

HURVIN ANDERSON
ALVARO BARRINGTON
ANDREW CRANSTON
JOHN CURRIN
ENRICO DAVID
TACITA DEAN
MARLENE DUMAS
NICOLE EISENMAN
IDA EKBLAD
DENZIL FORRESTER
ISA GENZKEN
ROBERT GOBER
ANTONY GORMLEY
MERLIN JAMES
ANISH KAPOOR
RAYMOND PETTIBON
RICHARD PRINCE
PREM SAHIB
YINKA SHONIBARE
THOMAS STRUTH
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THE ICA 75TH ANNIVERSARY AUCTION

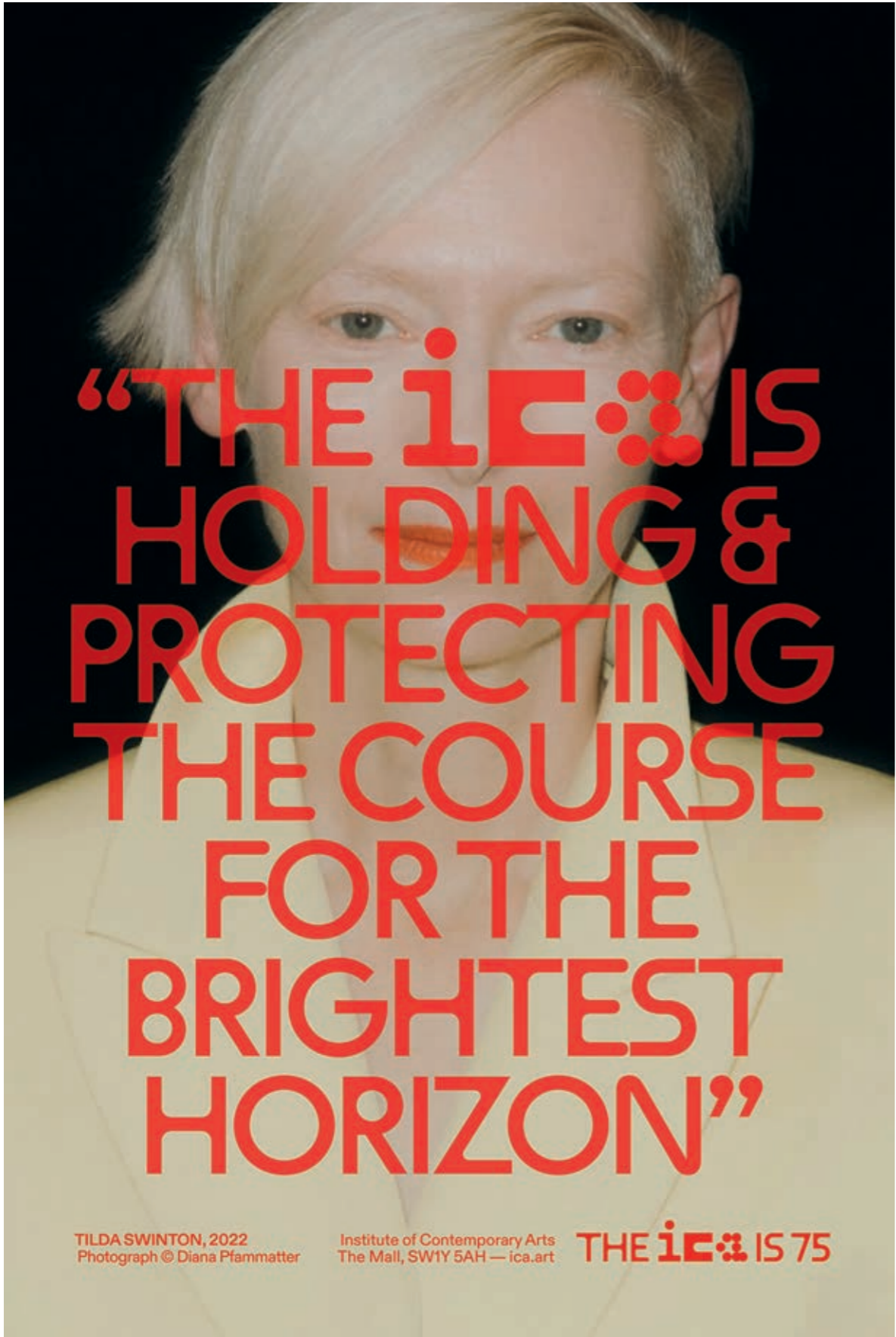
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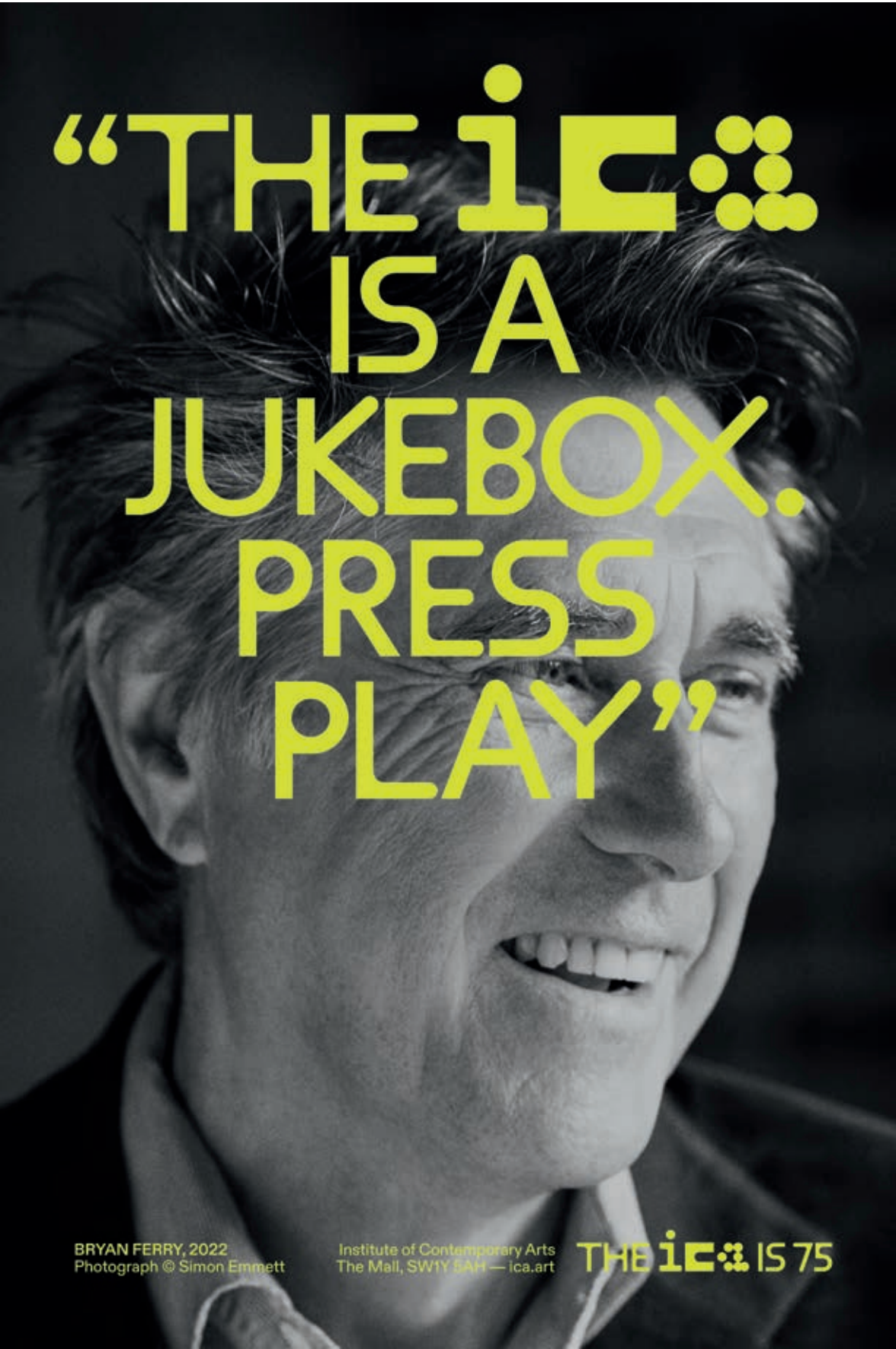
The ICA 75th Anniversary Auction

