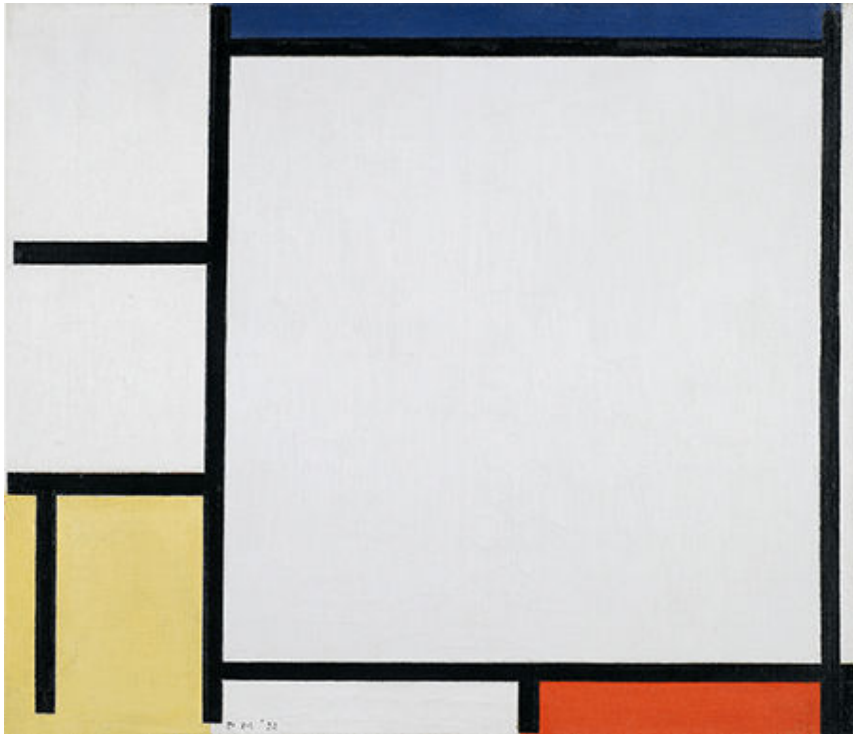
Carmen Herrera, *Untitled*, 1952, The Museum of Modern Art, New York. Image: The Museum of Modern Art, New York/Scala, Florence, Artwork: © Carmen Herrera

## The Road to Abstraction

Born in Havana, Cuba in 1915, Herrera initially studied architecture, a practise she would eventually abandon for sculpture and painting after her move to New York with husband Jesse Loewenthal in 1939. Nevertheless, a sense of spatial form, weight, and density remained constant across her work, worked out in masterfully executed preparatory sketches and clearly evident in the serene formal arrangement of *Stanzas*' constituent parts.

*'I believe that I will always be in awe of the straight line, its beauty is what keeps me painting.'* —Carmen Herrera

While Herrera spent the majority of her adult life in the United States, the post-war years based in Paris would prove decisive in her move towards the purified, hard-edged abstraction for which she is remembered today. Finding a more open and adventurous artistic community than she had left behind in late 1940s New York, Herrera was quickly drawn into the group of artists gathered around Sonia Delaunay-Turk under the title of the Salon des Réalités nouvelles, exhibiting alongside the likes of Joseph Albers and Theo Van Doesburg as early as 1949. Refining her pictorial vocabulary into a restrained repertoire of colour and shape, Herrera continued a legacy of European modernism pioneered by artists of the Bauhaus, Russian Suprematism, and De Stijl, her rigorous sense of form drawing comparison to Piet Mondrian's geometric balance.



Piet Mondrian, *Composition with Blue, Red, Yellow and Black*, 1922, Minneapolis Institute of Arts, Minneapolis. Image: Minneapolis Institute of Arts, Gift of Bruce B. Dayton / Bridgeman Images

Herrera's canvases also extend this sympathy for modernist form into an affinity for Brazilian neo-concretists Lygia Clark and Hélio Oiticica, as well as the formal simplicity developed by contemporaries Ellsworth Kelly and Frank Stella, who rose to prominence during the same period that Herrera executed her strikingly restrained black and white paintings, an example of which now resides in the Museum of Modern Art.

Although her work sits in tension with the gestural exuberance of a then-dominant Abstract Expressionism, her distillation of 'the impossibility of pure objectivity, of pure rationality and universalism in painting' highlights the dialogue that she maintained with these artists, and the challenges that she leveled at them.<sup>iii</sup> While for Rothko, colour was an emotional vehicle to explore higher, spiritual territory, Herrera instead pursued the tensions between colour and form. As Charles Darwent describes: 'A slow look at the picture – Herrera's canvases benefit from slow

looking – and the two strong colours begin to pull apart. One of the triumphs of the Abstract Expressionists was to do away with the figure-ground conundrum, Rothko making his ground the figure, Pollock his all-over figures the ground. By contrast, Herrera exploits doubts about which is which – orange on black or black on orange? – and breeds uncertainty from certainty.<sup>iv</sup>



Mark Rothko, *1957 #20*, 1957, National Gallery of Australia, Canberra. Image: © National Gallery of Australia, Canberra / Purchased 1978 / Bridgeman Images, Artwork: © Kate Rothko Prizel and Christopher Rothko / DACS 2022

Despite the historical marginalisation of women artists – and especially those working within the

macho climate that dominated mid-century Abstract Expressionist circles typified by Irving Sandler's complete omission of women from his 1970 history of the movement – Herrera survived, and her legacy continues to thrive. Reaching critical attention late in her long career, Herrera maintained a consistent focus and dedication to her practice, refining the minimal and sharp-edged but lyrical abstraction for which she is now so revered. The subject of significant solo exhibitions, films, and monographs, Herrera also occupies a prominent place in the ambitious touring group exhibition *Women in Abstraction* previously on view at the Musée National d'Art Moderne – Centre Pompidou and the Guggenheim Museum Bilbao.

## Collector's Digest

- In 2015, the release of Alison Kalyman's acclaimed documentary *100 Years Show* proved to be highly instrumental in reinvigorating an interest in Carmen Herrera's work in the last years of her long life.
  - Following a significant 2005 survey exhibition at Miami Art Central, Herrera's first European presentation was hosted by the Ikon Gallery in Birmingham, England in 2009, before traveling to Museum Pfalzgalerie, Kaiserslautern, Germany. More recently, Herrera was the subject of a major career retrospective at the Whitney Museum of American Art, New York in 2016 at the age of 101.
  - Examples of Herrera's work can be found in major institutional collections including The Museum of Modern Art, New York, the Walker Art Center, Minneapolis, and the Tate Modern, London.
- <sup>i</sup> Tony Bechara, quoted in Simon Hattenstone, 'Carmen Herrera: "Men controlled everything, not just art"', *The Guardian*, 31 December 2016, [online](#).
- <sup>ii</sup> Laura Cumming, 'Carmen Herrera', *The Guardian*, 2 August 2009, [online](#).
- <sup>iii</sup> Tom Denman, 'Carmen Herrera "Colour Me In" The Perimeter / London', *Flash Art*, 24 December 2020, [online](#).
- <sup>iv</sup> Charles Darwent, '"Her canvases breed uncertainty from certainty" – the art of Carmen Herrera', *Apollo*, 7 October 2020, [online](#).

## Provenance

Lisson Gallery, New York  
Private Collection, Europe



## 20th Century & Contemporary Art Evening Sale

London Auction / 30 June 2022 / 4pm BST



PROPERTY FROM A DISTINGUISHED PRIVATE  
BELGIAN COLLECTION

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**Luc Tuymans**

*Candy Container*

signed and dated 'Luc Tuymans '93' on the reverse;  
signed and dated 'Luc Tuymans '93' on the stretcher  
oil on canvas

74.5 x 60.1 cm (29 3/8 x 23 5/8 in.)

Painted in 1993.

**Estimate**

£250,000 — 350,000    £

[Go to Lot](#)



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

A work of quiet complexity executed on a modest scale in delicate, light brushstrokes and emitting an ethereal luminosity, *Candy Container* combines painterly traditions of portraiture and still life in its closely cropped depiction of a softly rendered pear - the familiar fruit made strange with its inclusion of a ghostly face in its centre.

