

SKARSTEDT

Art | Basel

June 13–16, 2024
VIP: June 10–12
Messe Basel
Booth E6

Cristina **BanBan**
Georg **Baselitz**
André **Butzer**
George **Condo**
Willem **de Kooning**
Yuan **Fang**
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Jeff **Koons**
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Marco **Pariani**
Pablo **Picasso**
Richard **Prince**
Thomas **Schütte**
Andy **Warhol**
Christopher **Wool**

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Cristina BanBan

Three Dancers

2024

oil on linen

90 x 72 inches

228.6 x 182.9 cm

(Inv #9646)



BanBan's artistic practice is often informed by dialogues with art history. In *Three Dancers*, these conversations manifest in multiple layers to create a rich tapestry of meaning. Here, BanBan engages in a new conversation with the enduring archetype of the dancer, and therefore with the likes of artists such as Edgar Degas, who painted his ballerinas voyeuristically. Instead, BanBan makes her dancers the entirety of the painting. In her most recent work, BanBan's women have been known for their refusal to meet their viewers' gazes. Denying us entry into their world, standing proudly on their own, they defy historical expectations. Now, they look at us, and they do so invitingly, continuing to defy precedent in the way they seem to dance with joyous abandon. Indeed, it is the way in which BanBan subtly updates her women to meet the present moment that makes her paintings so bold. Not only do they seem to smile at us, but these bodies are not the bodies of a dancer one would find in a Degas painting, nor do they wear the traditional leotard and tutu. This desire to see a modern woman on the canvas has been one of BanBan's most enduring, and most powerful, exercises. Wrestling these figures free of the gaze of artists as varied as Degas, Picasso, and de Kooning, while simultaneously using many of their techniques and forms, BanBan has created something that feels both timeless and contemporary.

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Georg Baselitz

Untitled (Baum/Tree)

1965

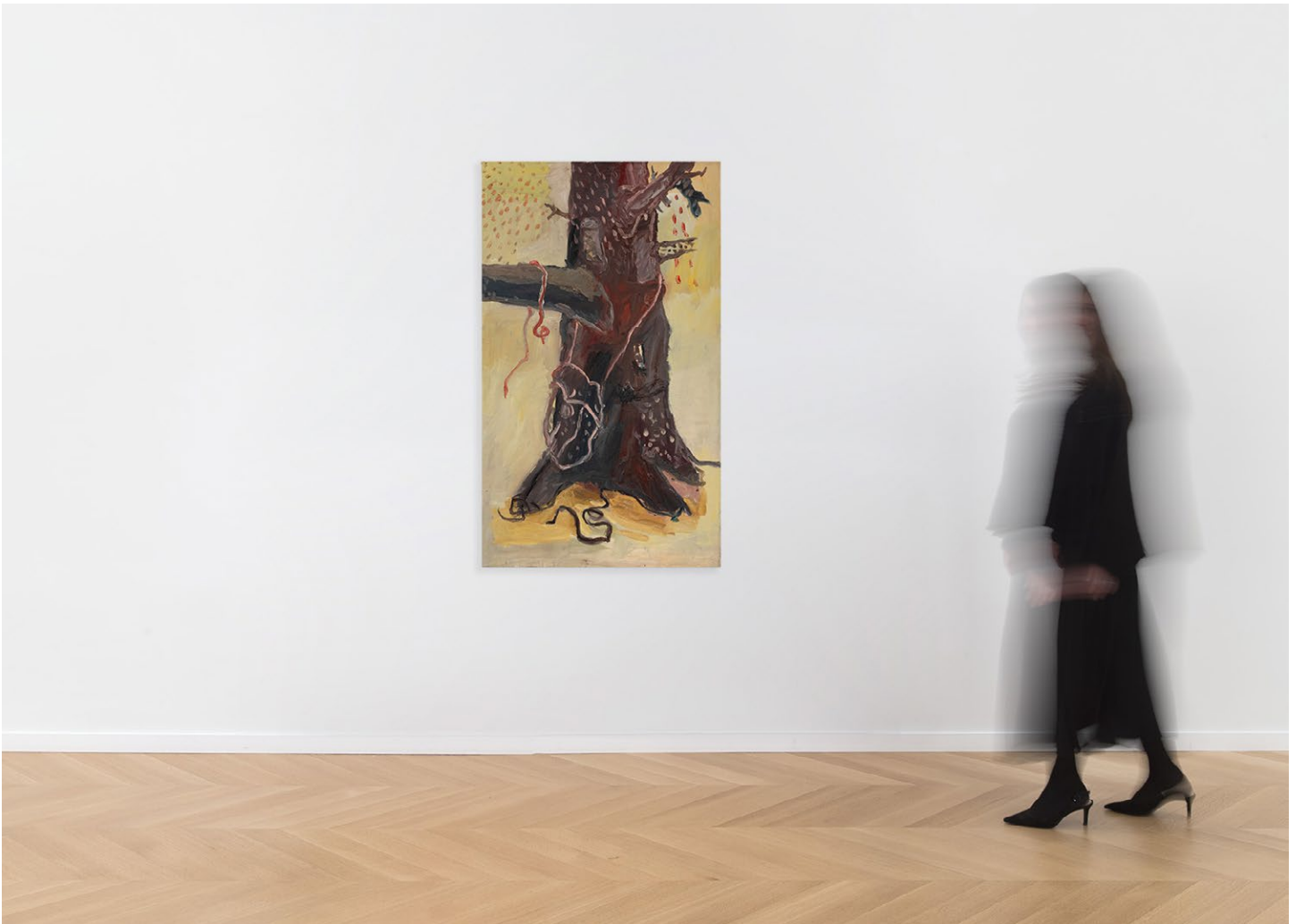
oil on canvas

53 1/8 x 31 inches

135 x 78.7 cm

signed and dated *G Baselitz 1965* (on the reverse)

(Inv #9324)



Part of Baselitz's lauded *Heroes* series, *Untitled (Baum/Tree)* embodies his emotional and theoretical investigations into the post-war German experience. Depicting a solitary tree that seems adorned with discarded rope amid a haunting landscape that appears to cry blood, there is a keen sense of both violence and loss. Through visual metaphors, Baselitz uses natural and human forms to symbolize the turmoil of both the current and immediately preceding eras. This figurative style emerged as a deliberate departure from the American abstraction of the 1940s and '50s, reflecting Baselitz's desire to explore his German identity amidst a rising global attitude.

Baselitz's engagement with trees in the 1960s marked a pivotal period in his artistic evolution. The *Heroes* series as a whole exemplifies his ability to convey vulnerability and defiance simultaneously. This confrontation of humanity's fragility, particularly in a post-war era, sees heroes and anti-heroes alike grappling with chaos and the existentialism of what has transpired, questioning what makes a hero to begin with.

Born in 1938 near Dresden, Baselitz's childhood experiences deeply influenced his art, especially in his earlier work. Growing up amidst the ruins of war and division, he grappled with this inherited trauma and an uncertain national identity. Through his paintings, Baselitz confronts the history of his country, drawing on expressionism and realism to challenge cultural psyche and guilt.

Critics often view Baselitz's work as ironic depictions of heroism, yet this overlooks his profound engagement with the history of art. Curator Norman Rosenthal has highlighted Baselitz's constant effort to recontextualize the past, describing his approach as heroic in and of itself. *Untitled (Baum/Tree)* stands as a testament to this artistic vision, a haunting image that continues to poignantly reflect the dark side of the human condition.

SKARSTEDT



André Butzer

Micky und Gamma

2023

acrylic on canvas

103.9 x 78.7 inches

264 x 200 cm

(Inv #9639)



With a unique visual language that vacillates between abstraction and figuration, André Butzer's oeuvre presents a kaleidoscopic fusion of colour, form, and emotion, embodying what he coined Science Fiction Expressionism. Set against a sunshine yellow background, *Micky und Gamma* exhibits Butzer's most recognisable traits whilst introducing a new character to his fictitious cosmos. The "base home" for this cast of characters is called Annaheim, a Germanified spelling of Anaheim, California, the location of the first Disneyland. According to Butzer's lore, this illusory land was colonised by Shame and H-Human, spawning the child-like "Friedens-Siemens" or "Peace-Siemens," referencing post-war Germany occupied by the Western allies and Soviet forces. Other characters include 'The Woman', embodying birth, death and benevolence, 'The Wanderer' who represents hardship and hope as well as the "Kirschmichel," who we see in the present work.

Whilst Science Fiction Expressionism has been at the core of Butzer's practice since 1999, he developed his N-Paintings between 2010 and 2018 which were vast, fully abstracted works in black and white. Only when he moved from Germany to Los Angeles in 2018 was he able to return to the enticing universe of Annaheim. Nevertheless, he decided that he could enjoy America better from his home in Germany and moved back in 2021, continuing to paint his vivacious characters. Growing up in Stuttgart, West Germany profoundly impacted Butzer's worldview. According to Hans Werner Holzwarth, "Butzer's work draws from scenes of friendly occupation, the human condition in West Germany under US cultural protectorate." He goes on to explain that "The new gods have brought Mickey Mouse, Coca-Cola, potato chips, Star Wars. They also bring the promise of death by atom or blood sugar."¹ This duality is integral to Butzer's paintings which are often appealing for their Disneyfied appearance yet have more ominous undertones.

Despite the figurative aesthetic of *Micky und Gamma*, it can also be understood as an abstract painting. Butzer believes that "Every image is an abstraction. No matter what's on it."² Using garish colours, much like his Expressionist forebears, he places the Kirschmichel figure against the monotonal background, which is decisively flat yet meditative in hue. Often monumental in scale, Butzer's paintings serve as a study of colour and form as much as they represent a theoretical universe. In the present work, small, angular, multi-coloured forms litter the canvas and deconstruct the plane, much like the Impressionist paintings of Paul Cézanne which prelude Cubism. Alternatively, this psychedelic cosmos in between the head, arms and legs of the figure perhaps references, Henri Matisse, another of Butzer's heroes. The robotic, abstract shapes reduce the composition to its simplest form much like Matisse's ground-breaking cut-outs.