LONDON 15 OCTOBER 2022



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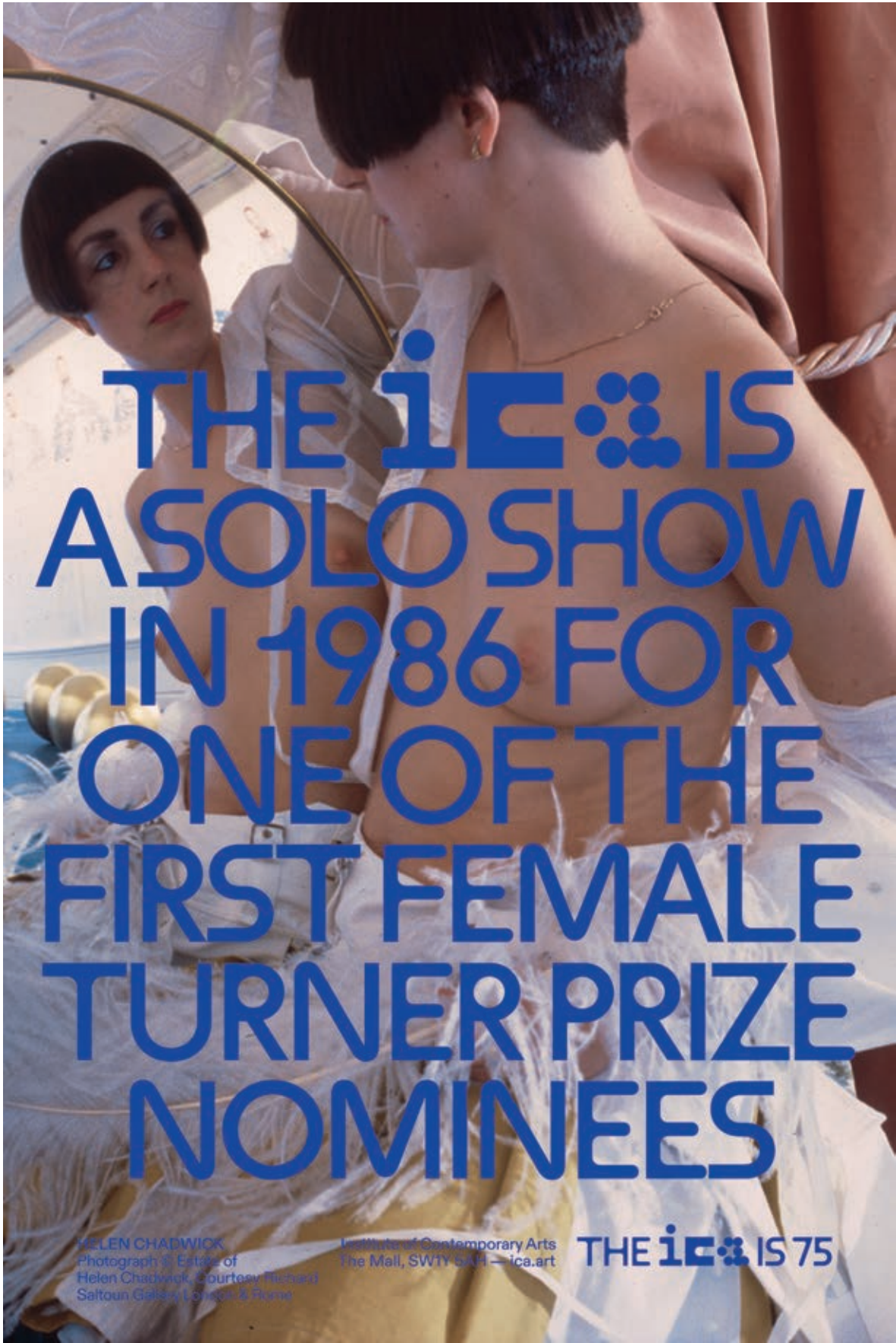


“THE **ica** IS A
JUKEBOX.
PRESS
PLAY”

BRYAN FERRY, 2022
Photograph © Simon Emmett

Institute of Contemporary Arts
The Mall, SW1Y 5AH — ica.art

THE **ica** IS 75



THE **ica** IS
A SOLO SHOW
IN 1986 FOR
ONE OF THE
FIRST FEMALE
TURNER PRIZE
NOMINEES

HELEN CHADWICK
Photograph © Estate of
Helen Chadwick, Courtesy Richard
Saltoun Gallery, London & Rome

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THE **ica** IS 75




“THE **ica** IS
A SYMBOL
OF ARTIST
LIBERATION”

NAIMA BOCK, 2022
Photograph © El Hardwick

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THE **ica** IS 75



“THE **ica** IS
THE ONLY
GALLERY IN
LONDON THAT
HAD THE
COURAGE TO
SAY YES TO A
SERIES OF
WOMEN’S ART
SHOWS IN 1980”

CATHERINE ELWES, 2022
Photograph © Unknown

Institute of Contemporary Arts
The Mall, SW1Y 5AH — ica.art

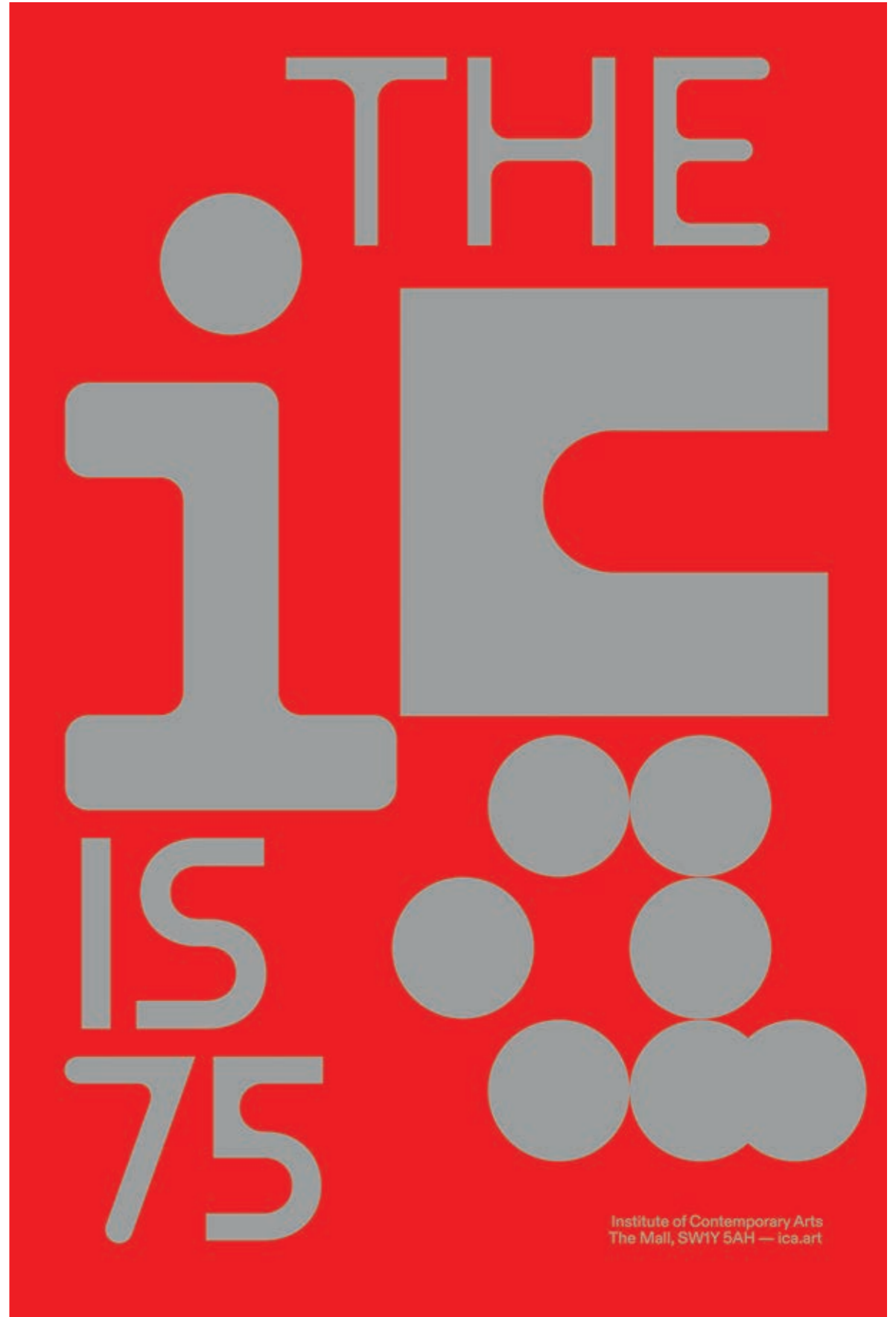
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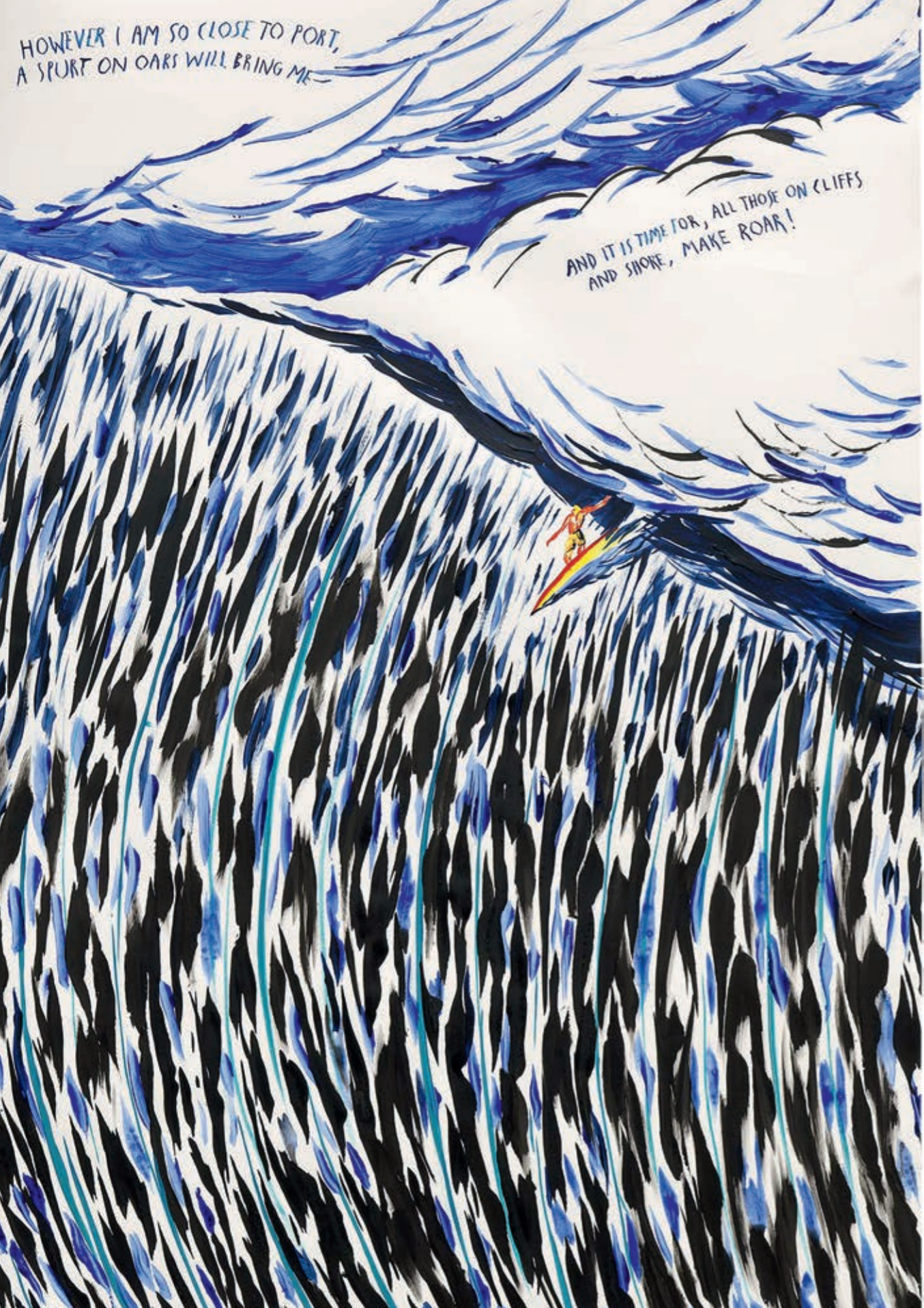
DAVID BOWIE, *Intruders at the Palace*, 1988.
Photograph © Allan Titmuss