Cutting against the grain as he cleaved to figuration in an era where artists tended towards a more abstract vernacular, Luc Tuymans first came to prominence in the 1990s with his strange and evocative images that explored history and its representation, the machinations of power, technology and the image, and the strangeness of quotidian objects. Executed in 1993, *Candy Container* dates from this decisive moment in the artist's critical recognition, the year after his widely-acclaimed documenta presentation, and immediately preceding the first of many exhibitions with David Zwirner. Exhibited shortly after its creation at Tuymans' 1993 exhibition with Galerie Paul Andriess in Amsterdam, and traveling to the Hayward Gallery in London the following year for its inclusion in the group show *Unbound: Possibilities in Painting*, the present work is a striking expression of Tuymans' painterly practice, and illustrates key themes that run across his oeuvre.

## The Treachery of Images



René Magritte, *Souvenir de voyage*, 1961, Private Collection. Image: Photothèque R. Magritte /Adagp Images, Paris, / SCALA, Florence, Artwork: © ADAGP, Paris and DACS, London 2022

Engaging with fellow Belgian artist René Magritte's notion of the 'treachery of images' most succinctly presented in his painting of a pipe which is, of course, not a pipe, *Candy Container* makes playful reference to the Surrealist's iconic series of paintings and gouaches featuring apples obscuring human faces, or themselves obscured by masks. Creating an immediate visual tension between the visible and the hidden, the apple motif neatly illustrated a key component of Magritte's Surrealism – a fascination with the limitations of the seen that comes into high relief in

the human face and the conflict it stages between what is presented to the world, and what remains inscrutable. Like Magritte, Tuymans exercises a deep distrust towards the image, or of our assumption that what we see is to be believed, the central conceit of his work being 'that images are unreliable, that they can offer us no more than a fragment of reality and that our own memories, personal or collective, mislead us.'<sup>i</sup>

Painting from source materials such as television, film, and photographs, Tuymans draws direct attention to this, developing a pictorial vernacular of dramatic cropping, softly diffused brushstrokes, and his distinctive, bleached palette of 'mouldy pastels, cool greys and dead plaster white [making] for blurred, obtuse images' that explore the fragility of memory, and the limitations of representation.<sup>ii</sup> Resting delicately on undulating folds of alternating grey tones, *Candy Container* draws on these formal elements, a cinematic close-cropping used to particular advantage in confounding our sense of scale. Much like in Magritte's work, set in a starkly bare environment Tuymans' anthropomorphic pear reads at once like a traditional still life, set upon the folds of a table cloth, and a monumental object set against a low horizon line. Referencing a trend amongst antique Christmas decorations that he also included alongside the present work in his 1993 exhibition with Galerie Paul Andriessse, Tuymans highlights the Surreal in the everyday, the strangeness lurking in plain sight.



Luc Tuymans, *Still Life*, 2002, The Metropolitan Museum, New York. Artwork: © Luc Tuymans

With a strong sense of historical consciousness borne out of his own family's experiences of the Second World war, and a keen awareness for the ways in which power and the events of the 20th century have shaped the world we live in today, Tuymans' work probes the complexities of memory, history and trauma. Although seemingly far removed from the horrifying realities of war and acts of terror, one of Tuymans' most monumental paintings, *Still Life*, responds to the seismic events of 9/11 with a delicately rendered arrangement of apples, pears, and a carafe of water inspired by an unfinished painting by Paul Cézanne.



Justus Junker, *Birne mit Insekten*, 1765, The Städel Museum, Frankfurt. Image: ak-g-images

Representing the transience of life, the use of overripe and rotting fruit was a familiar motif employed in *memento mori* and *Vanitas* painting. A reminder not only of the inevitability of death, but of the need to consider our moral actions and the state of our souls in life, the traditional genre emerges as an unlikely but powerful framework for Tuymans to explore his themes. As the artist explains, 'in a sense, what I do is quite traditional [...] that's exactly the point about painting: its essence is to be central and traditional.'<sup>iii</sup> Engaging seriously with a tradition of Northern European still life painting, the roots of which loom large in Tuymans' native Belgium, *Candy Container* nevertheless embraces a note of absurdism, an ambiguous and compelling image that draws the viewer in to its strange world, giving weight to the suggestion that 'According to Tuymans, the still life and the portrait are utterly interchangeable; depictions of people and things can tell the same story, as long as the tone is equally hushed, the perspective equally skewed, the cropping equally extreme.'<sup>iv</sup>

## Collector's Digest

- One of the most influential painters working today, Luc Tuymans at once defies painterly convention, and embraces painting as the most traditional of all artistic mediums.
- Examples of Tuymans work can be found in major international institutions including the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York, the Tate Gallery in London, and the Stedelijk Museum in Amsterdam, among others.
- Alongside his painting practice, Tuymans is also an accomplished and active curator, especially showcased in the 2015 exhibition that he organised with London's Parasol Unit, bringing together six painters of different ages and nationalities.

<sup>i</sup> Cristina Ruiz, 'Luc Tuymans: "People are becoming more and more stupid, insanely stupid"', *The Art Newspaper*, 27 March 2019, [online](#).

<sup>ii</sup> Gareth Harris, 'Why Paintings Succeed Where Words Fail', *The Art Newspaper*, 1 September 2009, [online](#).

<sup>iii</sup> Luc Tuymans, quoted in Donna Wingate and Tommy Simoens, ed., *Luc Tuymans: Exhibitions at David Zwirner, 1994 – 2012*, Brussels, 2012, p. 8.

<sup>iv</sup> Ulrich Loock, *Luc Tuymans*, London, 2003, p. 97.

## Provenance

Galerie Paul Andriesse, Amsterdam

Acquired from the above by the present owner

## Exhibited

Amsterdam, Galerie Paul Andriesse, *Luc Tuymans*, 16 October – 24 November 1993

London, Hayward Gallery, *Unbound: Possibilities in Painting*, 3 March – 30 May 1994, p.103 (illustrated)

Berlin, Galerie Isabella Czarnowska, *Paul Thek and Luc Tuymans: Why?!*, 27 April – 28 July 2012, pp. 29, 112 (illustrated)

## Literature

Frank-Alexander Hettig, 'Luc Tuymans', *Kunstforum International*, vol. 125, January 1994, p. 378

David Lillington, 'Zeitgeist', *Time Out London*, no. 1228, 2 March 1994 (illustrated)

Tim Hilton, 'Every Which Way but Forwards', *The Independent*, 6 March 1994 (illustrated)

Waldemar Januszczak, 'A State of Confusion', *The Sunday Times*, 13 March 1994

Adrian Dannatt, 'London by Numbers: Three Painting Shows', *Flash Art*, no. 177, Summer 1994, p. 121 (illustrated)

Jonathan Turner, 'Under the Skin: Luc Tuymans', *Tableau*, February 1999, p. 84 (illustrated)

Tim Ackermann, 'So sehen Sieger aus', *Welt am Sonntag*, 29 April 2012

Frank Demaegd, ed., *Luc Tuymans, Zeno X Gallery: 25 Years of Collaboration*, Antwerp, 2016, p. 262 (illustrated)

Eva Meyer-Hermann, ed., *Luc Tuymans: Catalogue Raisonné of Paintings, Volume 1: 1972-1994*, New York, 2017, no. LTP 146, pp. 334, 488 (illustrated, p. 335)



## 20th Century & Contemporary Art Evening Sale

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30 ♦

### Salman Toor

*Three Men with Trays*

oil on panel

60.6 x 50.5 cm (23 7/8 x 19 7/8 in.)

Painted in 2018.