Abstraction allows Butzer to express external horrors in an appropriate place. Christian Malycha, an authority on Butzer summarises the concept stating that, "The artist absorbs the semiotic texture of the external, seemingly hellish industrial world and transforms it into an inner experience."

¹ H. W. Holzwarth, André Butzer, Cologne, Taschen, 2021, p.6. / ² H. W. Holzwarth, André Butzer, Cologne, Taschen, 2021, p. 11. / ³ C. Malycha, Being and Image: André Butzer 1994 – 2014, Bielefeld, Kerber Verlag, 2018, p. 34.

SKARSTEDT



George Condo

Extrapolation

2007

mixed media on canvas

80 x 65 inches

203.2 x 165.1 cm

signed and dated *Condo 07* (upper left)

(Inv #9459)



A cacophony of limbs and faces cover every inch of the composition in George Condo's *Extrapolation* (2007). Most of these are rendered in a kind of grisaille, but some likewise exist in the collaged elements that dot the canvas. All of them, however, feature the grizzly, heightened states that are a hallmark of the series. The *Existential Portraits* began as a way for Condo to explore the despair felt during the mid-aughts, and the false belief people hold that they possess choices in how they live their lives, when the reality is that so much is dictated by norms of society they had no hand in crafting. The figures scream in anguish or grin with a mischievous knowing, aware of their situation and living life to the fullest anyway. Through a rotating cast of characters, Condo effectively used the series to explore what it means to be a person trying to make their way through the world.

Moreover, *Extrapolation* illustrates Condo's continued interest in blurring both the line between figuration and abstraction, and the relationship between painting, drawing, and collage. Although figures are undoubtedly identifiable throughout the composition, there is a mass of lines and swaths of colors into which these characters dissolve and reappear. In this way, they evoke some of Condo's earlier paintings from the 1980s and 1990s, particularly the *Expanding Canvases*. These works were almost completely abstract representations of the structure of music, illustrating how music operates as opposed to the experience of listening to it. As such, *Extrapolation* can be seen as a representation of the structure of emotions, acknowledging that nobody ever truly feels one singular emotion at any given time—every feeling is a compounding of one's entire lived experience, complicated by coexisting thoughts and ideas. If Condo toes the line between the abstract and the literal, then he likewise does so with various mediums. Drawing has remained an immensely important aspect of Condo's oeuvre, and he has built entire series around renegotiating the hierarchy between drawing and painting, to the point where all primacy is removed from painting and the two exist on a level playing field. In *Extrapolation*, this reveals itself through the strength of the linework, as well as through the collaged drawings that appear throughout. Illustrating notable characters from the *Existential Portraits*, such as Uncle Joe, the practice of collage extends back to some of Condo's earliest works, such as *Spanish Head Composition* (1988) in the collection of the Museum of Modern Art in New York.

SKARSTEDT



George Condo

Linear Portrait

2019

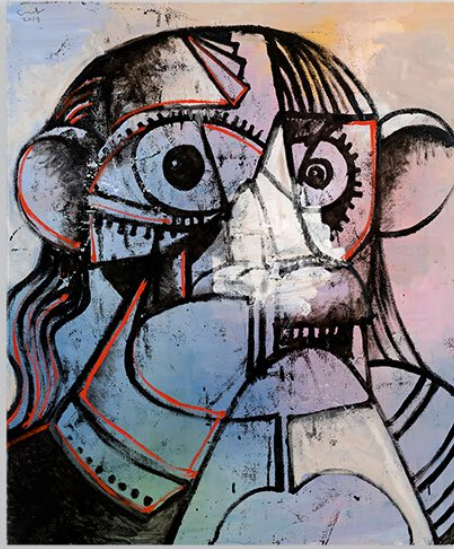
acrylic, oil and pigment stick on linen

36 x 30 inches

91.4 x 76.2 cm

signed and dated *Condo 2019* (upper left)

(Inv #9558)



Beauty and tragedy exist side-by-side in Condo's paintings in much the same way as in his personal life. The figure in *Linear Portrait*, an ambiguously gendered creature, sports long locks of waving hair. At the same time, their mouth is splayed open to reveal bared teeth, and both eyes and ears bulge out of its head. Despite their jarring appearance, these often perverse pictures are deeply reverent and aware of tradition. Condo's oeuvre has long toyed with art history, irreverently using it to expose its inner workings, revealing as much about the people who make art as they do society writ large.

Then, there is the lyrical quality to a work such as *Linear Portrait*. Condo is known both for his fast-paced working style and for his former life as a musician. Speaking of the works made at the time of *Linear Portrait*, Condo notes, "If I make a parallel with music, let's say you have an incredibly fast piece....Take one of the Bach violin paritas that's just really ripping. You can't miss a note, but you've got to play it at an accelerated speed. The amount of time it takes to work on each phrase, pretty soon that becomes muscle memory. And pretty soon you can up the tempo. With painting, after doing it for 40 years, I feel like it's all muscle memory."¹

¹ George Condo quoted in Pac Pobric, "Everything That Could Go Wrong, Did Go Wrong?: George Condo on the Difficult Path to His Most Personal Exhibition to Date," *Artnet News*, 3 December 2019.

SKARSTEDT



Willem de Kooning

Untitled XXIX

1986

oil on canvas

77 x 88 inches

195.6 x 223.5 cm

signed *de Kooning* (on the stretcher)

(Inv #6041)



In the late 1980's, de Kooning was revived with a new focus and vision. He became "aware of his own mortality and the fragility of painting itself [and] applied himself with a deliberate speed to forge a lasting legacy."¹

Thick painterly contours of red and blue are choreographed on a white ground, dancing in serpentine undulations similar to the jazz inspired work of Stuart Davis and the strong monochromes of Franz Kline. With this interplay of color and form, de Kooning was energized by the light infused watery landscapes of Long Island, where he moved in 1963. De Kooning condensed the rich and tactile qualities of his earlier work into narrow bands of prismatic colors, paring down the scraping, feathering and glazing techniques he formerly employed. These graphic forms that buckle and turn in space, shape elusive figurations, creating paintings that are both a culmination and reduction of his extensive oeuvre. *Untitled XXIX* belongs to this last, prodigious wave of painting.

Not only diverging from the abstracted figuration of his early career, de Kooning also changed materials and methods of applying paint that showed his awareness of longevity and conservation, in a way acknowledging his position within art history. Redirecting his approach, de Kooning's canvases became spare with sinuous lines of primary colors with loops and linear forms across a white ground. "I am becoming freer, I feel that I have found myself more, the sense that I have all my strength at my command. I think you can do miracles with what you have if you accept it... I am more certain in the way I use paint and the brush."²

1 J. Zilzer, "Chapter 5: Looking Back," *A Way of Living: The Art of Willem de Kooning*, New York, Phaidon, 2014, p. 232.

2 W. de Kooning, quoted in Willem de Kooning, exh. cat., Tate Gallery, London, 1995, p. 199

SKARSTEDT



Yuan Fang

Light Touching

2023

acrylic on canvas

83 x 67 inches

210.8 x 170.2 cm

(Inv #9556)



In Yuan Fang's work, emotive gestural swirls loop around, over, and through one another, acting as metaphors for the turbulence of the human experience. In her recent paintings, this tumult focuses itself on the female experience, and the strength, devastation, and adaptability that exists simultaneously in women. Born and raised in Shenzhen, China before relocating to New York City, Fang's first language was Chinese, a dialect that uses many similar words to describe both women and water. Indeed, as Jia Baoyu says in *Dream of the Red Chamber* (1791): "Women are like water...Water is dynamic and changeable, able to overcome obstacles and pass through stones...Like water, women can navigate challenges and adversity, smoothly overcoming all obstacles." The fluidity and resilience of both women and water, the two sources from which all life is born, echoes in the gestural forms across the canvas. These ideas are furthered in her choice of color palette, its muted tones drawing out further feelings of tension and drama. Deep burgundies evoke menstruation, while softer hints of lavender and pink speak to the clichéd tropes of womanhood that Fang hopes to break away from.

SKARSTEDT



Eric Fischl

October 7: Heading Out

2023

acrylic on linen

62 x 72 inches

157.5 x 182.9 cm

signed, titled and inscribed *Eric Fischl*

OCTOBER 7 HEADING OUT 2023.022 (on the reverse)

(Inv #9419)



Hotel rooms take on an array of meanings, associations, and possibilities for each of their inhabitants. For some, they feel personal and cozy, like a safe haven. For others, they're simply a space to put their things. They can be sites of nefarious, taboo activity; a blank slate on which to place romantic ideals; or even spaces of extreme isolation and sadness. A wide range of events take place in these rooms that are not what they supposedly promise, and Fischl explores each one of these potential outcomes in this new body of work, a perfectly fresh continuation of the ideas that have haunted his paintings for so many years.

The experience of travel is latent with a, perhaps false, sense of promise and possibility, making it a prime activity on which to project one's innermost fantasies—one can be someone else when in a different city. Similarly, there is a certain familiarity in the experience of a hotel room: one can more or less expect the same outdated patterned carpet, drab wall art, a couple of chairs, and a bed. At the same time, one remains keenly aware throughout their stay that they are transient, and that this space does not belong to them. Within this dichotomy of the familiar and unfamiliar lies further, tenser juxtapositions between interiority and exteriority, public and private, dislocation and comfort.

Each painting vibrates with an almost tragic stillness—a feeling that the artist likens to a muffled scream. In *October 7: Heading Out*, for example, a smartly dressed woman, poised to go explore wherever she is visiting, is instead frozen in place with her eyes glued to the television as it emanates that classic blue glow, projecting a real-time, real-world horror right as she attempts to remove herself from the realities of life through this vacation. Although we do not see what is unfolding, we understand its darkness through the stiffness of her body. The question of where emotions live in the body, particularly those more forbidden feelings of shame and violence, echoes across the works in the exhibition, as do feelings of dislocation, an effect Fischl partly achieves by bending the realities of time. These ideas raised in paintings such as *October 7: Heading Out* reveal that we are simultaneously always alone and never alone—a pervasive sentiment that can be found in even the most quotidian of moments.