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The ICA 75th Anniversary Auction

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Foreword

Dear Lovers of the Arts in London, the UK and across the World,

The moment we are all living through will be remembered as one of extreme change and difficulty. A time disrupted by the pandemic, a war dividing the world into two polars, a planet challenged by rising temperature levels, and the cost of living putting pressure on millions. All industries, businesses, organisations, and individuals must be responsible and learn to respond quickly in order to remain afloat and relevant in this fast-paced environment. The negative news around us also happens at a time of unprecedented technological and scientific advances. Civil rights are won in unexpected places, whilst rolled back in others. It is hard not to lose a sense of direction amidst all of this.

Here, at the ICA, the times we are in also represent an opportunity to be part of change that is viable and sustainable. To deliver a vision for the ICA that will elevate the organisation and to rebalance its multidisciplinary programme across all arts and media with the diversity of its spaces and specialists. In our landmark home on The Mall in Central London, we invite artists and audiences to interrogate what it means to live in our world today, with a genre-fluid programme that challenges the past, questions the present and confronts the future. It is our honour to invite you to support the ICA as it prepares to celebrate its 75th year anniversary.

The ICA has always been a progressive, an alternative, and a safe place for artists who are looking beyond the mainstream: the ones who are willing to go beyond the status quo, the artists who take risks and defy definitions. To safeguard this space for them and the next generations, securing the future of the ICA for the next 75 years is our most important responsibility.

That's why we are immensely grateful to all the artists who decided to become part of this special mission by contributing with their artworks for this auction. We would also like to thank their galleries and staff for giving their time, care, and love to the ICA. We are hugely grateful to Sotheby's who are so generously lending their expertise and time to this unique cause.

This auction offers outstanding works of art that have been selected during the past six months with the ICA and the future of progressive arts in the heart of London in mind. By bidding generously, you have the opportunity to also become part of this ongoing journey, 75 years in the making.

Wolfgang Tillmans
Chair
Institute of Contemporary Arts

Bengi Ünsal
Director
Institute of Contemporary Arts

The Institute of Contemporary Arts

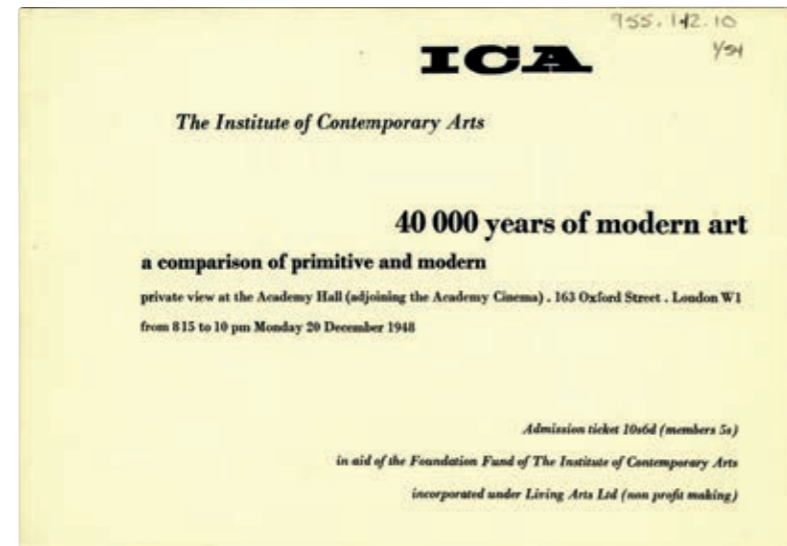
An Introduction

The Institute of Contemporary Arts commissions, produces and presents new work in film, music, performance, and the visual arts, by today's most progressive artists.

In its landmark home on The Mall in central London, the ICA invites artists and audiences to interrogate what it means to live in our world today, with a genre-fluid programme that challenges the past, questions the present and confronts the future. The cross-disciplinary programme encourages these art forms and others to pollinate in new combinations and collaborations; staging club nights and film festivals, gigs and exhibitions, talks and digital art – with interplay and interaction at the core of all we do.

Our history of presenting and promoting visionary new art is unrivalled in London: from Kenneth Anger to Kathy Acker, k-punk to Klein, Jackson Pollock to Jean-Michel Basquiat, Gay Sweatshop to Forensic Architecture, Pop Art to queer techno. Today, as ever, our inclusive programme reflects and represents who we are as a disparate and diverse collection of cultures and identities.

Exactly 75 years after a group of artists and poets founded the ICA as an alternative to the mainstream, the institute today is committed more than ever to pave the way for the next generation and to give a platform to creative voices. The ICA continues to celebrate risk and champion innovation, and experimentation across the arts – a playground and a home for today's most vital artists.



Left, Private view card for Institute of Contemporary Arts, London, exhibition *40,000 Years of Modern Art: 1907-1947*. Photo: © Tate

Right, Photograph of Roland Penrose lifting Pablo Picasso's *Les Femmes d'Avignon*, ICA, 1948. Photo: © Tate. Artwork: © Succession Picasso/DACS, London 2022

Beginnings

The foundations of the ICA were laid at 23 Brook Street in Mayfair on 30 January 1946, when writer-artist ELT Mesens, painter-photographer Roland Penrose and poet-critic Herbert Read led the first meeting of what was then called the Museum of Modern Art Organising Committee. Augmented by an increasingly influential coterie of figures from the London art world, the group resisted their initial impulse to become purely a modern art museum, preferring instead to encourage, present and promote what Read called 'the arts of the future' at its monthly meetings. 'We would rather be thought of as a laboratory than as a museum,' reckoned Read, 'where a new vision, a new consciousness is being evolved.' The name they chose for their new enterprise was the Institute of Contemporary Arts.

Establishing its first offices on Fitzroy Street in Fitzrovia, the ICA presented its first exhibitions in a hired space in the basement of the Academy Cinema on Oxford Street (a space that eventually became the first home of the Marquee Club). The nascent organisation's first two exhibitions, both presented in 1948, set out its stall in provocative and effective fashion: *40 Years of Modern Art: 1907-1947*, a celebration of the European avant-garde featuring works by the likes of Dalí, Magritte and Matisse, was followed by *40,000 Years of Modern Art: A Comparison of Primitive and Modern*, a radical juxtaposition of contemporary pieces such as Picasso's *Les Femmes d'Avignon* with ethnographic works from around the world.

Fig. 1



Fig. 3

A first home

Spring 1950 saw the ICA move into its first permanent home: a suite of rooms at 17-18 Dover Street in Mayfair, the former home of Admiral Nelson, which were refurbished under the direction of modernist architects Jane Drew and Maxwell Fry. The opening exhibition was dedicated not to the visual arts but to literature: *James Joyce: His Life and Work*, which opened in June 1950.