Estimate

£250,000 — 350,000 ₹

[Go to Lot](#)



*'I like for the characters in my painting to move between vulnerability and empowerment. I like the foolish, marionette-like figures that evoke empathy as immigrants crossing borders, but they also have agency and dignity: things that have not been traditionally associated with our faces and our bodies in painting.'*  
—Salman Toor

Well-known for his remarkable ability to blend the present with the art historical past, Pakistani-born Salman Toor paints scenes of intimacy, camaraderie, and community, imaginatively drawing on his personal experiences as a queer Pakistani man living in New York to create tender works with incredible narrative charge. Featuring three, downcast looking men wrapped in loose fitting clothes and shawls set against a denuded background, *Three Men With Trays* evokes Renaissance icons and Biblical scenes as much as carrying more contemporary connotations, succeeding - in Roberta Smith's terms - in beginning to 'pluck your heart strings almost as soon as you see them.'

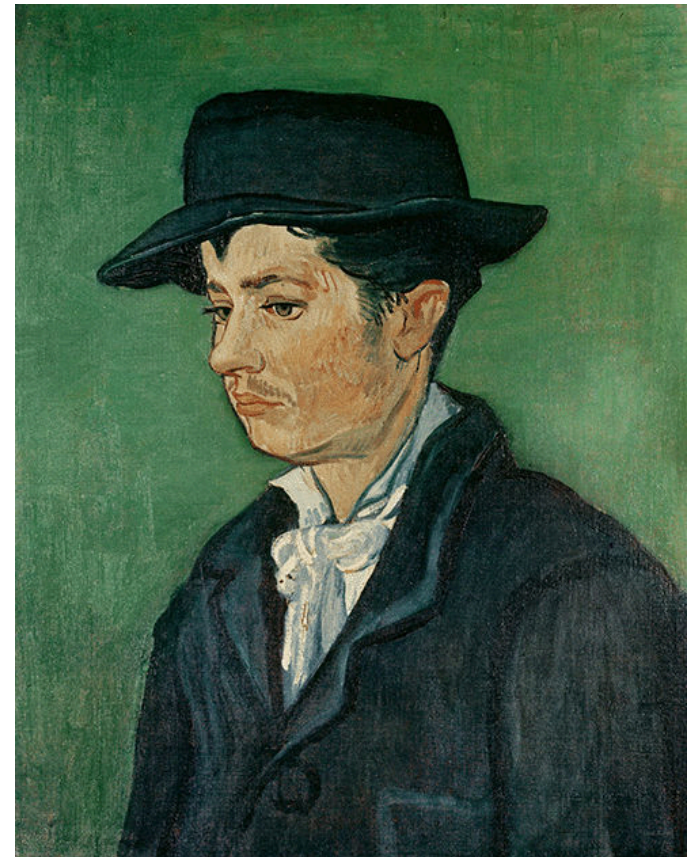
Painted in 2018, *Three Men With Trays* Toor uses his own experiences as an émigré living between worlds as a vantage point from which to interrogate the relationship between the two, observing points of divergence, tension, and similarity, or, as the artist explains, 'My own positioning between places which we designate East and West is an amusing point from which to look at the world and the histories of both Indian and European painting, both of which are a part of my work.'<sup>ii</sup> Building on an earlier series of works that illustrated the rigid class divide defining social relations in Pakistan and across much of India from the point of view of an outside observer, *Three Men with Trays* blends commentary on the persistent divides between the affluent and the needy through the lens of a Western pictorial tradition.

## Telling Stories

Showcasing Toor's remarkable strength as a storyteller as much as his technical virtuosity as a painter, the scene takes on a serene stillness; a moment of quiet anticipation that is loaded with questions related to these three men - who are they, where are they, and what are their empty trays waiting for? While one man tilts his head to one side in a gesture of gentle appeal and deference, the figure to his left takes on a more defiant stance, catching our eye as he stare out of the canvas towards us, the tray gripped tightly between his hands.

Standing, closely grouped together in loosely rendered, non-descriptive space, Toor plays with the idea of liminality, the allegorical 'in-between spaces' that 'can take on the feeling of an inner psychic space of some of the characters.'<sup>iii</sup> Rooted in the diasporic experience of belonging everywhere and no-where at once, a sensation keenly communicated in the present work. Removing any visual or narrative clues that we might use to anchor the dramatic tension of the scene from the environment around them, our attention is focused squarely on the three figures. In this - as in his lithe treatment of the figure and strong sense for expressive colour - Toor draws

close to the evocative portraits of Vincent van Gogh, whose portraits generated a similar dramatic intensity.



Vincent van Gogh, *Portrait of Armand Roulin*, 1888 Museum Boijmans Van Beuningen, Rotterdam, Netherlands. Image: Bridgeman Images

## Learning From the Old Masters

While we might bring to mind the ruddy palette and sense of quiet sufferance that characterises van Gogh's *Potato Eaters*, the art historical roots of Toor's approach to figuration go considerably

deeper, referencing Dutch Old Masters, Baroque, and Neo-Classical traditions that he absorbed so eagerly when he first embarked on his art studies in the United States. Scenes of peasant life and *la vie Bohème* in particular preoccupied the artist, explaining how he 'learned about the grimy peasants in David Teniers and Bruegel, the dark-skinned servants in Dutch genre paintings, the steely refinement of an Anthony van Dyck subject, the sordid nightlife of Impressionist Paris', finding within this rich subject matter compelling ways of approaching at 'the relationship between the rich and the poor, ways of portraying forgiveness, race, power, dignity, exoticism, difference.'<sup>iv</sup>



[Left] Peter Paul Rubens, *Study of Two Heads*, c.1609, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York. Image: © The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, Bequest of Miss Adelaide Milton de Groot (1876–1967), 1967. [Right] Detail of the present work

Executed in earthy tones accented by touches of soft violet and blue on board, *Three Men With Trays* draws fruitfully on this art historical legacy, recalling the high contrasts of light and shadow, sense of movement, and dramatic sensuality of Paul Peter Reubens' portraits. Reflecting on his time as a student and his immersion into a European art historical tradition, Toor explains 'Instead of moving with the times, I wanted an academic education in painting [...] I wanted to be as good as the White Old Masters. In fact, I was only happy when I could pretend that I was a 17th century or 18th century painter living in Madrid, Venice, or Holland.'<sup>v</sup>

Broaching a global conversation on identity, belonging, and developing his uniquely compelling brand of empathetic aesthetics, Salman Toor bridges the personal and the universal, the autobiographic and the imaginary, drawing close to the the Old Masters, while speaking profoundly to the present moment.

## Collector's Digest

- Ranked among *TIME* magazine's 2021 list of 100 emerging leaders shaping the future, Salman Toor has captured the attention of the artworld as an influential voice in contemporary painting, with work now featured in the permanent collections of institutions such as the Tate Modern in London, and Museum of Contemporary Art Chicago.
- Having recently presented his first museum solo show at the Whitney Museum of American Art in New York, *Salman Toor: How Will I Know* (2020–2021), Toor will soon be presenting his first solo exhibition in Asia at M Woods in Beijing.
- When Phillips were the first to debut a work by Toor at auction in Asia in December 2020, *Group Dance* (2012) far surpassed its estimates, achieving the artist's top auction record at the time. Demonstrative of the artist's rocketing success, that result has since been broken many times over, and global interest in Toor's figurative painting remains strong.

<sup>i</sup> Roberta Smith, 'Salman Toor, a Painter at Home in Two Worlds', *New York Times*, 23 December 2020, [online](#).

<sup>ii</sup> Salman Toor, quoted in Micah Pegues, 'Issue No. 1. Interview with Salman Toor', *Polychrome Magazine*, 11 February 2019, [online](#).

<sup>iii</sup> Salman Toor, quoted in Cassie Packard, 'Blurring the Lines between Public and Private: Salman Toor Interviewed by Cassie Packard', *BOMB Magazine*, February 12, 2021, [online](#).

<sup>iv</sup> Salman Toor, quoted in Cassie Packard, 'Blurring the Lines between Public and Private: Salman Toor Interviewed by Cassie Packard', *BOMB Magazine*, February 12, 2021, [online](#).

<sup>v</sup> Salman Toor, quoted in Ayla Angelos, "'I wanted to be as good as the white old masters': meet painter Salman Toor," *It's Nice That*, November 7, 2019, [online](#).