SKARSTEDT



Günther Förg

Obne Titel

1995

acrylic on canvas

98 3/8 x 165 3/8 inches

249.9 x 420.1 cm

signed and dated *Förg 95* (upper left)

(Inv #8405)



Executed in 1995, *Ohne Titel* offers a monumental early example of Gunther Förg's *Gitterbilder* (*Grid Paintings*), a series that would come to preoccupy two decades of the artist's practice. Raw and exuberant, *Ohne Titel* perfectly exemplified the series, drawing upon both Förg's fanatical knowledge of art history and a distinctly tactile and sensorial understanding of gestural abstraction. With this important series, Förg spearheaded an entirely new visual language playfully engaging and subverting the legacy of modernism, carving out a new trajectory for the medium of painting in the late 20th and 21st Centuries.

SKARSTEDT



Günther Förg

Untitled

2001

acrylic on canvas

47 3/8 x 39 5/8 inches

120.3 x 100.6 cm

signed and dated *Förg 01* (upper right)

(Inv #9286)



A maze of crisscrossing lines of red, green, black, gray, and yellow, Günther Förg's *Untitled* (2001) uses the simplicity of the line to self-reflexively ask what it means to create a painting. Attempting to create a painting that is reduced down to its most essential parts, works such as *Untitled* explore how these elements of line and color can transcend subject matter to evoke a sense of complete freedom, for the marks left on the canvas are simultaneously gestural and precise, intimate yet sweeping. Förg's lack of interest in conceptual understandings of a painting, therefore, give way to a more intuitive approach to art making.

This idea can be found throughout Förg's oeuvre, but becomes particularly apparent in the series from the last handful of years of his life. *Untitled* belongs to a series known as the *Grid Paintings*, a group of works begun in the early 1990s defined by the matrices of quick, colorful strokes. These themselves were a transformation and continuation of his *Fenster-Aquarelle*, or *Window Watercolors*, that took the art historical motif of the window that was first popularized as a metaphor for the illusionary and flat picture plane during the Renaissance, and explored how it could be used as a vehicle for abstraction and the painterly act itself. Distinctly aware of his art historical predecessors, Förg's *Grid Paintings* both continue this lineage while engendering an entirely new way of both making and seeing.

SKARSTEDT



Chantal Joffe

Coming Downstairs

2024

oil on canvas

48 x 24 inches

122 x 61 cm

signed, titled and dated *Chantal Joffe*

Coming Downstairs 2024 (on the stretcher)

(Inv #9500)



Coming Downstairs belongs to a new body of work by the painter Chantal Joffe that explores the dueling sides of the coin that is grief. Having lost both of her parents and her brother-in-law around the same time her daughter, Esme, left for college, Joffe was surrounded by a chasm of loss that could only be processed through painting. The self-portraits of this series exemplify the quiet moments of sorrow that come with mourning. Here, Joffe walks down her stairs holding a striped blanket that mimics the stripes of her night clothes. It's a poignant yet familiar scene: after a night of tossing and turning, one finally retreats down to the couch in a feeble attempt to not wake their partner, or to maybe, finally get some sleep with a new change of scenery.

At the same time, the act of painting works such as *Coming Downstairs* was marked by a heightened state of inspiration, with paintings flowing out of her one by one in rapid succession—a state so powerful and exciting, she wished it would never end. And indeed, there is a lusciousness in the way Joffe paints a work like *Coming Downstairs* that illustrates a sheer joy in the act of painting, and subsequently, the little moments of life.

SKARSTEDT



Chantal Joffe

In the Bath

2023

watercolor on paper

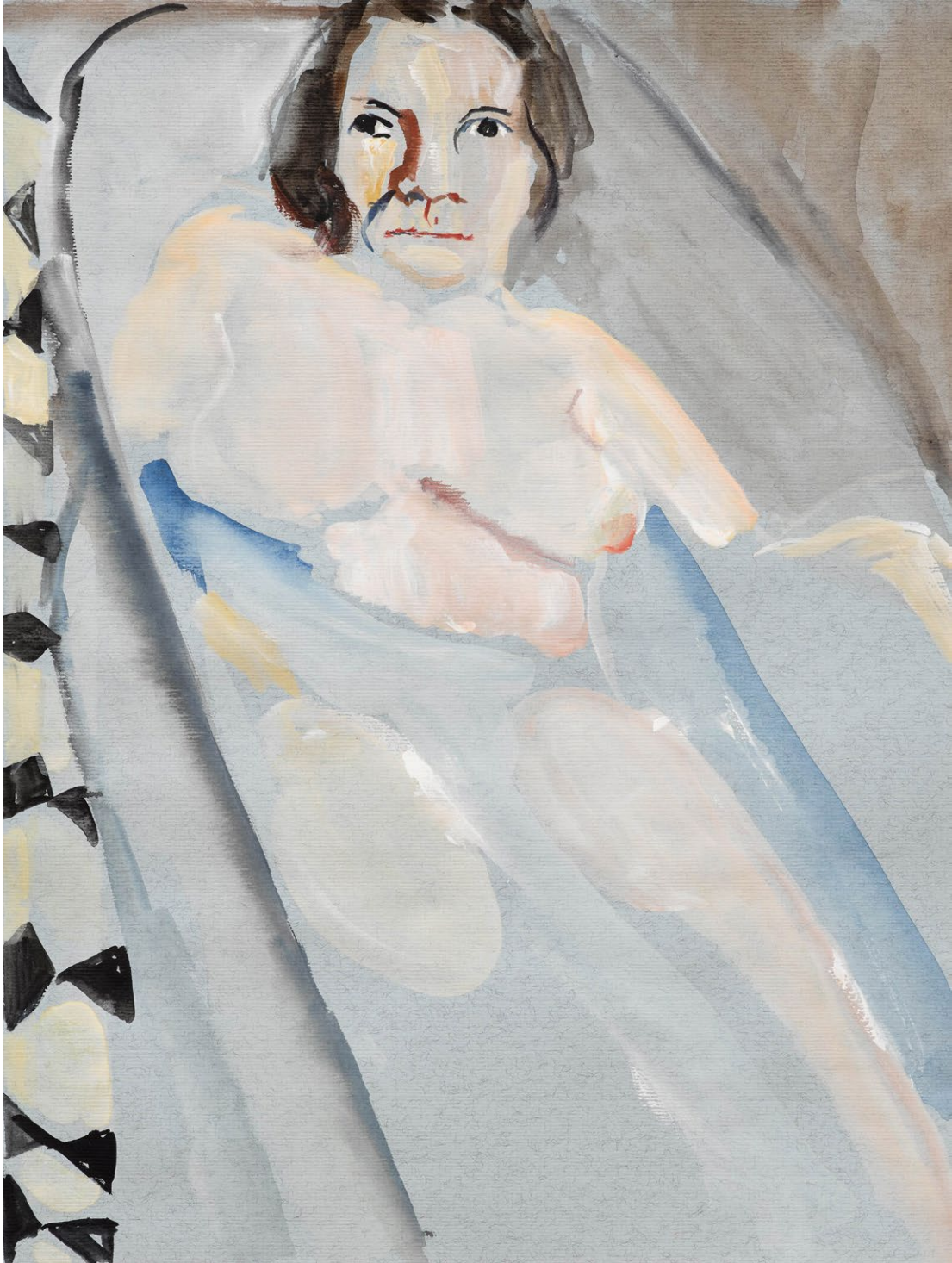
11 3/4 x 15 5/8 inches

29.8 x 39.7 cm

signed and dated *Chantal Joffe 2023* (on the reverse)

(Inv #9637)

SKARSTEDT



Chantal Joffe

Self-Portrait in the Bath, Penzance 2

2023

watercolor on paper

15 5/8 x 11 3/4 inches

39.7 x 29.8 cm

signed and dated *Chantal Joffe 2023* (on the reverse)

(Inv #9635)

SKARSTEDT



Chantal Joffe

Self-Portrait in the Bath, Penzance 3

2023

watercolor on paper

15 5/8 x 11 3/4 inches

39.7 x 29.8 cm

signed and dated *Chantal Joffe 2023* (on the reverse)

(Inv #9636)

SKARSTEDT



Hans Josephsohn

Untitled

2003-2005

brass

26 3/4 x 17 3/4 x 14 3/16 inches

68 x 45 x 36 cm

Edition 1 of 6, with 2 AP

signed, dated and numbered *JOS 2003/05 1/6* (on the bottom right)

(Inv #9285.1)



Hans Josephsohn captures the essence of the human figure through his unwavering dedication to the medium of sculpture. The present work, *Untitled*, is a superb example from the artist's oeuvre illustrating his iconic 'head' motif with a characteristic textured surface. Josephsohn worked exclusively in plaster from 1940 which allowed him to develop an image over a longer period. The plaster models are subsequently cast in brass- the artist's medium of choice – imbuing his work with an irrefutable permanence. Using fresh plaster in combination with hardened plaster gave his works a cubist twist whilst reducing the figure down to its simplest form. Even amidst his most extreme reductions, Josephsohn pays attention to the model and will note subtle characteristics such as the parting of the hair.