The early 1950s saw the ICA devise and present a series of ground-breaking exhibitions, installations, lectures, and concerts. Many were organised by members of what came to be known as the Independent Group, a loose coalition of radical artists and writers – Reyner Banham, Richard Hamilton, Nigel Henderson, Eduardo Paolozzi and others – who used the ICA as its unofficial



Fig. 4



Fig. 5



Fig. 6

headquarters and are widely regarded as the progenitors of Pop Art in Britain. Shows such as Richard Hamilton's *Growth and Form* (1951) and *Parallel of Life and Art* (1953) were joined on the programme by lectures, discussions, concerts, and film, which in 1955 included the UK premieres of three films by Kenneth Anger.

Despite what now looks, from 70 years distance, like a far-reaching and forward-thinking programme, the ICA was not spared criticism by those who might have been expected to find their natural homes within its orbit – such as John Berger, who in 1954 dismissed the installation as 'no more than a jazz club'. The mainstream media were no friendlier: surrealist artist Toni del Renzio, a member of the ICA's Exhibitions Committee during the 1950s, remembered the ICA as being 'an isolated minority... beleaguered, attacked by everybody. The tabloid press seemed to feel it was its duty to attack anything we were doing. In some ways it was a very painful time, but it was exciting too.'

To The Mall

The ICA moved to its present location at 12 Carlton House Terrace on 11 April 1968. Newly ensconced in a classical Regency building designed by John Nash and located between government (Westminster and Whitehall) and royalty (Buckingham Palace), the Institute became a rebel presence at the heart of the British establishment. Despite its new location, its mission remained unchanged and its appetite for the new and progressive remained undimmed – an attitude neatly captured by Michael Kustow, the ICA's newly appointed 28-year-old Director, at the time of the organisation's move to The Mall.

"If the new ICA becomes merely another cultural amenity, in a city well stacked with galleries, theatres and concert-halls, it will have failed. It must become an active presence, a focal point where a nucleus of artists from all the contemporary arts can communicate urgent and needed messages [...] A free space, in which the deepest questions that concern us as individuals and society can be explored in continuity [...] A sustained enquiry into the roots of our present possibilities and discontents."

The move coincided with a huge spike in membership, which more than trebled to 10,000 when, for the first time, students were encouraged to join. Their arrival saw the average age of members drop by at least 20 years – and opened up the ICA to new ideas.

The 1970s saw a dizzying variety of events created, produced and presented at the ICA, many with an increasingly political outlook: key premieres included David Hare's play *Fanshen*, exploring communism in China, and *The Nine Days and Saltley Gates* by Jon Chadwick and John Hoyland, telling the stories of those who lived through miners' strikes in the '20s and '60s. While exhibitions included Gustav Metzger's *Executive Profile*, examining the semiotics of managerial power. The politics of gender and sexuality, and the cultural politics of ethnicity and race, both featured widely on the Institute's programme during this period, from *Gay Sweatshop's* first season (1976) to *Britannia Waives the Rules: Empire and Resistance* (1979), a series of films disrupting established British attitudes to race. The 1980s, meanwhile, saw a greater emphasis placed on work by women artists and performers, from group shows such as *Women's Images of Men* (which featured work by 35 artists) to solo exhibitions from artists such as Jenny Holzer and Barbara Kruger, among others.

Fig. 3
Catalogue designed by Richard Hamilton for *James Joyce: his life and work, 1950* - the opening exhibition at the ICA's first permanent home on Dover Street.
Photo: © Tate

Fig. 4
Private view card for *Francis Bacon*, ICA, 1955 – the artists' first ever solo institutional exhibition in the UK and held at a time when homosexuality was outlawed in Britain.
Photo: © Tate

Fig. 5
Private view card for *Francis Bacon*, ICA, 1955 – the artists' first ever solo institutional exhibition in the UK and held at a time when homosexuality was outlawed in Britain.
Photo: © Tate

Fig. 6
Private view invitation to *An Exhibit* by Richard Hamilton, Victor Pasmore, Lawrence Alloway, ICA, 1957.
Photo: © Tate



Towards the future

The outlook that the ICA developed during the 1970s and '80s – progressive and provocative, fearless and forward-looking – has ultimately come to guide the organisation's outlook ever since. Indeed, the intervening decades, for instance, have seen ground-breaking exhibitions by some of the world's leading artists: among them the first institutional exhibitions by Jean-Michel Basquiat, Tacita Dean, Damien Hirst, Douglas Huebler, Mary Kelly, Gabriel Orozco, Richard Prince, and Cindy Sherman, as well as early exhibitions by Bernadette Corporation, Robert Mapplethorpe, Steve McQueen, Gerhard Richter, Tino Sehgal, Hito Steyerl and Luc Tuymans.

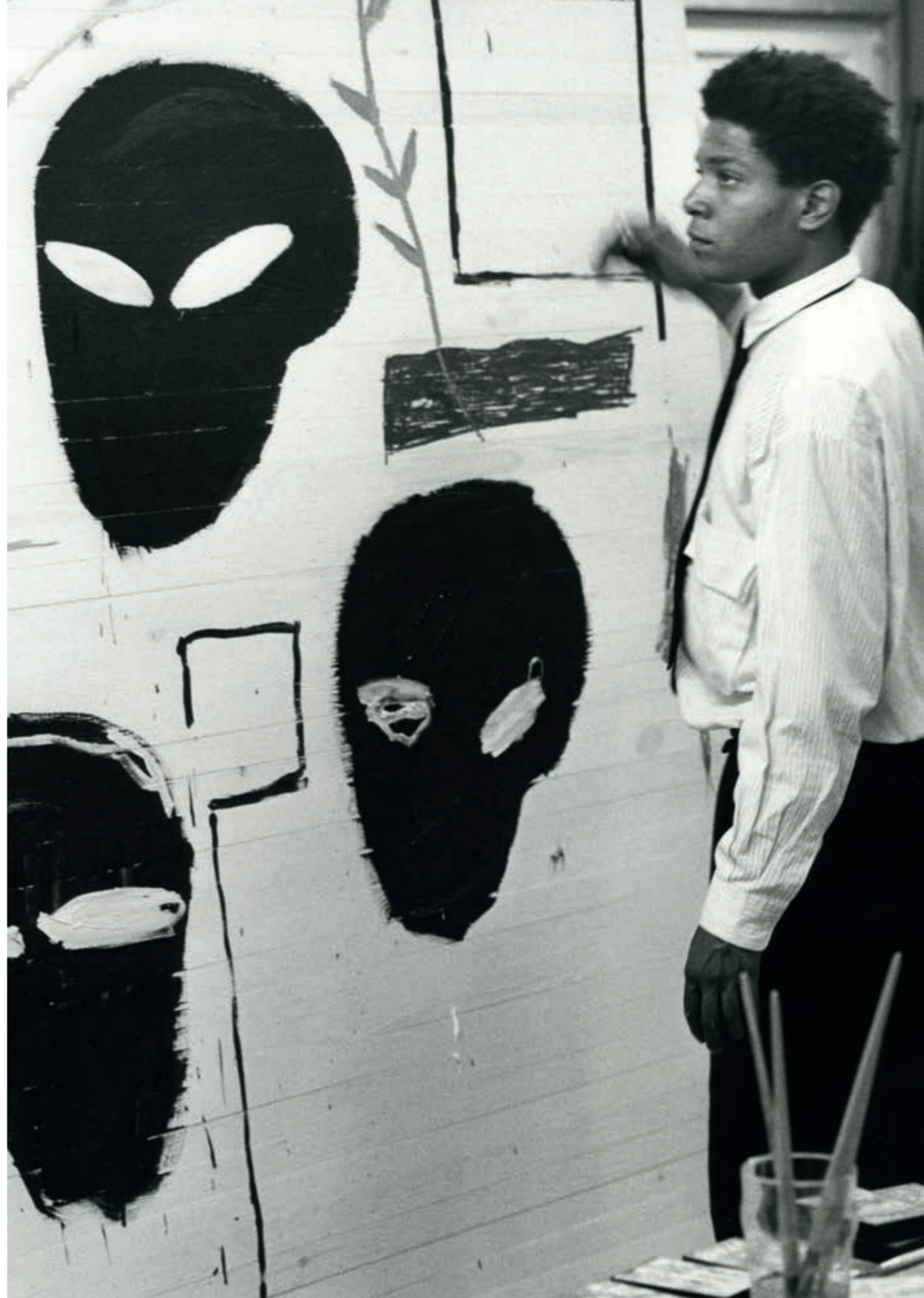
Some of the most memorable moments in the ICA's history have been in its Theatre: performances by the likes of Laurie Anderson, Beastie Boys, The Clash, Einstürzende Neubauten, The Smiths, Throbbing Gristle and Yoko Ono, among many others. The cinema programme, meanwhile, has long emphasised new work by pioneering filmmakers as diverse as Chantal Akerman, Matthew Barney, Derek Jarman, Isaac Julien, Abbas Kiarostami, Ken Loach, Joshua Oppenheimer, Laura Poitras and Zhang Yuan, with a strong focus on the presentation of artists' film and the moving image. And leading writers and thinkers such as Monica Ali, JG Ballard, Roland Barthes, Homi K Bhabha, Jacques Derrida, TS Eliot, Allen Ginsberg, Michel Foucault, Stuart Hall, Luce Irigaray, Jean-François Lyotard, Salman Rushdie, Gayatri Spivak and Slavoj Žižek have all joined us to help us through the decades to define how we think about culture and society today.