## Provenance

Private Collection, Pakistan (acquired directly from the artist)  
Acquired from the above by the present owner

## Exhibited

Lahore, Hazoori Bagh, *First Lahore Biennale (LB01)*, 18 March – 31 March 2018

## 20th Century & Contemporary Art Evening Sale

London Auction / 30 June 2022 / 4pm BST



31

### Issy Wood

*Not Turned On*


signed and dated 'Wood '18' on the stretcher

oil on velvet

140.3 x 90.3 cm (55 1/4 x 35 1/2 in.)

Executed in 2018.

**Estimate**

£100,000 — 150,000 

[Go to Lot](#)





*'Both painting and producing music deal with layers, scrapping the parts you don't want, and happy accidents.'* —Issy Wood

A work of strange and subtle beauty, *Not Turned On* is a particularly striking example of interdisciplinary artist Issy Wood's highly sought-after paintings on stretched velvet – an unusual and unsettling choice of material that has marked her out since her first solo show with Carols/Ishikawa Gallery in 2017. Typical of Wood's seductive style, the closely-cropped and magnified figure here is made more inscrutable by the soft-focus effect generated by the artist's combination of materials. Sensorily perplexing and difficult to read, *Not Turned On* belongs to a body of work focused on decontextualised and enigmatic objects that hover between the antique artefact and kitsch, material and image working together to 'establish an intoxicating interplay of desire, luxury, and degradation.'<sup>i</sup>



Detail of the present work

## Out of Time

At once utterly contemporary and existing strangely out of time, Wood's darkly imaginative paintings make surprising juxtapositions between temporalities, compounded by the artist's use of her grandmother's ornaments, old auction catalogues, and iPhone photographs as her source material. As a space where objects are radically decontextualised, taken out of their own specific cultural and temporal frameworks and placed alongside an assortment of other objects, the glossy pages of old auction catalogues are especially compelling for the artist, where 'centuries of heritage and ulterior motives are boiled down to into a transaction.'<sup>ii</sup> Divorced from its historical and cultural contexts in this way, the carved figure dominating the composition becomes difficult to locate as an object, emphasised by Wood's inclusion of a diaphanous layer of floral print intervening between the viewer and the painted figure.

Acknowledging the sense of temporal confusion generated by her strange and compelling paintings, Wood describes herself as a 'medieval millennial', her paintings as at home in the 1910s as the 2010s. Born in the 1990s, Wood is a digital native, well-schooled in the constant flows of decontextualised images and information that characterises the internet age she belongs to 'a generation born into that ahistorical, anti-mnemonic blip culture – a generation for whom time has always come ready-cut into digital micro-slices.'<sup>iii</sup>

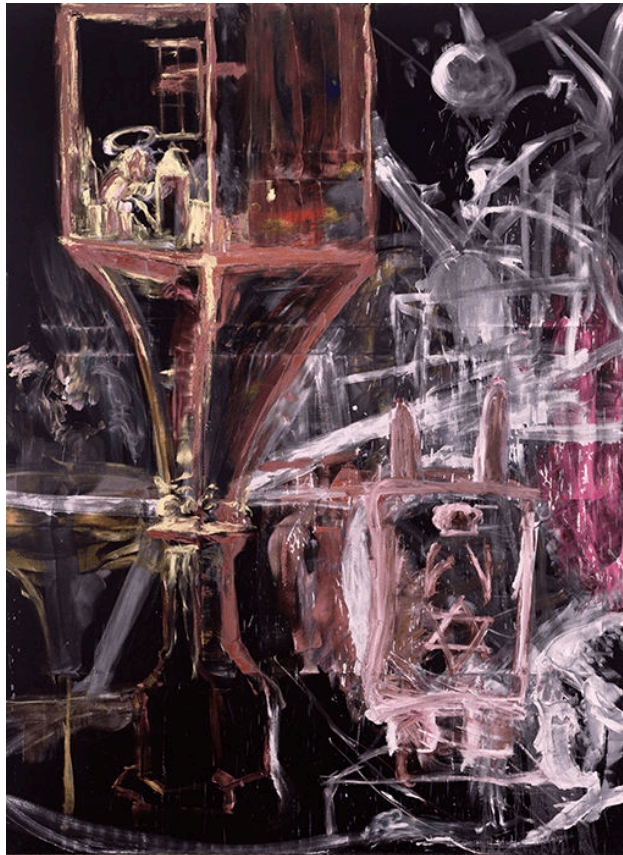


René Magritte, *Découverte* (Discovery), 1927, private collection. Image: Bridgeman Images, Artwork: © ADAGP, Paris and DACS, London 2022

A playful double entendre referring to the closed, unseeing eyes of the central sculptural figure and a lack of sexual attraction, the title highlights Wood's delight in word-play and an interest in the slipperiness of meaning that extends to her treatment of materials. As in her paintings of leather jackets and car interiors, in *Not Turned On* Wood generates a compelling confusion in her use of black paint on a black velvet ground here, rendering the likeness of one material onto the surface of another that she describes as 'a sort of joke with myself about painting, alluding to painting a fabric on a different fabric [...] it has an uncanniness to it.'<sup>iv</sup> Drawing out the uncanniness of these objects, and their ability to stand in for one another, *Not Turned On* frustrates our attempts to make the carved object legible as obsidian or hard-polished wood in a manner that

recalls the careful balance between revealing and concealing struck in Surrealist master René Magritte's insidiously subtle notion of combined objects, and the slippery exchanges between word and image, sign and signified.

Exploring relationships between the visual and the haptic through her painterly process, Wood reveals the power of material juxtaposition in generating mood and meaning. Once popular in ancient Kashmir, velvet painting historically designated wealth, prestige, and opulence. Slipping into kitsch in more recent years with popular subjects including depictions of Elvis Presley and religious imagery however, the luxury material now also signifies a kind of anti-art statement developed self-consciously by Julian Schnabel in the 1980s, where 'the linking of different strands and the juxtaposition of essentially incompatible elements at the levels of colour, materials and even content give each work a dissonant quality.'<sup>v</sup>



Julian Schnabel, *Kaballistic Painting*, 1983, Detroit Institute of Arts, Detroit. Image: © Detroit Institute of Arts / Founders Society purchase, W. Hawkins Ferry fund / Bridgeman Images, Artwork: © Julian Schnabel / ARS, New York / DACS 2022

As Max Hollein has described in relation to Schnabel's velvet paintings, 'a found painting surface, such as an old tarpaulin, a dark-coloured velvet, or a panel from a stage set, already has its own structure and history. Such surfaces are not neutral; they are not passive, but instead already have a voice of their own and the power to evoke mood'<sup>vi</sup> Bringing our attention to the painted surface and the complex variety of associations and sensations that it gives rise to, *Not Turned On* reasserts the immediacy and primacy of the painted image in the Digital Age.

## Collector's Digest

- Since her first major institutional show with Goldsmiths Centre for Contemporary Art in 2019, Wood has exhibited her work world-wide, including the Museum of Modern Art in Warsaw and Tate St. Ives. In 2021 her work was included in the critically acclaimed exhibition of contemporary painting in Britain, *Mixing it Up: Painting Today* at the Hayward Gallery in London.
- Featured in the Artsy Vanguard 2020, her works now reside in the permanent collection of Beijing's X Museum, where she also enjoyed a significant solo exhibition in 2020.
- An established musician, Issy Wood is signed with producer Mark Ronson's Zelig Records, with her second EP *If It's Any Constellation* released last year.