Figuration is a subject as old as art itself, and indeed, Josephsohn was inspired by ancient influences from Greek, Egyptian, and Assyrian sculpture. The present work is frontally orientated with symmetrical features reminiscent of Egyptian sculpture. Josephsohn spent much of his life consciously and unconsciously attempting to excavate the core of humanity. He was profoundly impacted by the turmoil in Europe in the 1930s, fleeing Königsberg (Kaliningrad) and then Italy before he settled in Switzerland in 1938. In turn, he sought refuge in the human figure and its enduring existence. As the artist's biographer, Gerhard Mack, aptly notes, "To Hans Josephsohn, human beings are bodies; everything is expressed in this body—thoughts and feelings, desires and anxieties, stories and expectations. There is nothing beyond this tangible human body and, most of all, there is no truth outside of it...It was always the body that had to bear and was marked by the consequences of this mindlessness. The body bore its injuries and burdens, its movements and fault lines."¹

Josephsohn found widespread acclaim and recognition in his latter years when Günther Förg convinced curator Rudi Fuchs to give Josephsohn a solo exhibition at the Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam in 2002. This led to renewed interest in Josephsohn's work. His work is held in the public collections of Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam; Kunsthaus Zurich; Neue Nationalgalerie, Berlin and MMK Museum für Moderne Kunst, Frankfurt to name but a few.

¹ G. Mack, *Hans Josephsohn*, Verlag Scheidegger & Spies, Zurich, 2005, pp. 13-14

SKARSTEDT



KAWS

4.8

2024

spray paint and acrylic on canvas

82 x 65 inches

208.3 x 165.1 cm

signed and dated *KAWS*, 24 (on the reverse)

(Inv #9562)



The first in a new body of work, *4.8* marks a turning point in KAWS's oeuvre. A skeletal COMPANION-like figure—first introduced in the game *Fortnite*—appears to lose all of his limbs, while the hands of a clearly living CHUM poke out from all corners of the canvas, all revealed to the viewer through a fuzzy ground that looks like television static. This is deceptive on multiple fronts. For one, what looks like it should be incredibly textured is actually a completely flat surface. For another, what looks like it should be made through some combination of spray can and air brush is actually produced entirely by hand, through a process of taking empty spray cans, a brush, and a stick, and laboriously stippling the paint onto the canvas. Although honed while making his recent series of paintings of cereal boxes, this technique evokes the collaboration between KAWS and Barry McGee in the 1990s, where the former would lay an image down in spray paint and then the two would draw over that initial form.

In this way, *4.8* both nods to new ideas and aesthetic innovations while continuing to harken back to the artist's roots as a street artist and his desire to use his motifs in many shapes and contexts. The title references the 4.8-magnitude earthquake that shook New York and its surrounding areas in April of this year, an unusual and startling event that occurred while the artist was in the midst of making this piece.

SKARSTEDT



KAWS

HIDDEN INTENT

2023

acrylic on canvas

86 x 72 inches

218.4 x 182.9 cm

signed and dated *KAWS,,23* (on the reverse)

(Inv #9331)



HIDDEN INTENT (2023) belongs to a series of fourteen paintings that see the artist's iconic character CHUM seemingly trapped behind highly saturated and chaotically placed bars, which act as an inward, meditative reflection on the transient nature of time. The claustrophobia induced by the composition points to the idea that time can feel exceptionally constricting and isolating. Time's seemingly illusionistic nature binds us to a sense of reality, and yet it is a device of our own making. It feels linear and fixed, but, in reality, it is quite cyclical and malleable. At the same time, the heightened frenzy brought on by the way these barriers shoot out in all directions speaks to a kind of future we might find ourselves entering.

Yet, while doubt persists in this work, KAWS ultimately leaves his audience with a palpable optimism for the future. Even with his X'd-out eyes, CHUM appears hopeful, looking to us as if we are here to save him. Whether through his choice of vivid colors or this sense of salvation, it becomes clear that not all hope is lost. By appropriating and modulating certain well-known cultural symbols and placing them in absurd scenarios, KAWS alludes to these existential ideas in more poignant ways that manages to capture what it is to exist as humans, with all the good and the bad on full display.

SKARSTEDT



Martin Kippenberger

Untitled from the Series *"Invention of a Joke"*

1993

oil on canvas

94 1/2 x 78 3/4 inches

240 x 200 cm

(Inv #6000)



Executed in 1993, this work belongs to Martin Kippenberger's series *Invention of a Joke* produced ahead of the artist's major exhibition *Candidature* for a retrospective at the Centre Pompidou, Paris in the Summer of 1993. The series consisted of nine equal-sized canvases painted from smaller templates drawn on hotel stationery. As curator Roberto Ohrt later recalled, "The show occupied three halls. The first section was Paris, connected to his personal history when he was living there in the early 1980s. The second was about the deconstruction of painting, which included his painting series *Invention of a Joke* – nine canvases that you couldn't piece together. The third was Martin's collection of erotica that consisted of works by friends. Running through all three rooms was this large display cabinet packed with all of his books and printed material. The case went through one of the walls and really formed the spine of the show. The mass of material on display was confusing, and purposefully so. He did everything he could to divert, confuse and make it difficult to decode his work. This was part of the joke."

The subject matter of the paintings draws on a macabre joke from the series *The History of Practical Jokes* by E.Z. Smith (1950), which Kippenberger discovered from a reproduction on a postcard. The image depicts a military incident set in Cuba in 1889 during the Spanish-American war, in which a member of one of American regiment is disfigured by an exploding cigar. Dividing the original image into sections, Kippenberger used the fragments to create the nine paintings in the series, constructing a metaphor on the deconstruction of painting as a medium. Presenting elements of architectural space, the composition plays with depth and perspective, conjuring a sense of objects in flux. Featuring an outline of a hand, *Untitled (from the series Erfindung eines Witzes [Invention of a Joke])* also references Kippenberger's lauded *Hand-Painted Pictures* series completed one year earlier in 1992.

Another painting from this series is in the collection of the Museum Boymans-van Beuningen, Rotterdam.

SKARSTEDT



Jeff Koons

Hot Dog

2002

oil on canvas

108 x 84 inches

274.3 x 213.4 cm

signed and dated *J Koons '02* (on the overlap)

(Inv #9375)



A frenetic amalgamation of unabashed sensuality and rapture, *Hot Dog* (2002) is an alluring evocation of Pop culture, childhood nostalgia and quintessential Americana. Belonging to the *Easyfun-Ethereal* series, Koons weaves an exuberant tapestry of absurd imagery—such as a ham and cheese sandwich, an inflatable pool toy, or the revealing lower half of a swimsuit model—into a kaleidoscopic tableau of excess. The title plays on the scantily dressed inflatable cartoon dog and its word association with the beloved American snack, a hot dog. *Hot Dog* seamlessly interlaces humour and sensuality returning to the territory of *Made in Heaven* (1989- 1991) and exudes debauchery and eroticism, recalling the unrestrained, ornate compositions from the Baroque period. The psycho-sexual landscapes of the *Easyfun-Ethereal* series overwhelm the senses with saturated colours and chaotic compositions infusing art history with the vernacular of American life.

Revealing a modern masterpiece, *Hot Dog* blends conceptual depth with visual impact while maintaining accessibility and photorealistic precision. Influenced profoundly by the Surrealist master, Salvador Dali, Koons combines seemingly random objects like inflatable pool toys with deli sandwiches to an absurd effect. The juxtaposition of two apparently disparate entities to create an entirely novel object is a central tenet of Surrealism. Thus, *Hot Dog* operates as a Surreal dreamscape, presenting multiple aspects of the modern American's subconscious in a tantalisingly nightmarish composition.

The *Easyfun-Ethereal* series was born out of a commission by the Deutsche Guggenheim, Berlin in 2000, following the enthusiastic public reception to Koons's ultra-reflective sculpture *Balloon Flower (Blue)* (1995-2000) installed in Potsdamer Platz the year before. Seven mural-sized paintings were commissioned by the museum, expanding to twenty-four by 2002. As exemplified in the present work, Koons applies the same exacting perfectionism to his paintings as he does to his towering aluminium and stainless-steel sculptures of his earlier *Celebration* series, many of which similarly feature inflatable animal-shaped pool floats such as swans, monkeys, and dogs. Nevertheless, *Easyfun-Ethereal* allowed for a more spontaneous creative process inherent to the compositional devices used by Koons and his assistants. Koons first trawls through glossy magazines and his personal photos before digitally manipulating and collaging the images in Photoshop. He then transfers this new image onto canvas through the traditional medium of oil paint.

SKARSTEDT



Juan Muñoz

Walking with a pointing stick

2001

bronze with gray patina

57 1/8 x 55 1/8 x 21 3/4 inches

145.1 x 140 x 55.2 cm

Edition 1 of 2, with 1 AP

signed, numbered, and stamped with the foundry mark
"JUAN MUNOZ 1/2 Schmake Düsseldorf" (back left leg)

(Inv #6216.1)



Installation view, Skarstedt, Paris, *Juan Muñoz: Coming Towards*, March 21 – April 27, 2024.

Space takes on an existential quality in *Walking with a pointing stick* (2001). Part of a series of Chinese figures Muñoz started in the 1990s, the man's face elicits a self-awareness in the viewer as they contemplate his tenderly frozen expression. Stuck in mid-laugh, as many of his figures are, this man distances himself from the viewer instead of drawing them in closer. The stick serves to guide the viewer around the sculpture, controlling the way it is seen and experienced. He once said in an interview: "I am basically against interactive approaches to modern art. The idea of touching art seems to me completely wrong. For me, a good sleight-of-hand trick requires that you have the spectator in front of you. He cannot be behind you because he will see the trick. I do want the spectators to move in a certain direction, but that's so that the trick will be effective and so that the spectator can see the wonder of it and not get involved with the mechanisms."¹

Muñoz consciously evokes a feeling of "otherness" throughout this series, to, in his words, "behave as a mirror that cannot reflect."² In presenting an archetype more than an individualized figure, *Walking with a pointing stick* allows the audience to look, but not see. Furthermore, he is imbued with a tension between movement and stasis: the man is walking, and yet he has no feet, preventing him from going anywhere.

1. Juan Muñoz quoted in Paul Schimmel, "An Interview with Juan Muñoz," in *Juan Muñoz* (Washington D.C.: Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden, 2001), 146.