The next 75 years

The ICA celebrates its 75th birthday in 2022 with an ambitious programme inspired by the most pressing issues of our time and presented under the leadership of a new Director. The arrival in March of Bengi Ünsal, the second woman to lead the organisation, heralds a new era for the ICA – and a rebalancing of its multidisciplinary programme across all arts, all media, and all spaces of the ICA's building on The Mall. Alongside the ICA's thriving visual arts, film and education programmes, Ünsal will look to commission, produce, and present a broader range of live performances. In doing so, she will set the stage for the next 75 years of this incomparable London institution.

Above. View of the ICA

Right. Jean-Michel Basquiat installing artwork for the exhibition *Jean-Michel Basquiat: Paintings 1981–1984* at the ICA, 1984, which was the first showing of the artist's work in London.
Photo: © Tate
Artwork: © The Estate of Jean-Michel Basquiat / ADAGP, Paris and DACS, London 2022





Richard Hamilton at the ICA. Photographed by Wolfgang Tillmans in 2005

ICA - a building alive

Portfolio by Wolfgang Tillmans

Spread 1

(left, top) Critical Conversations: Homi K. Bhabha with Parul Sehgal and Professor Richard Sennett, 30 September 2019.

(left, bottom) Artist Self-Publishers' Fair: The Forth, 9 December 2018.

(right) View from the Director's Office balcony towards Whitehall, 2019.

Spread 2

(left) New ground floor bathrooms designed by Cookies, Rotterdam, completed July 2021.

(right) Nash Room, architectural detail, 2021.

Spread 3

(left) Stafford Scott giving a curators tour of *War Inna Babylon: The Community's Struggle for Truths and Rights*, 7 July – 26 September 2021.

(right) *ICA Linoleum Flooring* by Jennie Moncur linking the Upper and Lower galleries, commissioned in celebration of the ICA's 40th Anniversary in 1987.

Spread 4

(left, clockwise from top) View from the Nash Room balconies looking towards Trafalgar Square, 2019.

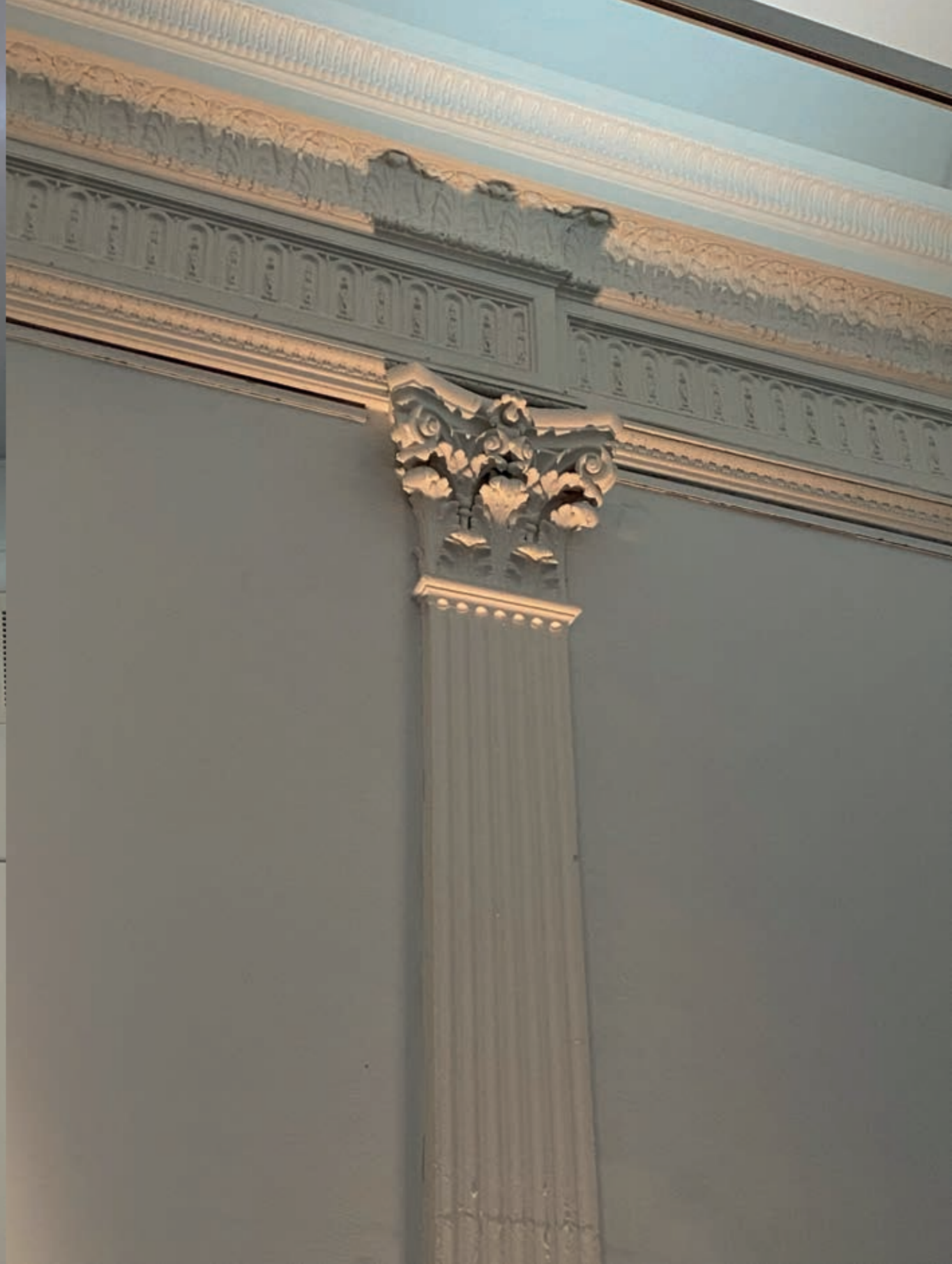
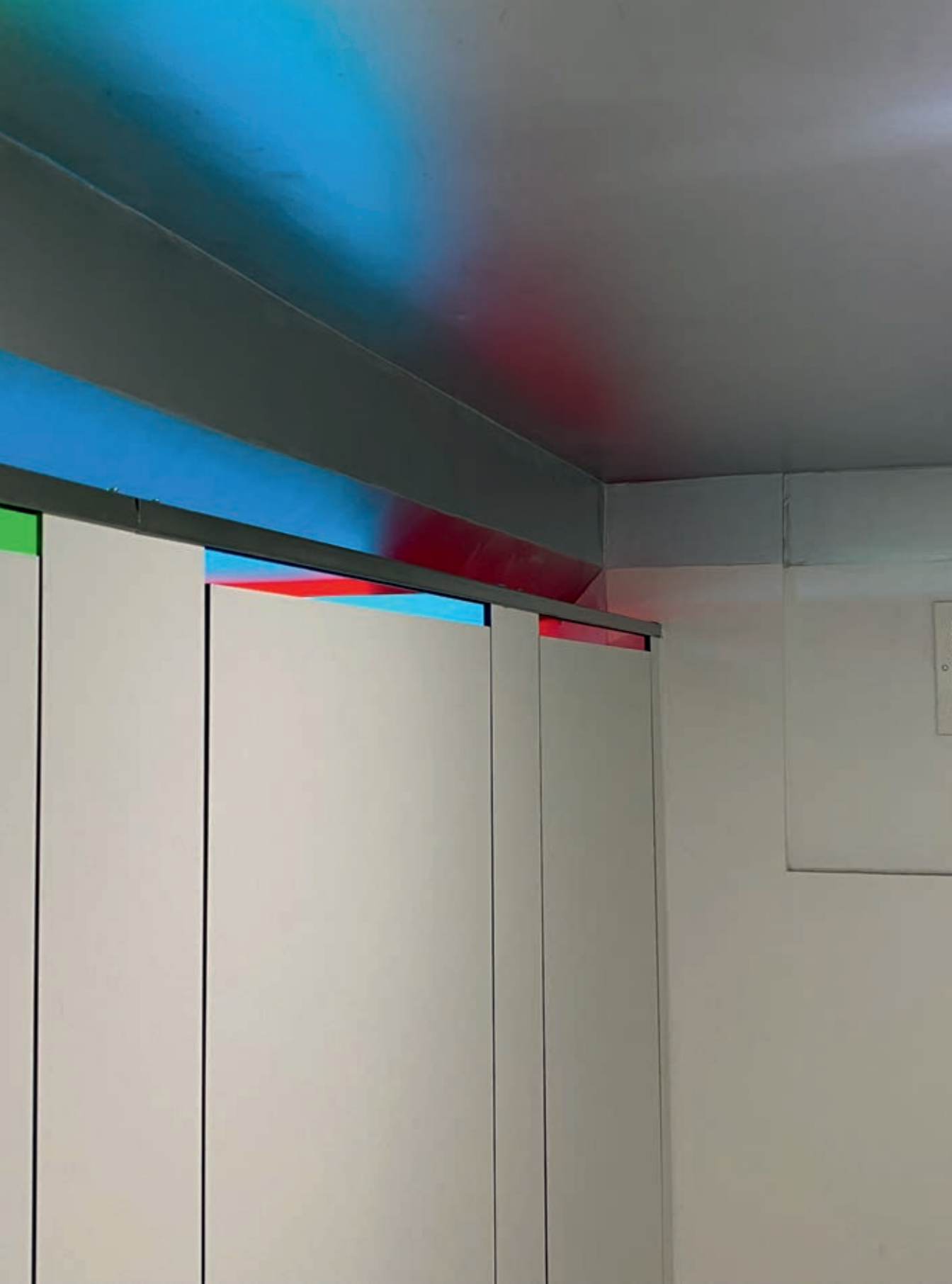
No Bra, *Love & Power* Album Launch with Nkisi, 5 December 2019.