Video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EMGj99UJ4M0>

Issy Wood, 'Debt', 2020

- <sup>i</sup> Rosanna McLaughlin, 'Issy Wood', *Mixing it Up: Painting Today*, (exh. cat.), London, Hayward Gallery, 2021, p. 112.
- <sup>ii</sup> Issy Wood, quoted in Rosanna McLaughlin, 'Issy Wood', *Mixing it Up: Painting Today*, (exh. cat.), London, Hayward Gallery, 2021, p. 112.
- <sup>iii</sup> Mark Fisher, quoted in Griselda Murray Brown, 'Paint the moment: why millennials are tuning to oil and canvas', *Financial Times*, 20 April 2018, online.
- <sup>iv</sup> Issy Wood in conversation with Sarah McCrory, *Luncheon*, No. 8., 2019, p. 60-61.
- <sup>v</sup> Max Hollein, ed., *Julian Schnabel: Malerei / Paintings 1978-2003* (exh. cat.), Frankfurt, 2004, p.34.
- <sup>vi</sup> Max Hollein, ed., *Julian Schnabel: Malerei / Paintings 1978-2003* (exh. cat.), Frankfurt, 2004, p.33.

## Provenance

Carlos/Ishikawa, London

Private Collection, Asia

Acquired from the above by the present owner

## 20th Century & Contemporary Art Evening Sale

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PROPERTY FROM A PROMINENT PRIVATE  
AMERICAN COLLECTION

32

**Anna Weyant**

*Bath Time*

signed and dated 'Anna Weyant 2019' on the reverse  
oil on panel

104.8 x 87 cm (41 1/4 x 34 1/4 in.)

Painted in 2019.

**Estimate**

£80,000 — 120,000 £

[Go to Lot](#)





*'I think there are features that I'm attracted to in a painting. I like a really round figure, something not bulbous, but round.'* —Anna Weyant

Filtering oblique references to the Freudian uncanny and the Surreal through a rich painterly vernacular of muted tones, smooth, softened edges and intense luminosity borrowed from Dutch Old Master paintings, Anna Weyant's irreverent and darkly humorous paintings delight in their ability to disturb. Focused primarily on a cast of young yet knowing female characters set in dark, denuded spaces, Weyant's paintings dramatise something of the passage of girlhood and its strangeness. Amplifying the tension in these static dramas, Weyant's dramatic chiaroscuro and careful attention to contour and form nods to Caravaggio in its intense luminosity, producing highly distinctive paintings cloaked in 'subdued liquid chartreuse, embellished with unexpected twists.'<sup>i</sup>



Michelangelo Merisi da Caravaggio, *Arciconfraternita di Sant'Anna de Parafrenieri (Madonna and Child with St Anne)*, 1606, Galleria Borghese, Rome. Image: akg-images

## Welcome to the Dollhouse

The subject of growing critical attention since her 2019 debut solo exhibition *Welcome to the Dollhouse* with taste-maker gallery 56 Henry in New York, Weyant has recently joined the ranks of Gagosian, the youngest artist to be internationally represented by the gallery. Taking its title from Todd Solondz's 1995 film of teenage angst and ritual humiliation, *Welcome to the Dollhouse* used the children's toy as a device to explore what Weyant has described as the 'low-stakes trauma' of girlhood, her paintings like compartmentalised vignettes staged using her cast of doll-like

characters serving as actors and avatars in her tragicomic narratives. Executed in the same year as this breakthrough exhibition, *Bath Time* shares in these themes, developing the rich, dark palette offset by luminous porcelain tones that have become associated with the Canadian artist's precisely rendered scenes of narrative disquiet.

Like Paula Rego, who mines a similarly rich vein of adolescent uncertainty, Weyant makes use of stage-set dolls in preparing her compositions, recorded here in the static pose, smooth porcelain skin, and the exaggerated articulation of the child's limbs in *Bath Time*. This distinctive quality introduces a note of strangeness to the figure, moving the painting from Old Master luxuriance into more overtly surreal territory, touching as it does on Sigmund Freud's notion of the doll as an uncanny double of the child itself. An ambiguous object, the doll combines the child's ambivalent fears and desires, continuing to function as a repository of lost innocence long after the child has grown out of it.

Drawing on John Currin's polished finish and taste for the macabre, the alabaster smoothness and exaggerated expressions of Weyant's characters position them on the 'knife edge between sweet and sour, beautiful and foreboding', evoking the strange world of Edmund Gorey and the enigmatic qualities of Dorothea Tanning's uneasy scenes of adolescent self-awareness.<sup>ii</sup>



Dorothea Tanning, *The Guest Room*, 1950 – 52, Private Collection. Image: Bridgeman Images, Artwork: © ADAGP, Paris and DACS, London 2022

Playfully acknowledging her approximation of a pictorial idiom more commonly associated with Old Master paintings, Weyant introduces flashes of dark comedy, the painting's compositional relationship to classical statuary and Old Master paintings such as Caravaggio's *Arciconfraternita di Sant'Anna de Parafrenieri* (*Madonna and Child with St Anne*). Loosely wrapped in a towel modelled with all the theatrical intensity of Baroque drapery, the child leans against the rim of the eponymous bath, her impervious face and averted eyes introducing an air of mischief to the piece. Indeed, while Caravaggio's Christ child reaches his foot out to trample the serpent – a pervasive symbol of evil and original sin – the child here slyly reaches her foot out towards a jettisoned rubber

duck as the overflowing bath water pools on the floor around her. Heavily featured in the early advertising campaign of the Victorian brand of Pears Soap alongside slogans emphasising conceptual connections between cleanliness and purity such as 'Pure and Gentle' and 'keeps your skin soft and smiling with innocence', Weyant's adaptation of the baby by the bath motif complicates notions of childhood as straightforwardly innocent and pure, presenting a darkly comic take on what might lie just beneath the surface.



[Left] American magazine advertisement, 1910, for Pears' Soap. Image: Granger / Bridgeman Images  
[Right] Detail of the present work

### Collector's Digest

- Recently announced as the youngest painter to join the roster at Gagosian Gallery, Canadian artist Anna Weyant has been garnering critical recognition since her first solo exhibition at 56 Henry in 2019.
- In addition to her forthcoming solo show with Gagosian towards the end of the year, Weyant has

also participated in several group shows, most recently *Women of Now* at the Green Family Art Foundation in Dallas, Texas.

- i Sasha Bogojev, 'Anna Weyant: Welcome to the Dollhouse', *Juxtapoz*, 13 July 2020, [online](#).
- ii Noor Brara, 'Artist Anna Weyant Paints the Indignities of Being a Young Woman – and Collector's of All Ages Can't Get Enough', *Artnet News*, 16 September 2021, [online](#).

### Provenance

56 Henry, New York

Acquired from the above by the present owner

## 20th Century & Contemporary Art Evening Sale

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### Amoako Boafo

*Bailike*

signed, inscribed and dated 'AMOAKO M BOAFO 2019

KING' lower right

oil and pencil on vinyl

201 x 151 cm (79 1/8 x 59 1/2 in.)

Executed in 2019.

**Estimate**

£350,000 — 450,000   ‡

[Go to Lot](#)





*'The primary idea of my practice is representation, documenting, celebrating, and showing new ways to approach Blackness.'* —Amoako Boafo

Born in Accra, Ghana, Amoako Boafo is an artist at the forefront of discussions surrounding the history of portraiture and the intersections of race, identity, representation, and masculinity historically overlooked by the genre. Executed in the same year that the Boafo took up a productive artist's residency at the Rubell Museum in Miami and presented his first solo show, *I See Me*, with Roberts Projects in Los Angeles, *Bailike* is a confident expression of this accomplished young artist's practice, highlighting at once his remarkable facility as a painter, and the careful tenderness with which he approaches his subjects.

Video: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FL\\_g906Ov9Y](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FL_g906Ov9Y)

Amoako Boafo discusses his painting practice and the role of fashion in his work ahead of his collaboration with the fashion house Dior for their Men's Summer 2021 Collection.