2 Ibid., 150.

SKARSTEDT



Albert Oehlen

Freier Stress

1996

oil on linen

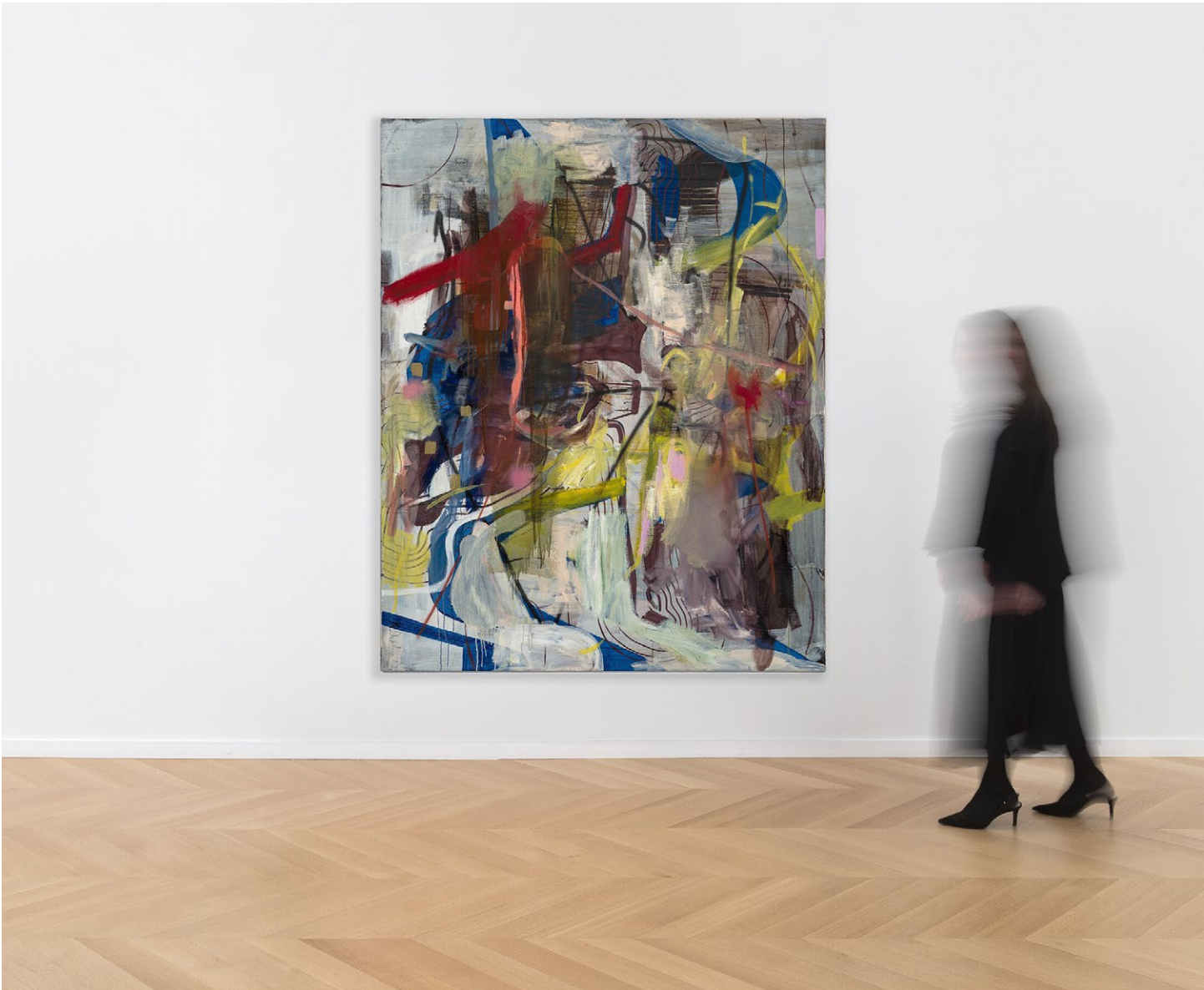
78 3/4 x 63 inches

200 x 160 cm

signed *A. Oehlen* (lower left); signed again, titled, dated, and inscribed

35 200 x 160 "Freier Stress" A. Oehlen 96 (on the reverse)

(Inv #9579)



In playing with depth and superficiality, abstraction and representation, Albert Oehlen's work exposes the inherent limitations of them all, simultaneously honoring and critiquing artistic tradition. Oehlen doesn't use paint simply to convey a message, although he does, but to explore the medium's capacities. With a blend of wit and apathy, Oehlen's work offers commentary on prevailing art world values and conventional notions of pictorial representation.

Oehlen first made a formidable reputation for himself in the 1980s as one of the leading "bad boys" in contemporary art. This use of the word "bad" spoke both to his persona, but also to the work itself. Alongside artists such as Martin Kippenberger and Georg Harold, Oehlen was curious about the prevailing theory of painting's "failure," and aimed to explore this in more depth. To do so was to not only make paintings, but to make paintings that were perceived as technically "bad." In breaking the rules of painterly traditions, Oehlen has made a comprehensive oeuvre off of both revealing and pushing past the perceived limits of abstraction and paint itself.

Despite the ever-present sense of humor in Oehlen's work, his practice engages seriously with the history of art, even if this engagement's purpose is to undermine this history's predetermined hierarchies. Referring to his work as "post-non-representational," Oehlen strives to build contemporary meaning for art in a postmodern era.

SKARSTEDT



Albert Oehlen

Untitled

1989

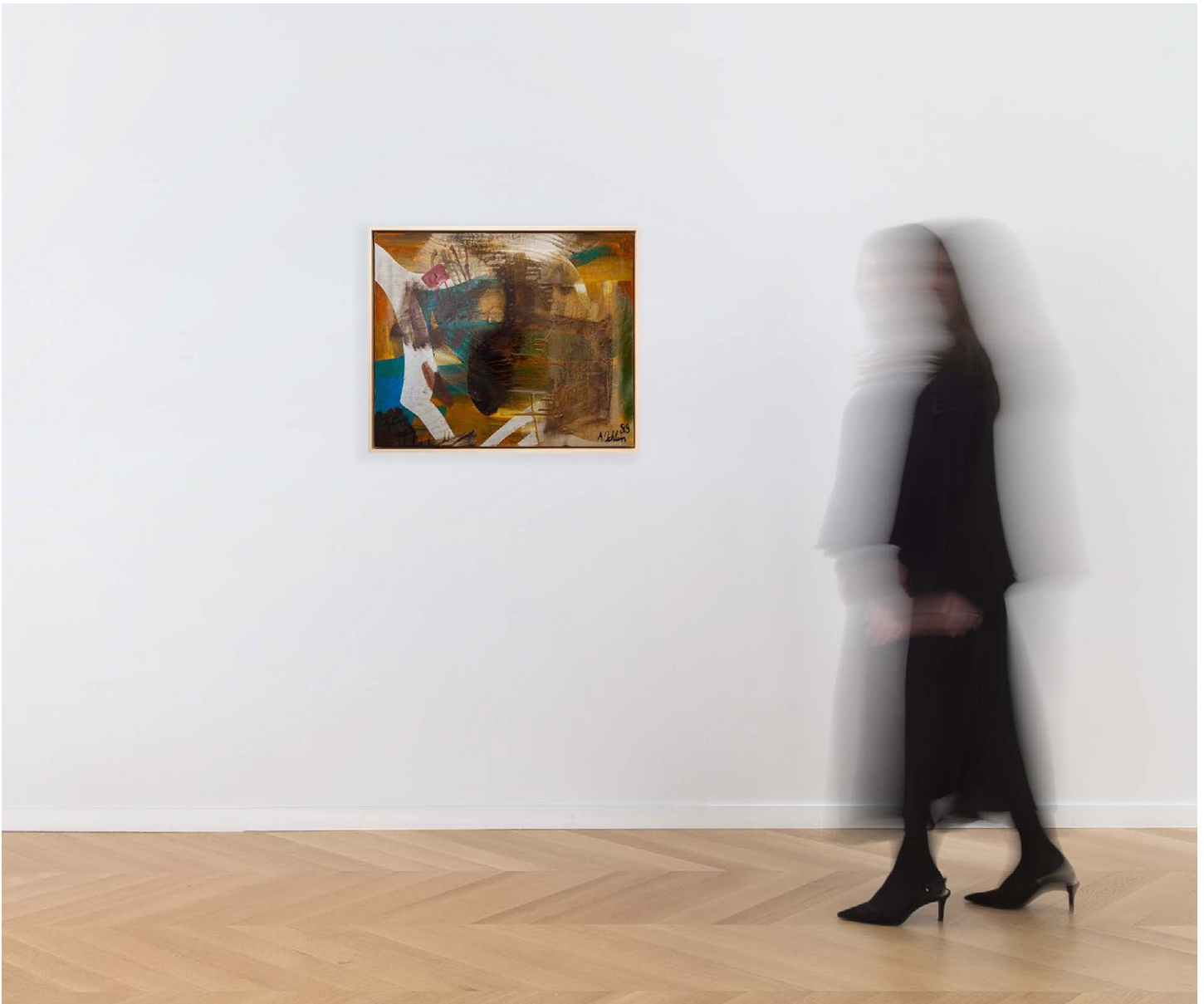
oil and resin on canvas

23 3/4 x 28 7/8 inches

60.3 x 73.3 cm

signed and dated *A. Oehlen 89* (lower right)

(Inv #7559)



“I require of myself that my paintings be comprehensible...I’m interested in very simple things. In the last few years, I’ve been particularly concerned with evidence – with not seeing anything in the painting other than what’s actually there. Nothing is codified – a mess is just a mess. I want an art where you see how it’s made, not what the artist intended, or what the work means, but what has been made, the traces of production.”¹

In the late 1980s, Oehlen began to challenge the expectations of conventional abstract art in works he deemed “post-non-figurative.” Influenced by the patterned surfaces of his teacher, Sigmar Polke, as well as Abstract Expressionists such as Willem de Kooning, Oehlen’s abstract works of this period are at once a nod to and a refutation of these predecessors. Throughout his career, Oehlen has strongly critiqued the theory of painting by eschewing its recognizable forms and subjects in favor of a volatile and anti-artistic style.