Deborah-Joyce Holman, *Moment*, 2022, commissioned as part of *Image Behaviour 2022* in partnership with Dr. Martens.

Joviale, *New Syntax 1* as part of *Nine Nights: Channel B*, 11 October 2021.

(right) FAUCI + NWAKKE, *New Syntax 1* as part of *Nine Nights: Channel B*, 11 October 2021.



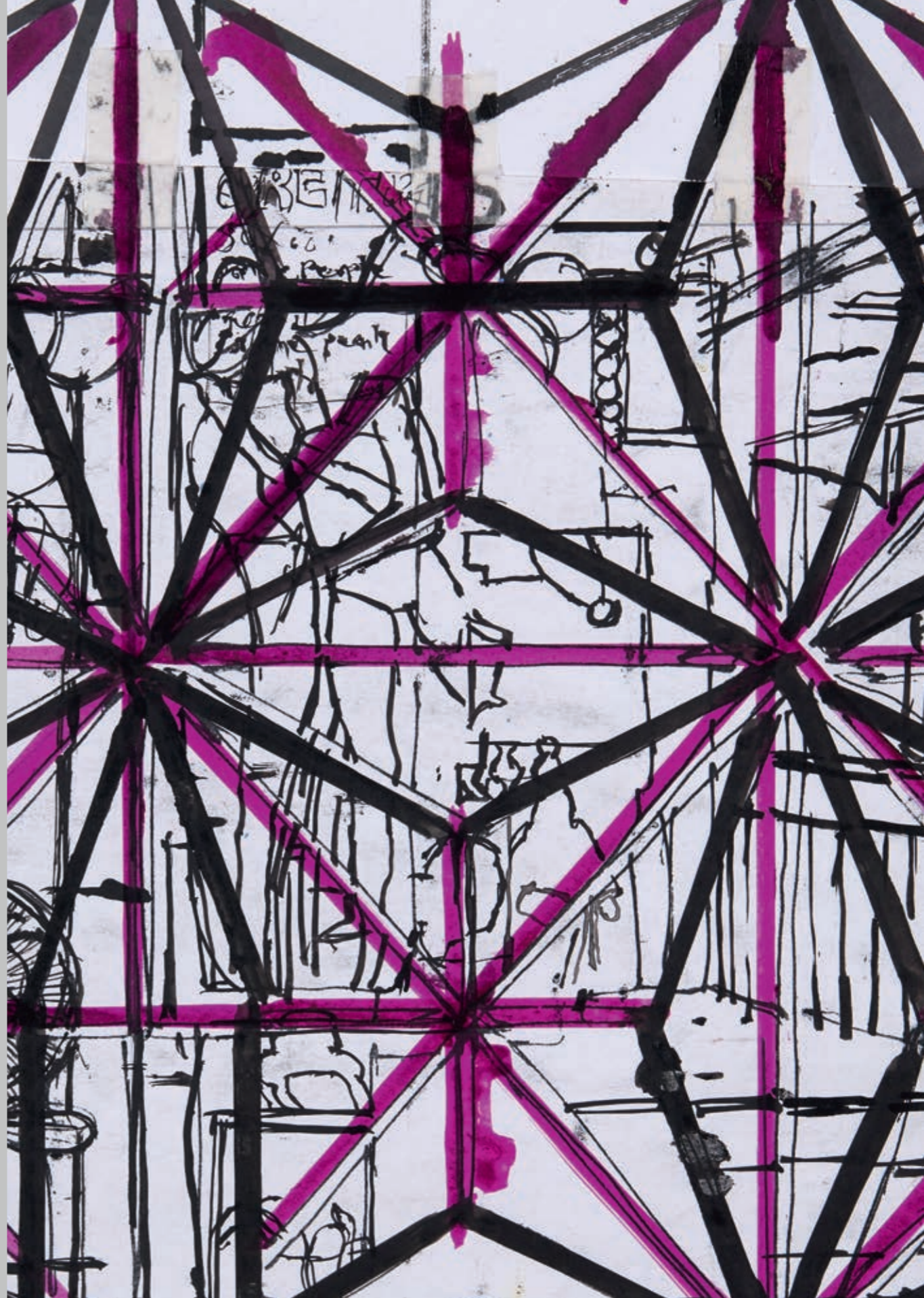








The Auction



HURVIN ANDERSON

b. 1965

Welcome: Revisited

signed and dated 2022

ink, graphite, paper collage and masking tape on paper

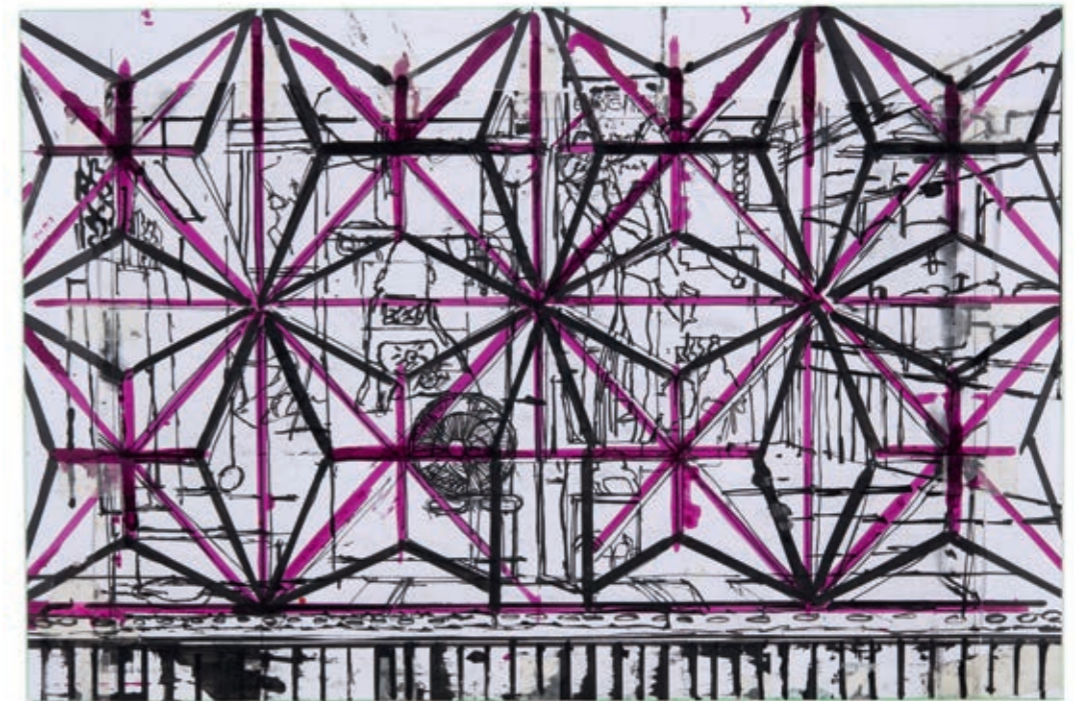
23.1 by 34.5 cm. 9 $\frac{1}{8}$ by 13 $\frac{5}{8}$ in.

framed: 30.1 by 41.5 cm. 11 $\frac{7}{8}$ by 16 $\frac{3}{8}$ in.

PROVENANCE

Donated by the artist

† £ 10,000-15,000



“The grille became a device, motif, code, all those archetypes, those types of words that could possibly structure the painting, but it’s also a blot on landscape. Something’s not right.”

(Hurvin Anderson quoted in: Alice Spawls, 'It's only in painting that you can do everything you want,' *Apollo Magazine*, 17 September 2016, online.)

ALVARO BARRINGTON

b. 1983

Leaving on a jet plane

signed and dated 22 thrice on the reverse of the frame
acrylic and oil on burlap, in artist's frame
47 by 47 cm. 18½ by 18½ in.

PROVENANCE

Donated by the artist

£ 18,000-25,000

“Painting clouds is something I’ve returned to if not every few months every year since 2017 that means something different every time I paint it. During lockdown it was a way to pass time, to reflect, it was aspirational. In the summer when I painted this, I was once again in the skies on planes back and forth to NYC to visit family on jet planes. Anyway, I like this On Kawara type of idea of an object that holds this very tight logic but marks vast change like his date painting and clouds are one of those subjects for me.”