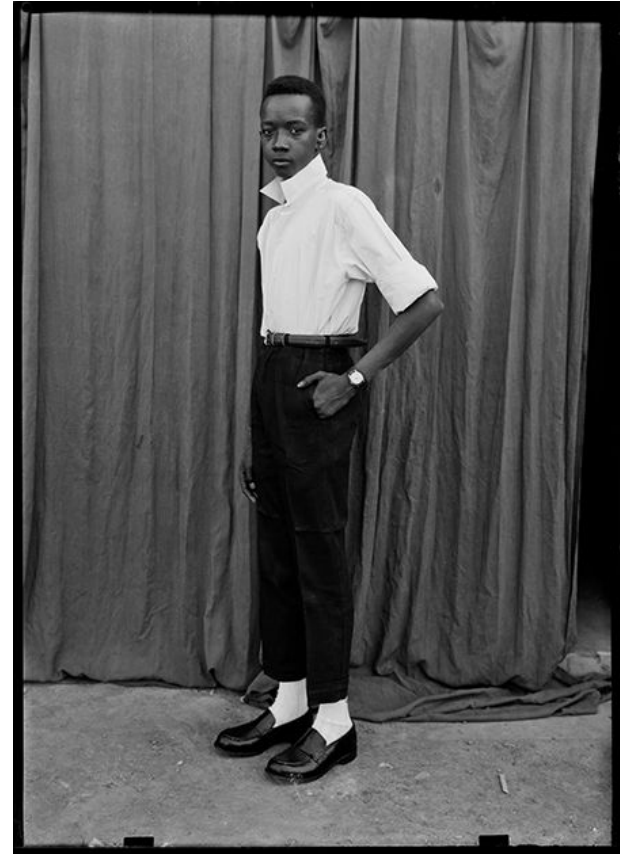
Standing in a relaxed, but quietly assertive stance with his arms hanging by his sides, the perfectly poised figure fixes us with a steady gaze, the crisp white of his clothed body standing out sharply against the monochromatic field behind him. Sketched out in confident, economic pencil lines, the unpainted hands are of particular significance here, one tagged with the enigmatic 'King' insignia with which Boafo often signs his works, which here seems to reinforce the subject's regal bearing. Highly characteristic of Boafo's portraits, the artist here achieves striking contrasts in his carefully focused palette and the sharp transitions between the warm peachy ground, brilliant whites, and more complex application of darker tones used in the construction of the figure's face.

Despite the static pose assumed by the coolly self-possessed subject, *Bailike* is charged with energy and vitality, a quality achieved through the artist's fluid treatment of paint, nuanced sense of colour, and the thick, gestural marks used in the modelling of the face. Highly textured, the subtle combinations of umber, deep red, bright yellow, and midnight blue are powerfully concentrated in the face here, making it the focal point of the composition and centring our attention on questions of identity, race, and representation.

## In the Picture

In its compositional arrangement and stripped back focus on the Black figure, *Bailike* contributes to an increasingly visible and robust legacy of 20th century and contemporary Black portraiture that includes the likes of Barkley L. Hendricks, Kerry James Marshall, Lynette Yiadom-Boakye, and Kehinde Wiley. In the understated elegance and self-possessed dignity of its subject, *Bailike* also recalls the West African studio portraits of celebrated mid-century photographers Malick Sidibé, James Barnor, and Seydou Keita, an influence that can be felt in Boafo's own artistic process, and

his tendency to work from carefully staged photographs of his subjects. Speaking of these influences Boafo has explained 'there is a lot I learn from these artists to use in my own work, such as capturing the moods and moments as they are able to capture with photography.'<sup>i</sup>



Seydou Keita, *Untitled*, 1952 / 1955. Image and Artwork: © Seydou Keita/SKPEAC - Courtesy The Jean Pigozzi African Art Collection

Intimacy and empathy are key to Boafo's practice, and in his decision to focus on the everyday individuals who, like him, have left the African country of their birth in what the artist describes as the 'Black diaspora', he has crafted a new visual language through which to explore questions surrounding racial identity and displacement. As the artist describes, 'I actually know most of the

characters I paint. I am familiar with their expressions and their energy. When you see the portrait I want you to know: This is their energy. By painting them I can connect the colours I use with the energy of the people I portray.<sup>iii</sup>

Relocating to Vienna in 2014 in order to attend the prestigious Academy of Fine Arts, Boafo's portraits are frequently likened to those of Austrian Successionist Egon Schiele, whose work he would have enjoyed first hand at the Leopold and Albertina Museums upon his arrival in the city. Certainly, Boafo's expressive use of colour, energetic treatment, and psychological lucidity draws close to that of his Austrian predecessor, the intense corporeality and energetic fluidity of Schiele's mark-making practice extended with Boafo's innovative application of paint to the canvas directly with his fingertips. Creating a profound sense of depth, surface texture, and movement in the face of the sitter who appeared in another portrait from the same year, *Bailike* highlights the emotional intimacy and vitality that characterises Boafo's best loved works.



[LEFT] Egon Schiele, *Self-Portrait with Striped Shirt*, 1910, Leopold Museum, Vienna. Image: Bridgeman Images [RIGHT] Detail of the present work

## Collector's Digest

• Examples of Boafo's work are held in the permanent collections of prestigious international institutions including The Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum in New York, the Los Angeles County

Museum of Art, and the Albertina Museum in Vienna, where the artist currently resides.

• In 2020, the year after the present work was executed, Boafo was named as one of 'The Most Influential Artists' of that year, and featured in the Artsy Vanguard 2020 following the then record-breaking sale of his *The Lemon Bathing Suit* at Phillips London. The focus of considerable attention since then, Boafo will also be represented as one of contemporary art's most significant emerging figures in the forthcoming publication *Prime – Art's Next Generation* (2022).

• Boafo's debut European exhibition *Inside Out* opened in April of this year with Mariane Ibrahim in Paris.

<sup>i</sup> Amoako Boafo, quoted in Belinda Kazeem-Kamiński, 'Amoako Boafo by Belinda Kazeem-Kamiński', *Bomb Magazine*, 26 August 2020, [online](#).

<sup>ii</sup> Amoako Boafo, quoted in Gabriel Roland, 'In the Studio: Amoako Boafo, Vienna', *Collector's Agenda*, [online](#).

## Provenance

Private Collection (acquired directly from the artist)

Acquired from the above by the present owner

## 20th Century & Contemporary Art Evening Sale

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34

### Emmanuel Taku

*My Brother's Keeper*

signed and dated 'TAKU 2020 TAKU 2020' on the reverse

acrylic and newspaper collage on canvas

210 x 145 cm (82 5/8 x 57 1/8 in.)

Executed in 2020.

#### Estimate

£30,000 — 50,000 ±

[Go to Lot](#)



*'The importance of capturing two figures in juxtaposition was to create a sense of consolidation, synergy, and unity. The anthropomorphic silhouettes created by the bodies engulfed in silkscreened fabric print are emphatic of this unity.'* —Emmanuel Taku

Immediately arresting in its large scale, bold patterning, and striking treatment of the Black figure, *My Brother's Keeper* is a preeminent example of contemporary Ghanaian artist Emmanuel Taku's practice. A graduate in Visual Arts and Textiles from the Ghanatta Institute of Art and Design, Taku makes use of a wide variety of materials and approaches, combining silkscreening methods, textiles, acrylic, and collaged newspaper on a painted canvas, fiberglass, or plywood ground. Frequently featuring twins or doubles with titles emphasising these familial bonds, Taku's portraits use pattern and decoration to explore deeper questions related to identity, representation, and the Black body.



Emmanuel Taku at the Noldor Residency, Accra, Ghana working on his painting [The Amethyst Pair](#), sold at Phillips London in July 2021.

## Band of Brothers

Executed in 2020 during Taku's time with Ghana's first independent artist's residency program, the Noldor Residency, *My Brother's Keeper* was also included in his first solo exhibition, *Temple of Blackness - It Takes Two*. As the artist describes, 'This body of work came to me as an idea when I heard John Akomfrah speak about his experience as a child referring to museums capturing artwork by Turner and Constable as a 'Temple of Whiteness'. I just remembered how that clicked for me and I truly wanted to create my own "Temple of Blackness" capturing black people as demi-



gods or heroes without pupils or eyes.’<sup>i</sup>

Against a backdrop of broader calls to decolonise these European museum collections, *Temple of Blackness – It Takes Two* played with classical tradition and modes of representation in the creation of a new metaphorical space, a temple within which to honour a new cast of Black gods and heroes. Presented in strong, statuesque poses with blank, pupilless eyes, Taku’s figures recall ancient Greco-Roman sculptures, although the artist radically updates this classical visual language with his distinctive paisley screen-printing process and idiosyncratic collage technique. While the opalescent eyes of Taku’s figures from this body of work identify them as deities worthy of reverence, the intricately collaged newspaper material that adorns their faces makes a subtle but suggestive point about the complex construction of identity, and of the media’s role in the politicising and objectifying the Black body.