In *Untitled*, viewers are lured into the composition by lively abstract shapes sandwiched between an ochre backdrop and a muddy central shape that radiates out across the canvas. In a style reminiscent of his aforementioned inspirations, Oehlen plays with the boundaries of the canvas’ space and surface, not only through the execution of competing elements, but also through the variation of geometric perspective.

1 Albert Oehlen quoted in J. Kelsey, “Collage and Program: Rise of the Readymetal Maidens,” *Parkett* no. 70 (May 2007): 51.

SKARSTEDT



Marco Pariani

Cherubs Holding a Painting

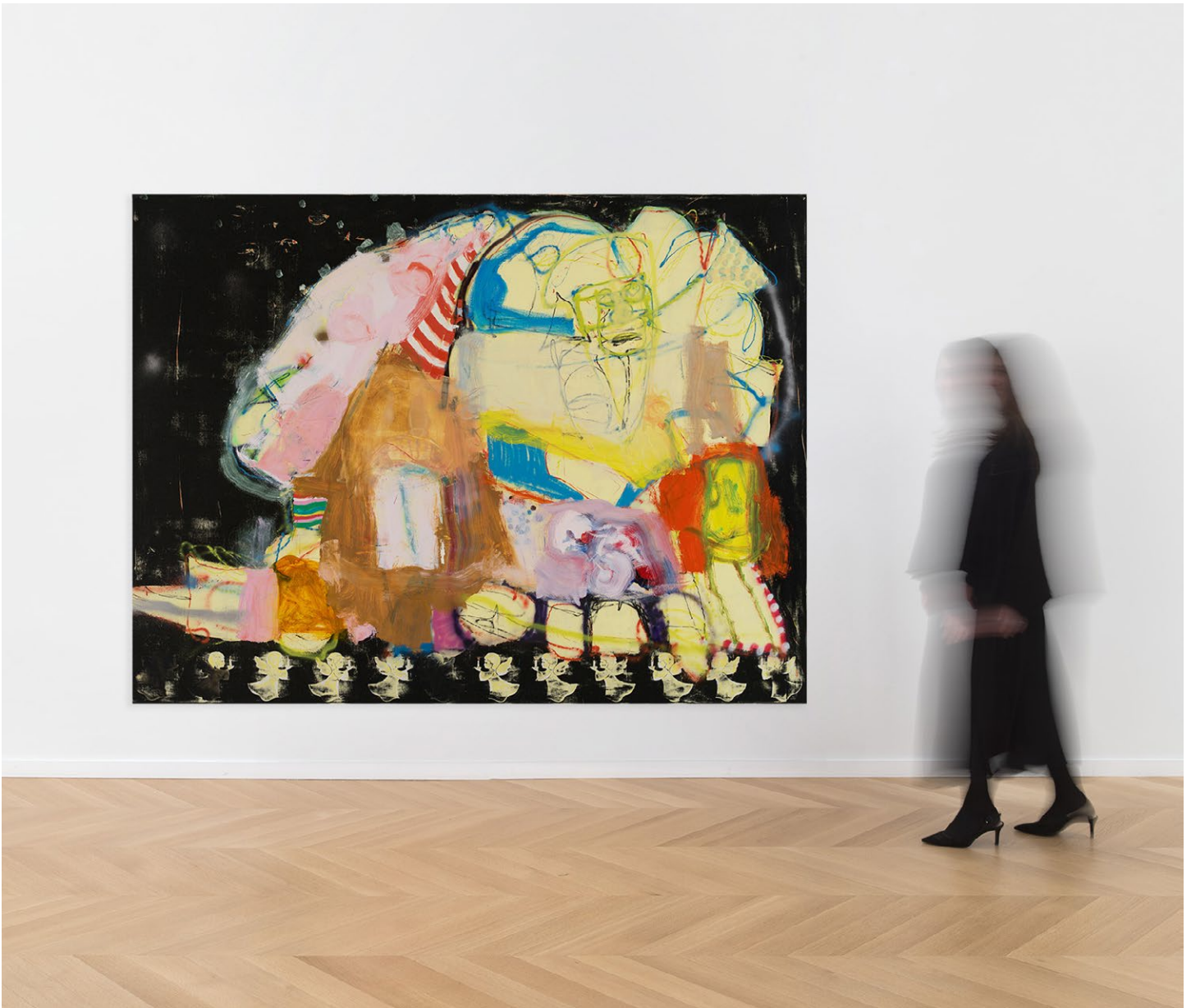
2024

oil, acrylic, alkyd resin and spray paint on linen

72 x 96 inches

182.9 x 243.8 cm

(Inv #9596)



In Marco Pariani's practice, humorous or absurd images are abstracted to the point of near total collapse, and yet the feeling of strangeness remains. In some instances, such as the present work, Pariani leaves the source image just clear enough that one can understand the crux of this bizarreness. Here, a frieze of sweet floating angels flit underneath a large of mass of gestural marks applied to the canvas with a wide array of techniques, tools, and media, such as squeegees, spray paint, and patterned paint rollers. A face is just visible coming out of the accumulation of pigment, ghostly yet stately. The imagery and subsequent title speak not only to the vast landscape of art history, particularly the religious imagery of the Renaissance, but is a roundabout continuation of Pariani's 2022 series of *Inflatables* that provided a look into the humor of the decidedly over-the-top commercial ways we celebrate religious holidays.

SKARSTEDT



Pablo Picasso

Trois Nus

26 May 1964

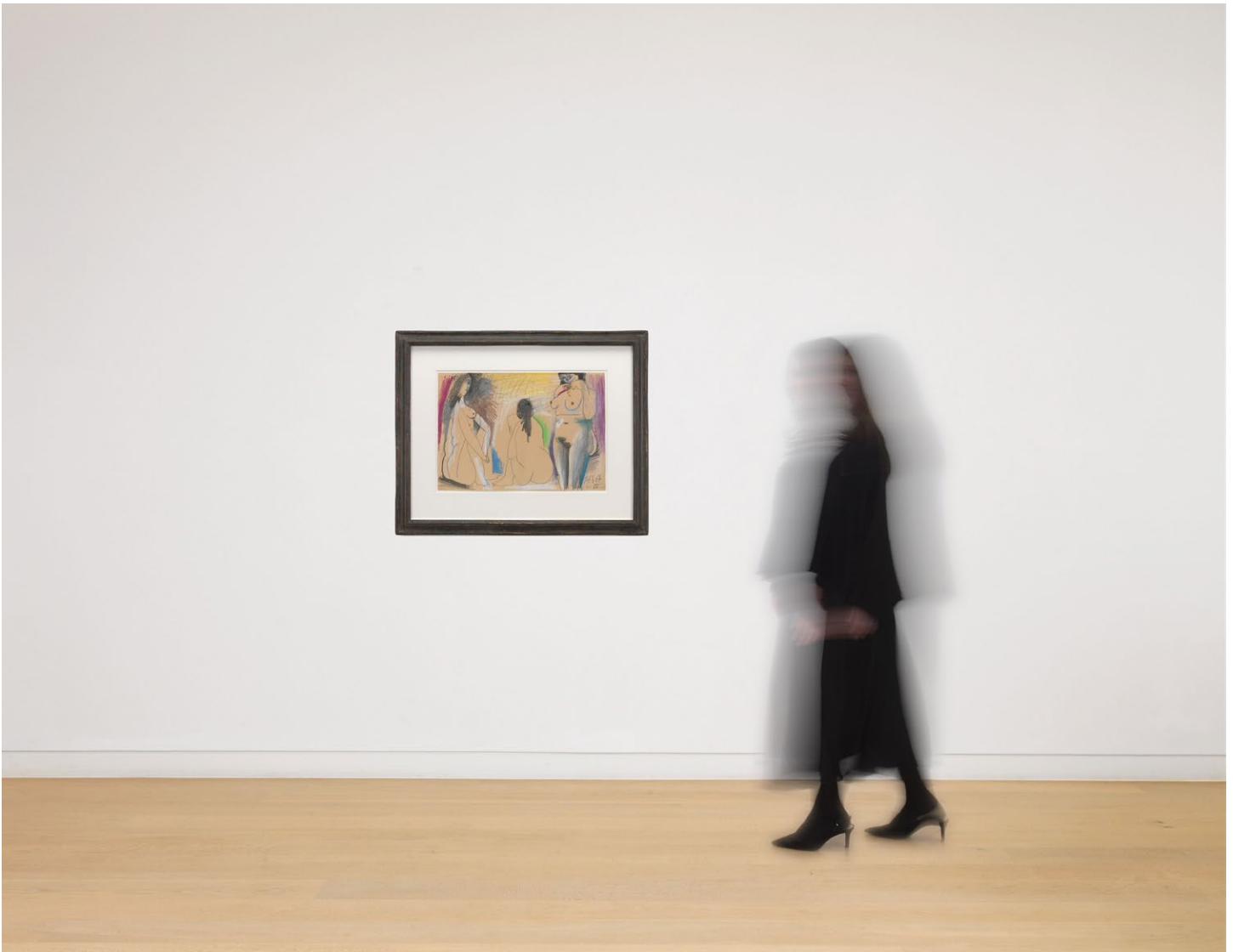
pencil and crayon on paper

20 3/4 x 29 1/4 inches

52.7 x 74.3 cm

signed, dated and numbered 26.5.64 Picasso III (lower right)

(Inv #9638)



As was the case for many of the female figures Picasso depicted at the end of his career, the women in this composition, with their full dark hair and large eyes, bear a striking resemblance to the artist's wife Jacqueline. Although Picasso never had Jacqueline pose for him in his studio, her image dominated the artist's work throughout the final decades of his life. Art historian Estrella de Diego describes the entrance of Jacqueline Roque into the life and work of the artist:

Jacqueline appeared at a perfect moment in the life of Picasso, an older man who was beginning to be overwhelmed by many things, from his family life to his success, as [Roland] Penrose explained. And as a result of a casual encounter, which recalls that between Rossetti and Elizabeth Siddal, a shop assistant before she posed for the English artist, Jacqueline came to embody – from the abstract to the concrete, from portraits to representations of the essence of woman – each and every one of the characters Picasso needed, as he had always done in the past, to activate the pictorial formulae that corresponded to his enduring obsessions, even including a certain unfashionable orientalism. And she ended up being, suddenly, the model, that recurrent character in Picasso's painting ever since *Les Femmes d'Alger*; bodies on the stage... where the gaze of the voyeur can finally be at ease: everything is there, right there.¹

¹ E. de Diego, 'Self-Portrait of the Artist with Model Nearby', *Picasso, Musas y Modelos*, exh. cat., Málaga, Museo Picasso, 2006- 2007, p. 30.