Alvaro Barrington, 2022





ANDREW CRANSTON

b. 1969

Nevertheless (Winter is Coming)

signed, titled and dated 2022 on the reverse
oil on hardback book cover
31.5 by 24.8 cm. 12³/₈ by 9³/₄ in.

PROVENANCE

Donated by the artist

† £ 8,000-12,000



JOHN CURRIN

b. 1962

Hippie

signed and dated 2022 on the overlap
oil on canvas
45.7 by 30.8 cm. 18 by 12½ in.

PROVENANCE

Donated by the artist

† £ 250,000-350,000

“Currin’s technique involves a continuous swerve between attraction and repulsion, pleasure and guilt, joy and shame.”

(Norman Bryson, cited in: Exh. Cat., New York, Gagosian, John Currin, 2006, p. 30.)





Whimsical and beguiling, John Currin's *Hippie* (2022) exemplifies the artist's renowned style of painting which fuses wry humour with psychological intensity. Drawing the traditional medium and genre of virtuosic oil painting with less conventional influences ranging from 1950s-style advertisements and magazines to pin-up girls and erotica, Currin's oeuvre grapples predominantly with the representation of the female form. His compositions, which span from the deeply poignant to the outright provocative, explore the fine line between the alluring and the unsavoury, as they contend with a consumer-driven and desire-fuelled contemporary world.

Rich in allusions to Old Master paintings, Currin's figures harbour an uncanny resemblance to the work or style of certain artists whilst evading a direct visual reference. The painters of the Northern Renaissance, from Rembrandt, Rubens and Vermeer to Cranach and Dürer, sit amongst the artist's greatest sources of influence, with their contrasting approaches to depicting women providing Currin with varied ways of painting the female body. The current composition presents a woman on the

precipice of maturity, wind setting the strands of her hair in a flurry in a way reminiscent of Sandro Botticelli's alluring *Birth of Venus*. However, whilst Botticelli's perfect figure and lush curls are rendered in soft pink and golden hues, Currin's carefully composed figure is contrasted by sunken shoulders, thinning locks and unnaturally elongated neck. Far from capturing the idealised forms of Botticelli, Currin's figure seems to depict an ambivalent moment, at once youthful and mature, as if merging the characteristics of the three women in Hans Baldung Grien's *The Ages of Woman and Death*.

Exposing a culture infatuated with unattainable beauty ideals, cosmetic surgery, airbrushing and a longing for eternal youth, Currin's paintings provide a social critique on an image-saturated world that is simultaneously desirable and disconcerting. For Currin, painting inevitably becomes a means of self-reflexive introspection in which his own sentiments – the good, the bad and the ugly – are projected onto his canvases. Re-envisioned in contemporary scenarios, Currin's curious portraits provide compelling meditations on many of art history's

most enduring precedents. Fascinated by the soft unwavering depiction of the female subject throughout history, with its voyeuristic undertones, Currin's paintings point to a society that remains, in many ways, unchanged: "I think that painting has always been essentially about women," he writes, "about looking at things in the same way that a straight man looks at a woman. The urge to objectify is more a male urge than a female one, and painting is one of the most personal and succinct methods of male objectification of the female" (John Currin cited in: 'Cherchez la femme Peintre! A Parkett Inquiry', *Parkett*, No. 37, 1993, p. 146). Sublime and astute at the same time, the present composition oscillates between the Renaissance and the contemporary, the beautiful and the bizarre, surreal against the corporeal, epitomising Currin's career-long enthrallment with the female portrait.



Left, Sandro Botticelli, *The Birth of Venus*, circa 1485
Uffizi Gallery, Florence

Right, Hans Baldung Grien, *The Ages of Woman and Death*, 1541-44
Prado Museum, Madrid

ENRICO DAVID

b. 1966

Shitty Tantrum: The Handler

acrylic, graphite and paper collage on paper
38 by 37.6 cm. 15 by 14¾ in.
framed: 49.6 by 49.5 cm. 19½ by 19½ in.
Executed in 2007.

PROVENANCE

Donated by the artist

† £ 2,500-3,000



TACITA DEAN

b. 1965

Bubble House (spray)

c-print

112.5 by 134 cm. 44¼ by 52¾ in.

Executed in 1999/2013, this work is number 3 from an edition of 5.

PROVENANCE

Donated by Frith Street Gallery on behalf of the artist

† £ 10,000-15,000



MARLENE DUMAS

b. 1953

Sweets for my Sweet

signed with the artist's initials, titled and dated 1998

ink and acrylic on paper

125 by 70 cm. 49¼ by 27½ in.

framed: 135 by 79.5 cm. 53¼ by 31¼ in.

PROVENANCE

Donated by the artist

EXHIBITED

Lucerne, Kunstmuseum Luzern, *Mixing Memory and Desire*, June - September 2000

Amsterdam, H401, *Shame! And Masculinity*, October 2020 - March 2021

‡ £ 100,000-150,000

“The ICA is simply the best, better than all the rest! It was the most exciting place a younger me ever showed at. The talks dealt with issues that the official artworld is only waking up to now. Punk and reflective at the same time. What a history and present to cherish!”

Marlene Dumas, 2022



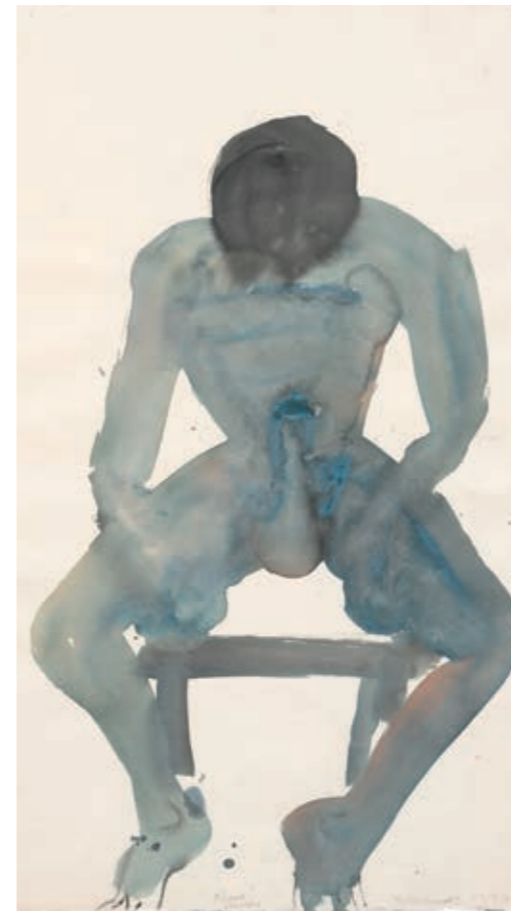
“When I think of youth,
I think of
the New People of Japan,
the film *Death in Venice*,
the paintings of Saint Sebastian,
the woodblock prints of blue-ish
spirits,
my own youth
– becoming a ghost.”

Marlene Dumas, *Youth and Other Demons*
Originally published in: Marlene Dumas, *Youth and Other Demons*
published by Gallery Koyanagi, Tokyo, 1996



Painted in soft, translucent washes, Marlene Dumas' *Sweets for my Sweet* is characteristic of the artist's bold and provoking explorations of sexuality and eroticism. It is a confronting yet tender portrayal of a young male body, sensually painted with the artist's distinctive wet-on-wet method, letting watery tones of peach and black bleed into the other. The present work questions the nature of desire, in relation to the unobtainable but longed for subject. Dumas explained that the young boy in *Sweets for my Sweet*, his pose like a rather sweet pin-up, reminds her of the beautiful boy in Luchino Visconti's 1971 film *Death in Venice*, who can be desired by different sexual orientations. She wrote in 1997, "I do not presuppose a universal hetero-sexual viewing subject. Neither do I always assign a gender to my images although most viewers seem to think I do and that everyone does" (Marlene Dumas, in a letter to Sotheby's, 14 September 2022).

Throughout an oeuvre defined by the transgressive possibilities of painting Dumas has used nakedness to explore love, desire, shame and vulnerability. Dumas situates her art between "the pornographic tendency to reveal everything and the erotic inclination to hide what it is all about" (Marlene Dumas, 'Pornographic Tendency', *Marlene Dumas*, 1986, online). Her understanding of the erotic is intrinsic to medium itself; while photography reveals all, painting blurs and conceals. The artist paints from photographic material, culled from magazines, newspapers, films, art history and her own polaroid photographs, preferring the anonymity, the amoral touch that accompanies this distance. With an expressive, sensual handling of paint, Dumas lifts her works beyond their source imagery, exploiting the semantic transformations between photography and painting. The present work is a testament to the significance of this practice, a photographic image transformed into washes of lucid pigment.



“Sweets for my sweet,
sugar for my honey
Your first sweet kiss
thrilled me so
Sweets for my sweet,
sugar for my honey
I'll never ever let you go”

(The Drifters, *Sweets for my Sweet*, recorded in 1961.)