## The Power of Print

Visually recalling the highly decorative surfaces of Viennese Successionist Gustav Klimt’s most celebrated works, and his masterful grasp of pattern’s propensity towards abstraction, the twinned figures in *My Brother’s Keeper* stand cheek to cheek, their bodies merging and separating in the flattening passages of green paisley that dominate the central section of the composition. Although Taku describes the painting as a portrait of the Residency’s founder Joseph Awuah-Darko, Taku’s doubled composition here not only speaks to the complex duality of any individual, but also of the uncanny likeness existing between the artist and his subject here. Creating a striking contrast against the pastel blue background, the layers of abstraction produced by the stunning green print heightens this confusion or blending of corporeal boundaries – what the artist describes as a mode of ‘figurative surrealism’ designed to ‘reclaim a Black narrative and identity’.<sup>ii</sup>



[LEFT] Gustav Klimt, *Der Kuss (The Kiss)*, detail, 1907-08, Österreichische Galerie Belvedere, Vienna. Image: Bridgeman Images [RIGHT] Detail of the present work

As well as playfully engaging with modes of abstraction in his treatment of these twinned bodies, the use of paisley in Taku’s practice also takes on political and culturally specific dimensions. As the artist describes in more detail: ‘The use of floral paisley prints comes from my personal fascination with the pattern and fabric that has always been a part of my life since youth – whether as a tablecloth or in garments. I also felt that paisley represents a melting pot of cultural identity; first being fashioned in India and expanding in reach before becoming adopted into a British sensibility and finally the sartorial mainstream. I’ve always worn paisley and have been practicing portraiture and art for almost ten years.’<sup>iii</sup>

With a background in textiles himself, Taku links his silkscreen practice to the textile work produced by his mother and sister, at once a powerful expression of his own, lived experience and a celebration of the rich cultural history of West African textile design. In these compelling combinations of pattern and portraiture, *My Brother’s Keeper* also makes visual reference to the hugely significant post-colonial West African studio photography of the likes of Sanlé Sory and Malick Sidibé. In this manner, his portraits bear striking similarities to the effective reference to pattern, fabric, and mid-century West African photography employed in the work of Taku’s friend and fellow graduate from the Ghanatta Institute of Art and Design, Amoako Boafo, whose work is also represented in Phillips’ London Evening Sale this June.



Malick Sidibé, *Deux femmes dans le studio en africaine*, 1978. Artwork: © Malick Sidibe Estate

## Collector's Digest

- Born in Accra in 1986, and a graduate of the Ghanatta Institute of Art and Design alongside friend Amoako Boafo, Emmanuel Taku is one of the region's most prominent emerging figurative artists.

- Following the success of his first solo exhibition as the inaugural artist of the Noldor Residency Program, Taku's most recent solo show *The Chosen Few* was presented at Maruani Mercier,

Brussels in 2021.

- The current auction record for the artist was achieved for his work [Sisters in Lilac](#), which sold at Phillips London for over 10 times its low estimate in March 2022.

<sup>i</sup> Emmanuel Taku quoted in 'Joseph Awuah-Darko and Emmanuel Taku Interviewed by Africa First', 25 February, 2021, [online](#).

<sup>ii</sup> Emmanuel Taku, quoted in Romina Román, 'Emmanuel Taku: Ghana's Finest and Brightest', *Metal*, 2020 [online](#).

<sup>iii</sup> Emmanuel Taku, quoted in 'Joseph Awuah-Darko and Emmanuel Taku Interviewed by Africa First', 25 February, 2021, [online](#).

## Provenance

The Noldor Residency, Accra

Acquired from the above by the present owner

## Exhibited

Accra, The Noldor Residency, *Temple of Blackness - It Takes Two*, 4 December 2020 - 17 January 2021

## Literature

Romina Román, 'Emmanuel Taku - Ghana's finest and brightest', *METAL Magazine*, January 2021 (illustrated, online)

Meghan Grech, 'Black Identity and Power: Emmanuel Taku's Mixed Media Portraiture', *Casper Magazine*, 10 February 2021 (installation view illustrated, online)

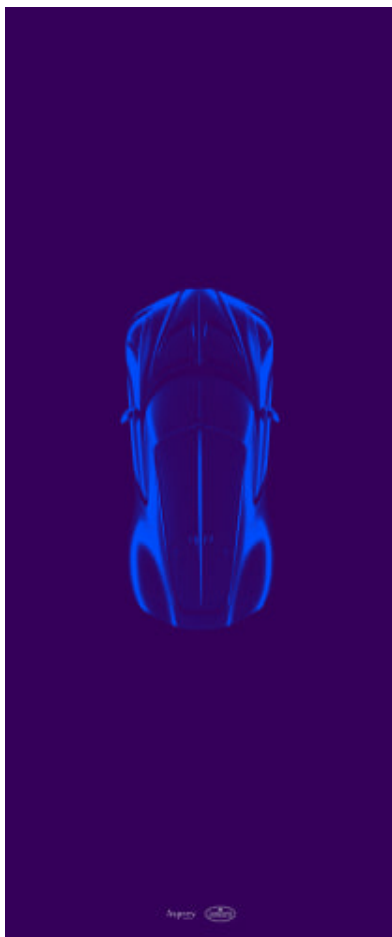
Sam Gaskin, 'Ghana's Noldor Residency Draws Artists to Former Pharmaceutical Factory', *Ocula Magazine*, 23 March 2021 (illustrated, online)

Cristina Samper, 'Feel Hypnotised with the Gaze and Clothes in Emmanuel Taku's Subjects', *Art of Choice*, 28 June 2021 (illustrated, online)

Melanie Gerlis, 'Magritte bought for £6,000 could fetch £15m', *The Financial Times*, 3 December 2020 (installation view illustrated, online)

## 20th Century & Contemporary Art Evening Sale

London Auction / 30 June 2022 / 4pm BST



THIS LOT IS A "NON-FUNGIBLE TOKEN" (NFT)

35

### Asprey Bugatti

*La Voiture Noire*

Token ID: 1

Contract Address:

[0x92506Ee8636436158358f0cE11813c4C1d3bF0c4](#)

Non-Fungible Token: ERC-721

PNG: 1.49 MB (1,565,152 bytes), 2835 x 6803 pixels

Minted on 27 April 2022, this work is unique.

Please note the buyer of this NFT will have the option of ordering up to two physical sculptures, to be created by Asprey London Limited following the Auction. For further details please see [Information relating to the Physical Companions](#).

[Additional Conditions of Sale applicable to NFT Lots](#)

[Additional Conditions of Sale applicable to](#)

[Cryptocurrency Payments](#)

[Auction Conditions of Sale](#)

**Estimate**

Estimate On Request ↑

[Go to Lot](#)



*'Timeless design is a fundamental philosophy at the core of both Bugatti's and Asprey's vision.' —Wiebke Ståhl, Managing Director, Bugatti International*

Celebrating an exciting collaboration between two brands synonymous with luxury and craftsmanship as much as innovation and pioneering design, Phillips is proud to present The Asprey Bugatti *La Voiture Noire*, a unique physical sculpture and artwork fused with NFT designed and created by the Asprey Studio and made at the Asprey workshop in London. Attached to the NFT being offered here which enables two physical sculptures to be redeemed, the gold 24k plated on silver with rose gold finish, included in the lot price. The second Noire version is an exclusive option to the buyer.

This piece is the latest iteration in a fascinating story related to one of Bugatti's most iconic designs influenced by the Bugatti Atlantic Type 57.