SKARSTEDT



Richard Prince

Untitled (Cowboy)

1980–1984

Ektacolor photograph

45 x 30 inches

114.3 x 76.2 cm

AP 1/1, from an edition of 2

signed, numbered and dated (on the reverse)

(Inv #9447)



“I started taking pictures of the cowboys. You don’t see them out in public anymore – you can’t ride down a highway and see them on a billboard. But at Time Life, I was working with seven or eight magazines, and Marlboro had ads in almost all of them. Every week, I’d see one and be like, ‘Oh, that’s mine. Thank you.’ It’s sort of like beachcombing”.¹

Richard Prince’s *Cowboys* have grown to become one of the artist’s most celebrated series. *Untitled (Cowboy)* reaches the apex of Prince’s deconstruction of American archetypes, one which, even contemporaneous to the work’s creation, glorified an antiquated way of life. The mythic cowboy mirrored an identity fixated on freedom, masculinity, and the strength to wield the Wild West – a national identity and media culture questioned by Prince and the disillusioned, image-saturated artists of the Pictures Generation. With the long-running Marlboro Man leading the cigarette company’s ad campaigns, Prince’s series began in the 1980s with crops and blurs of men staged in moments of action and rest, the focus of his appropriated images on the Stetson clad cowboy.

Here, a man readies his lasso, hoisting the rope up in the air as he rides through the landscape on his noble steed. The idolized, but fictitious frontiersman reveals the artifice nestled in the romanticism of the landscape – a facsimile of the psychological machinations dictating popular culture. Prince’s layered subversion of this natural splendor and mythic nostalgia – of both the cowboy and his terrain – reproach the romanticized patriotism and the tumultuous politics of climate change in the new millennium.

1. R. Prince quoted in “Artist: Richard Prince” *New York Magazine*, 2005

SKARSTEDT



Thomas Schütte

Wichte

2006

bronze with stainless steel base

13 3/4 x 15 3/4 x 13 3/4 inches

34.9 x 40 x 34.9 cm

This work is from an edition of six plus two artist's proofs,
each with a unique patina

(Inv #9580)



Wichte, German for “imps,” belongs to a series of twelve sculpted heads of the same name, characterized by rough, occasionally deformed or caricatured features. Cast in bronze and each with their own unique patinas, these busts are similar in their visage to Schütte’s earlier *United Enemies* series from the 1990s.

Schütte’s interest in sculpted heads and busts dates as far back as the mid-1980s, when he made his first forays into polychrome wood and plaster casts. This thematic pursuit is part of what has brought Schütte to prominence as one of the main revivors of figurative sculpture, favoring a return to expressionism, narrative, allegory, and the human form over conceptual and abstract objects.

Each head in the series encapsulates its own distinct emotion, presenting a spectrum of psychological states, or “grammar of the character,” as Schütte puts it. Here seen as a kind of grumpy and standoffish man, these visages evoke the timeless archetypes found in the annals of art history, such as the busts of Roman emperors or the caricatures of Honoré Daumier.

Said to have each been individually sculpted in the span of an hour, *Wichte* lacks discernable eyes, instead having only holes where eyes should be, thereby amplifying their mockery of power and all it embodies. Yet, this character seeks neither homage nor submission, instead inviting visitors to gaze upon them amusedly or sympathetically.

SKARSTEDT



Andy Warhol

Hammer and Sickle

1976

acrylic and silkscreen ink on linen

72 x 86 inches

182.9 x 218.4 cm

signed *Andy Warhol* (on the overlap)

(Inv #8942)



Executed in 1976, Andy Warhol's *Hammer and Sickle* series belongs to a significant period in his work, characterized by its overt politicism and boundary-pushing subject matter. Known for his ability to capture the essence of popular culture and social trends, Warhol's series depicts the iconic symbols of the Soviet Union in a minimalist yet provocative style. The series followed his equally provocative portraits of Mao Zedong.

Hammer and Sickle, with its stark composition and inverted symbolism, challenges conventional notions of power and ideology. Departing from the portraits of the elite that dominated much of the early 1970s, Warhol turned his attention to politically charged imagery, reflecting the tensions of the Cold War era. The series transformed the familiar symbols into tangible objects, emphasizing their materiality and inviting viewers to reconsider their meaning.

Inspired by his travels to politically divided Italy, Warhol found himself drawn to the ubiquitous presence of communist iconography. This experience prompted him to explore themes of political affiliation and society norms. Through works like *Hammer and Sickle*, Warhol blurs the lines between high and low culture. The color palette of the series remains true to its subject, with dark hues and bold reds evoking the spirit of communism. Yet, Warhol's treatment of these symbols transcends mere representation, offering a commentary on the nature of power and propaganda. In treating this motif the same way he would treat a can of Campbell's soup, Warhol acknowledges that politically imagery is also mass-produced imagery, prompting us to consider how we come to believe what we believe.

SKARSTEDT



Andy Warhol

Man Ray

May - June 1974

acrylic and silkscreen ink on linen

13 x 13 inches

33 x 33 cm

signed and dated *Andy Warhol 74* (on the reverse);

numbered *687/2* (on the stretcher)

(Inv #9268)



Fig 1. Polaroid of Man Ray, 1973.



Fig 2. Polaroid of Andy Warhol and May Ray, 1973.

Executed in 1974, several years before Man Ray's death, this portrait by Andy Warhol (1928-1987) presents the sitter seemingly unaffected by time, his confident expression underpinned by the energetic brushwork. This iconic image is a direct reference to the Polaroid taken by Warhol in 1973 (Fig.1) where he captured this endearing moment. Always in control, he instructed Man Ray to "hold the cigarette in his mouth, take off his glasses, and keep his hands away from his face."¹ The meeting of these two masterminds was orchestrated by by Turin based dealer, Giovanni Anselmino in Paris and captured via one of Warhol's favourite mediums, a Polaroid. (Fig. 2).

The present work is built up from a black silkscreen image that was finished with salmon, bubble-gum pink, and sky-blue acrylic paint. Thick, sweeping brushstrokes prevail across the canvas accented by specks of blue towards the centre, revealing the artist's hand. The worked surface of the painting points to Warhol's extended engagement with his subject and projects the sense of respect one does not feel in the images of his contemporaries. As Warhol's catalogue raisonné notes, "Warhol's portraits of Man Ray show just how far he was willing to push painterliness, how freestyle the brush could become in his hands."²

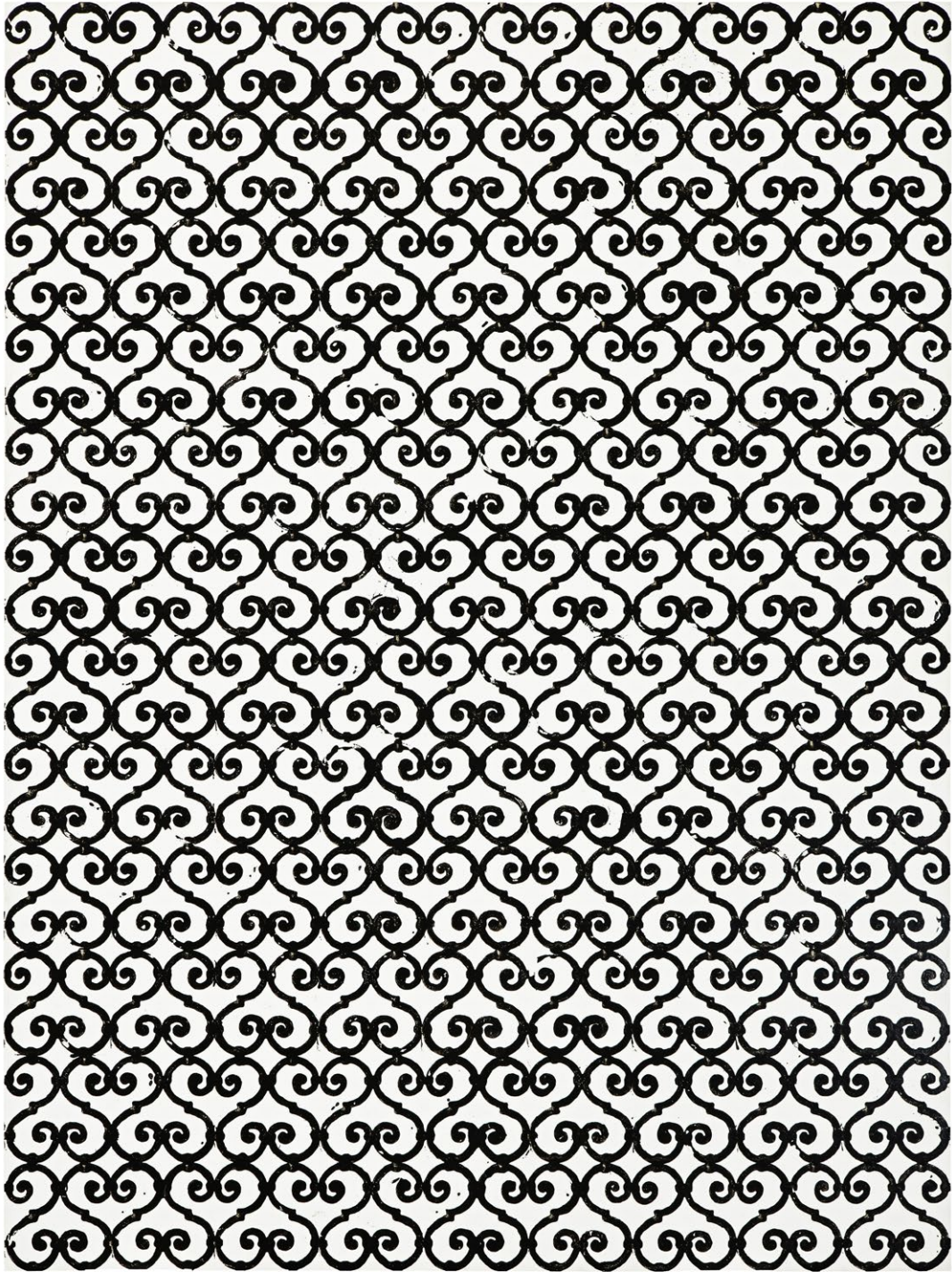
Whilst Warhol had begun accepting commissioned portraits of wealthy and celebrity sitters in the early 1970s, the present work was created from pure admiration. As a central figure in Dada and Surrealist movements, Man Ray holds a significant position in the Modern art historical canon. Warhol owned several of his photographs, paintings, and early books during his lifetime. He even noted in his diary that, while in Rome in 1977, he stayed in the same hotel suite as Man Ray had before his death.³ A rich art historical dialogue exists between the two pioneering artists. Man Ray similarly executed portraits of celebrities contemporary to his lifetime. These celebrity portraits include actress Ada Garner, photographer Lee Miller, and artist Pablo Picasso. A diptych of Warhol's 1974 Man Ray paintings is part of the joint permanent collection of the Tate and National Galleries Scotland.