Installation shot of the NFT with renderings of the physical components

Breaking new digital ground for both brands, this collaboration also honours the deep connections to innovation and art that anchors the legacies of both Asprey and Bugatti. Born into a family of prominent designers and sculptors, Ettore Bugatti is of course best known for his iconic car design. As an internationally recognised artist and silversmith in his own time, Ettore's father Carlo provides a particularly fitting lineage for this new collaboration which blends design, craft, and digital technology as it moves the idea of a masterpiece into the future.

Asprey Studio's Chief Creative Officer Ali Walker has described: This is the first masterpiece derived from the Asprey Bugatti partnership, following the hugely successful sell out of the smaller 261 collection, inspired by pop art and the current digital art movement. The NFT enables the



artwork to link to two physical sculptures in the blockchain, preserving provenance and authenticity. The NFT is a secondary feature that simply enables the sculpture and artworks to co-exist together in a unique narrative, a moment in history for the art of Asprey and Bugatti.

Raising fascinating questions around ownership and the object, NFTs and blockchain technology have become increasingly prominent aspects of our contemporary landscape. While the tendency towards reproduction and replication of digital products might have initially presented certain complications for brands founded in a history of craftsmanship, scarcity, and exclusivity of which Bugatti and Asprey are of course supremely representative of, the introduction of NFTs into this landscape proved decisive. Shifting the debate from questions of reproduction onto those of individuality and ownership, NFTs have ushered in 'the power to prove the provenance of a digital asset', radically transforming 'what was an alien landscape into familiar territory'.<sup>i</sup>

London of course sits at the heart of Asprey's history. Founded by William Asprey in 1781 and focussed initially on silk printing, by 1847 the family-run business moved into premises on Mayfair's New Bond Street, where it remains today. Celebrating their 241st anniversary this year, Asprey's new Studio ushers in a new, exciting chapter in the company's history. As Walker has described: 'The partnership with Bugatti, such an iconic and artistic brand, is the ultimate collaboration to explore new production and artistic techniques. The bold colours, mixed with the gold and silver precious metals, create a vivid pop art theme.'<sup>ii</sup>



Andy Warhol, *Self-Portrait*, 1966, The Museum of Modern Art, New York. Image: The Museum of Modern Art, New York/Scala, Florence, Artwork: © 2022 The Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts, Inc. / Licensed by DACS, London

The reference to Pop Art goes considerably further than the bold colour contrasts employed by the likes of Andy Warhol and Roy Lichtenstein but draws on a pioneering history which recontextualised the objects of popular and consumer culture as art for the first time. Warhol too was of course an early pioneer of digital technologies, his computer-based works from the mid-1980s recently recovered and sold as NFTs in 2021. The culmination of centuries of heritage in the decorative and applied arts, the present lot represents the opportunity to be a part of this fascinating history at a pivotal moment, occupying both physical and digital spaces.

i Alex Levin, 'Bugatti and Heritage Luxury Goods Maker Asprey Announce Invite-Only Access to Auction of Inaugural NFT', *Forbes*, 16 February 2022, [online](#).

ii Ali Walker, quoted in 'Bugatti Asprey Collaboration Creates One of One La Voiture Noire Sculpture', press release, Bugatti Newsroom, 2 February 2022, [online](#).

Once paid for in full, the buyer of the NFT Lot will have the option of ordering one or both of the following physical sculptures which will be created by Asprey London Limited following the Auction (the "Physical Companions"):

- a unique sculpture (1 of 1) of a "Bugatti La Voiture Noire" in original silver with 24K gold plated and rose gold plated finish, dimensions 120 x 55cm (inclusive of the base) ("Gold Physical Companion") on a complimentary basis without any additional charge; and/or
- a unique sculpture (1 of 1) from the "Asprey Bugatti La Voiture Noire Collection" series with black finish, dimensions 120 x 55cm (inclusive of the base) for an additional price to be agreed between Asprey London Limited and the Buyer ("Black Physical Companion").

For full details please see the [Information relating to the Physical Companions](#)

For further terms applicable to NFT Lots, please see the [Additional Conditions of Sale applicable to NFT Lots](#).

This Lot is sold subject to the [Conditions of Sale, London Auctions](#), the [Additional Conditions of Sale applicable to NFT Lots](#) and the [Additional Conditions of Sale applicable to Cryptocurrency Payments](#), in addition to the following supplemental term

## Further Information on NFTs

### In what currency will I be bidding?

The auction will be conducted and invoiced in British Pounds (GBP).

### What forms of payment are accepted?

You can pay for this NFT Lot in GBP or in Ether. If you wish to pay for this NFT Lot in Ether you must satisfy the Cryptocurrency Conditions set out in our [Additional Conditions of Sale applicable to Cryptocurrency Payments](#).

You acknowledge and agree that the price of Ether can be volatile and subject to upward and downward movements. You acknowledge that the conversion rate between these Accepted Cryptocurrencies and GBP will change during and after the auction until the Lot is paid for. Phillips does not offer cryptocurrency conversion functionality during the auction. Bidders are responsible for making their own currency conversion calculations when bidding in the auction.

### How much will I have to pay?

If you are the successful bidder on an NFT Lot, you must pay the total purchase price for the Lot (calculated as described in the [Conditions of Sale](#) plus network and other fees required to transfer the NFT to your Digital Wallet).

If you elect to pay for an NFT Lot in Ether and satisfy our Cryptocurrency Conditions (see above), the GBP purchase price as shown on your invoice will be converted automatically into Ether using the Coinbase Commerce rate of exchange at the time the buyer accesses the Coinbase Commerce platform to make payment using the QR code or link we will issue to you.

### Are resale royalties payable to the artist on re-sales of the NFT?

If resale royalties are payable to the artist on subsequent resales of the NFT, this will be stipulated in the NFT Lot's smart contract. Where they exist, re-sale royalties will be a percentage of the re-sale price of the NFT. It is therefore important that you review (or seek professional help to review) and understand the operation of the NFT's smart contract (including any rights and restrictions

contained in the smart contract) before bidding.

Depending on where the NFT Lot is re-sold, additional artist resale royalties and transaction duties may apply to the transaction under applicable law. These would be additional to and not in substitution for any resale royalties imposed by the NFT's smart contract.

### ***BY REGISTERING TO BID YOU ACKNOWLEDGE AND AGREE AS FOLLOWS***

- You are bidding for yourself and not on behalf of anyone else
- If you are the successful bidder, you will be buying the NFT only. You will not be buying the digital artwork asset identified by the NFT. For further details please read the [Additional Conditions of Sale for NFT Lots](#)
- You have a wallet capable of supporting and accepting the NFT token type listed in the NFT Lot description
- You can only pay for the Lot in Ether if you satisfy the Cryptocurrency Conditions set out in our [Additional Conditions of Sale applicable to Cryptocurrency Payments](#). These include requirements for you to make payment:
  - from a single digital wallet registered in your name maintained on one of the following platforms:
    - Coinbase Custody Trust;
    - Coinbase, Inc.;
    - Fidelity Digital Assets Services, LLC;
    - Gemini Trust Company, LLC; or
    - Paxos Trust Company, LLC;
  - using funds obtained from legal activities and belonging to you.

- if you are resident in or otherwise subject to the laws of a country or territory which has banned or restricted payments in cryptocurrency (such as the People's Republic of China); or
- you fail to satisfy our client identification and verification checks or other vetting procedures; or
- other circumstances exist which would expose you or Phillips to potential legal or regulatory actions or fines by completing the transaction in cryptocurrency.

If we cannot accept payment from you in cryptocurrency for these or other reasons, you must make payment in GBP.

For the full terms and conditions which apply to the sale of this Lot, please read the Conditions of Sale, London Auctions, the [Additional Conditions of Sale applicable to NFT Lots](#), the [Additional Conditions of Sale applicable to Cryptocurrency Payments](#).

### **Provenance**

Asprey London Limited

### **We cannot accept cryptocurrency payments:**

- from digital wallets hosted on other exchanges or self-hosted wallets;
- from multiple digital wallets; or