1 K. Goldsmith, R. Wolf and W. Koestenbaum, *I'll Be Your Mirror: The Selected Andy Warhol Interviews: 1962-1987*, New York 2004, p. 229-32.

2 Neil Printz and Sally King-Nero, eds., *The Andy Warhol Raisonné: Paintings and Sculptures 1970-1974*, Vol. 3, New York 2010, p. 374.

3 P. Hackett, eds. *The Andy Warhol Diaries*, Penguin Books, Ltd., London, 2010, p. 25.

SKARSTEDT



Christopher Wool

Untitled

1988

enamel and flashe on aluminum

96 x 72 inches

243.8 x 182.9 cm

signed, dated and inscribed *Wool 1988 P70* (on the reverse)

(Inv #7839)

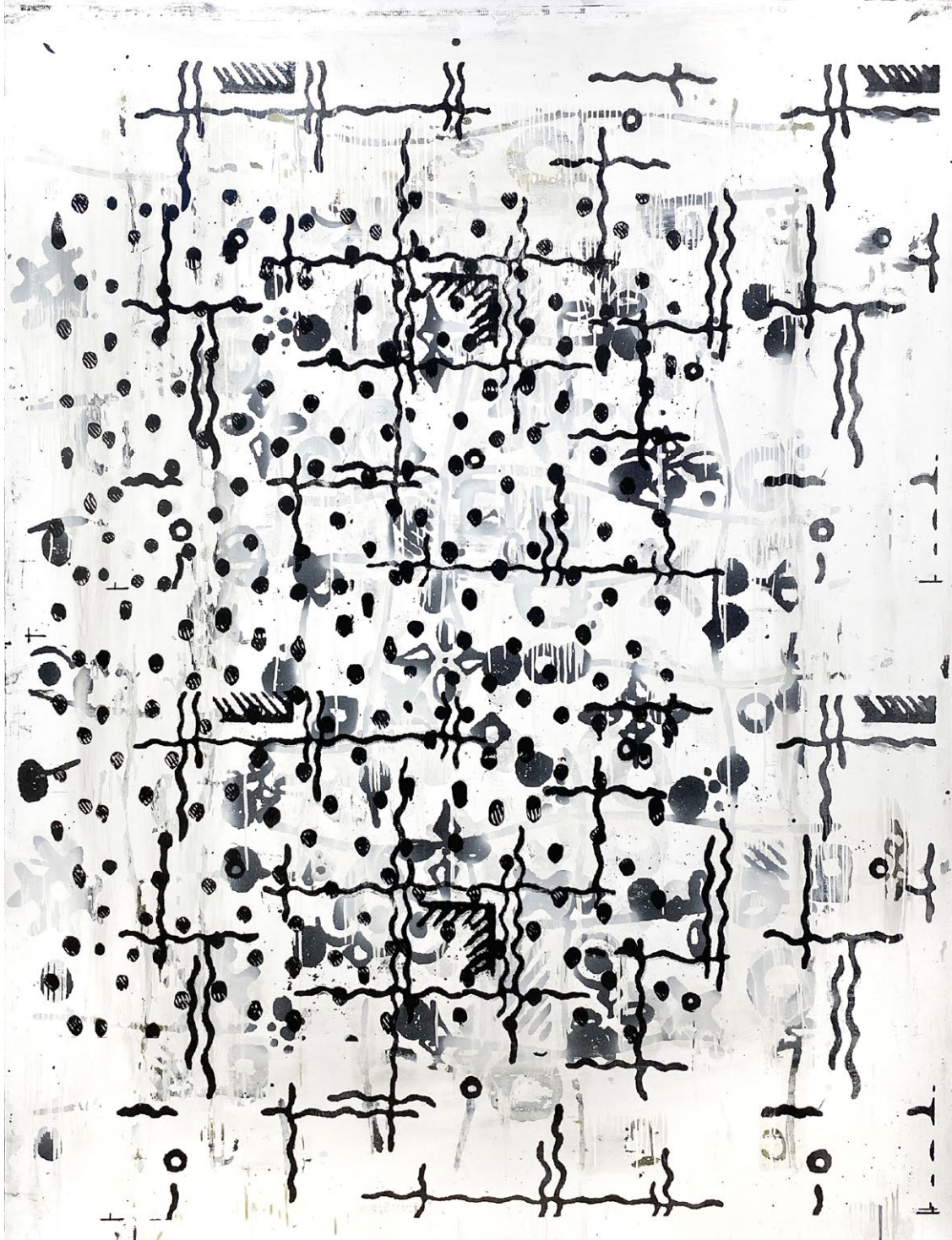


Part of Wool's series of *Pattern Paintings*, the present work demonstrates an early example of Wool's continued explorations into the use of mechanical, cipher-like paint applications as a means to conflate art historical tradition with countercultural influences. In the late 1980s, Wool entered the stairwell of his New York City apartment building to find a workman applying patterned embellishments to the shared spaces of the building with wallpaper rollers. Fascinated by the dexterity of lining up the patterns successfully and inspired by the readymade and accessible nature of a patterned paint roller, Wool embarked on a series that would align him not only with Duchamp, the father of the readymade, but with the Pop sensibility of Andy Warhol and his silkscreens. Like Warhol's silkscreened images of celebrities and quotidian Americana, Wool's patterned paintings toe the line between mechanical reproduction, mass consumption, and painterly gesture. While the motif on the roller may be consistent, its application onto the canvas reveals the hand of the artist through subtle drips of paint and differences in line thickness.

These subtle differentiations enhance the power of *Untitled*, and the *Pattern Paintings* more generally, as they paradoxically and frustratingly reveal the inherent lack of meaning within the work. As John Caldwell notes, "Since the repeated pattern has no inherent meaning and no strong association, we tend to view its variation largely in terms of abstraction, expecting to find in the changes of the pattern some of the meaning we associate with traditional abstract painting."¹ Yet, when it becomes clear through further looking that no such meaning exists, the viewer is left to ponder their expectations and associations for themselves—a bold and powerful use of painting.

¹ John Caldwell, "New Work: Christopher Wool," in Christopher Wool (San Francisco: San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, 1998), 185.

SKARSTEDT



Christopher Wool

Untitled (P258)

1997

enamel on aluminum

84 x 60 inches

213.4 x 152.4 cm

signed, dated and numbered *WOOL 1997 (P258)* (on the reverse)

(Inv #9376)



At once gesturally charged and aesthetically allusive, Christopher Wool's *Untitled (P258)* is a commanding example from the artist's corpus of abstract monochrome works. Executed in 1997, the present work juxtaposes a chaotic entropy with the austerity of its black and white palette, perfectly encapsulating Wool's anarchic painterly enterprise. Allowing the paint to sit directly on the surface without any of the absorption, the present work is executed on aluminium substrate which Wool would cease using by the end of the 1990s. Creating a striking juxtaposition, the textured, nearly transparent surface of white overpainted passages contrasts with the shiny gloss of black enamel. In the late 1980s, Wool began using semi-mechanical processes to create paintings. Using wallpaper pattern rollers, rubber stamps and stencils, he created all-over compositions of readymade motifs, banal patterns, and ubiquitous words and phrases on immaculate white aluminium surfaces in thick enamel paint. Combining the process-oriented practices of late-Minimalism with a quotidian 'borrowing' from everyday life, Wool's paintings deftly sidestepped the baggage of painterly expressivity. Nevertheless, the mistakes and chance slippages of Wool's handmade-readymade method maintained a sense of free-hand energy in his work.

This work affords a highly revealing insight into the process of construction and destruction of pictorial vocabularies that have formed the foundation for Wool's conceptual and aesthetic enterprise. In the 1980s, amidst an artistic landscape predominated by neo-expressionist painting, Wool and a small enclave of artists including Martin Kippenberger, Sigmar Polke, and Albert Oehlen scrutinised the role of painting from within the medium, creating bodies of work that were inherently self-reflexive. Emerging from this context of painterly discourse, Wool's oeuvre has sought to dissect contemporary painting by exploring the potential of decorative images. Defined by its limited palette, compositional flatness, and dynamic layers of accumulation and erasure, the condensed imagery of the present work renders a myriad of art historical precedent with sensational economy.