Left, Marlene Dumas, *Young Boy*
(*Pale Skin*), 1996
Image: © Peter Cox, Eindhoven
Artwork: © Marlene Dumas 2022

Right, Marlene Dumas, *Phew!*, 1999
Image: © Peter Cox, Eindhoven
Artwork: © Marlene Dumas 2022

The title of the present work is taken from the song *Sweets for my Sweet*, originally recorded by The Drifters in 1961. Dumas chooses the titles of her paintings meticulously, attune to the nuances and tricks of language, and in this work betrays a sense of humour often present in her erotic paintings. *Sweets for my Sweet* was painted in 1998, the same year as Dumas's landmark *Erotic Room* at Museum für Moderne Kunst in Frankfurt. The artist hung ink drawings of mostly young men and older women side by side; in a similar manner to the present work the poses of the male figures were open, expressing availability, while the stances of the female figures were of submission and ecstasy. This followed *Young Boys* (1997), a series of hazy, fantasised images of the sexual body taken from classical paintings of Saint Sebastian, Bettina Rheims's photobook *Modern Lovers* (1990) and photographs of Japanese rent boys and her own friends. *Sweets for my Sweet* work occupies similar territory,

exploring desire and distance, and implicating the viewer in the exchange of gazes. The baring honesty in Dumas' portrayal of the naked body draws parallels with John Berger's treatise on the male gaze in *Ways of Seeing* (1972), which Dumas references when discussing her early paintings of naked men. She shares Berger's distinction between the 'nude' and 'naked', and the honesty, even banality needed to challenge the idealised male gaze. "Why do my pictures escape the 'voyeuristic gaze'", Dumas writes, "the aim is to 're-veal', not to 'display'. It is the discourse of the Lover" (Marlene Dumas, 'Miss Interpreted', *Marlene Dumas*, 1992, online).



Installation view of *Sweets for my Sweet* at Amsterdam, H401, *Shame! And Masculinity*, October 2020 - March 2021
Image: © Maarten Nauw
Artwork: © Marlene Dumas 2022

NICOLE EISENMAN

b. 1963

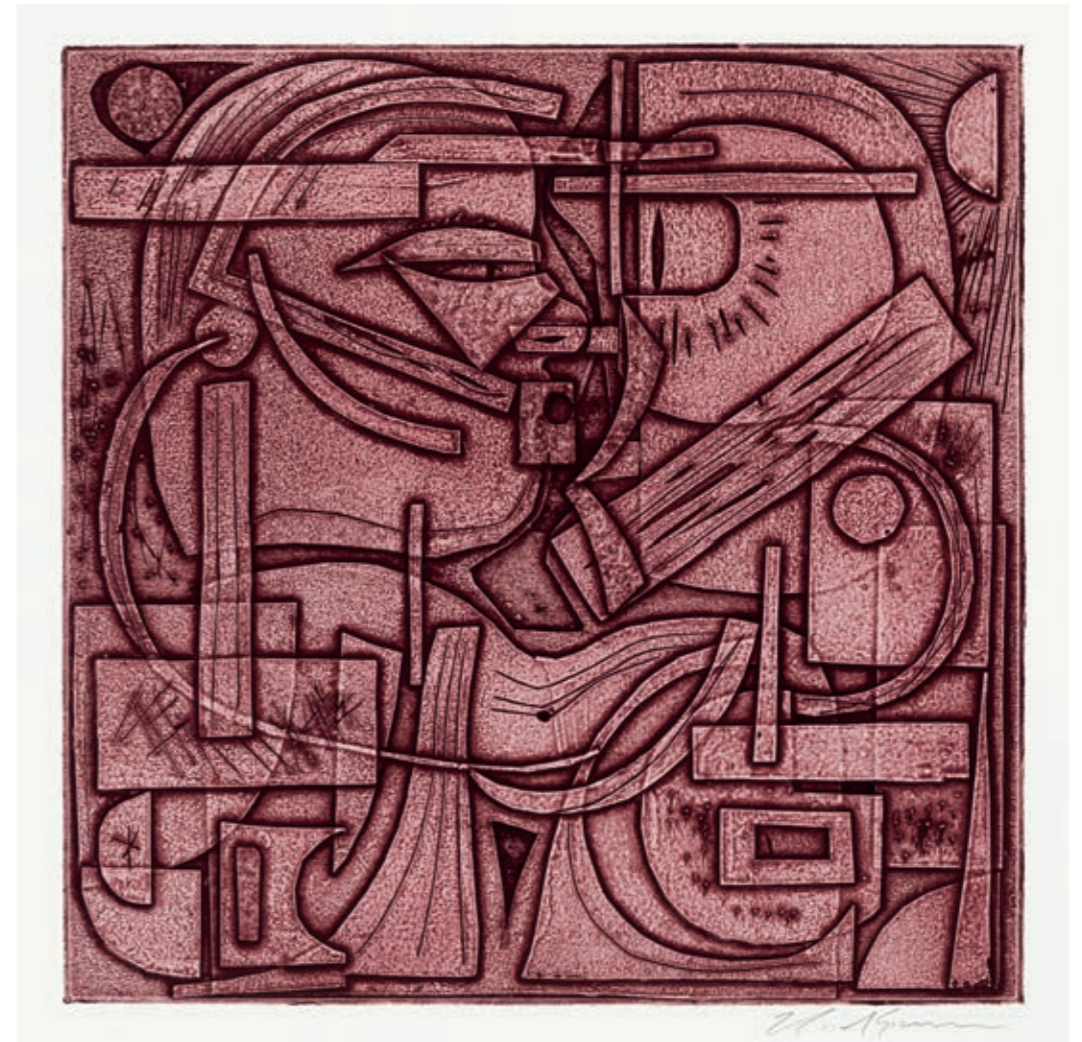
Machine Learning Kiss

signed
collagraph
50.2 by 50.8 cm. 19¾ by 20 in.
framed: 54 by 54.6 cm. 21¼ by 21½ in.
Executed in 2020, this work is from an edition of 25.

PROVENANCE

Donated by the artist

† £ 3,000-4,000



IDA EKBLAD

b. 1980

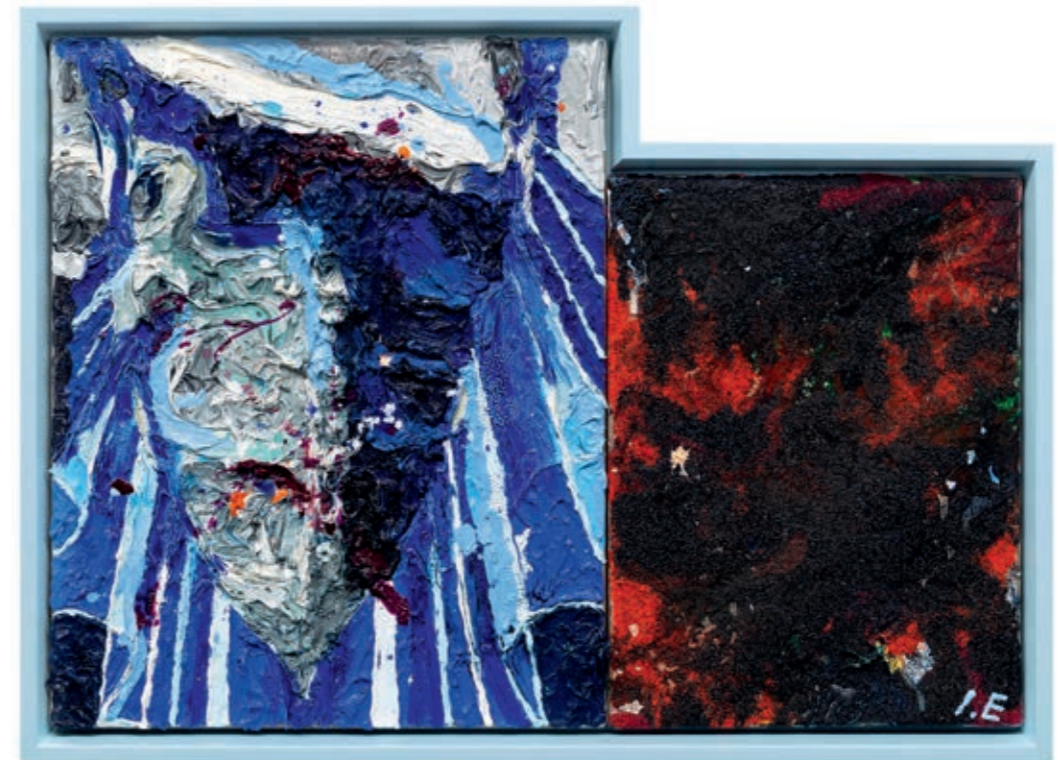
Worthy of the Moon's Regard

signed with the artist's initials
oil on two adjoined canvases, in artist's frame
55 by 75 cm. 21⁵/₈ by 29¹/₂ in.
Executed in 2021.

PROVENANCE

Donated by the artist

† £ 10,000-15,000



“Painting to me combines expressions of rhythm, poetry, scent, emotion... It offers ways to articulate the spaces between word, and I cannot be concerned with its death, when working at it makes me feel so alive.”

(Ida Ekblad quoted in: 'Ida Ekblad,' Saatchi Gallery, online.)

DENZIL FORRESTER

b. 1956

Untitled

signed
charcoal and pastel on paper
59 by 84.4 cm. 23¼ by 33¼ in.
framed: 77.7 by 102.4 cm. 30⅝ by 40¼ in.
Executed in 2019.

PROVENANCE

Donated by the artist

† £ 6,000-8,000



ISA GENZKEN

b. 1948

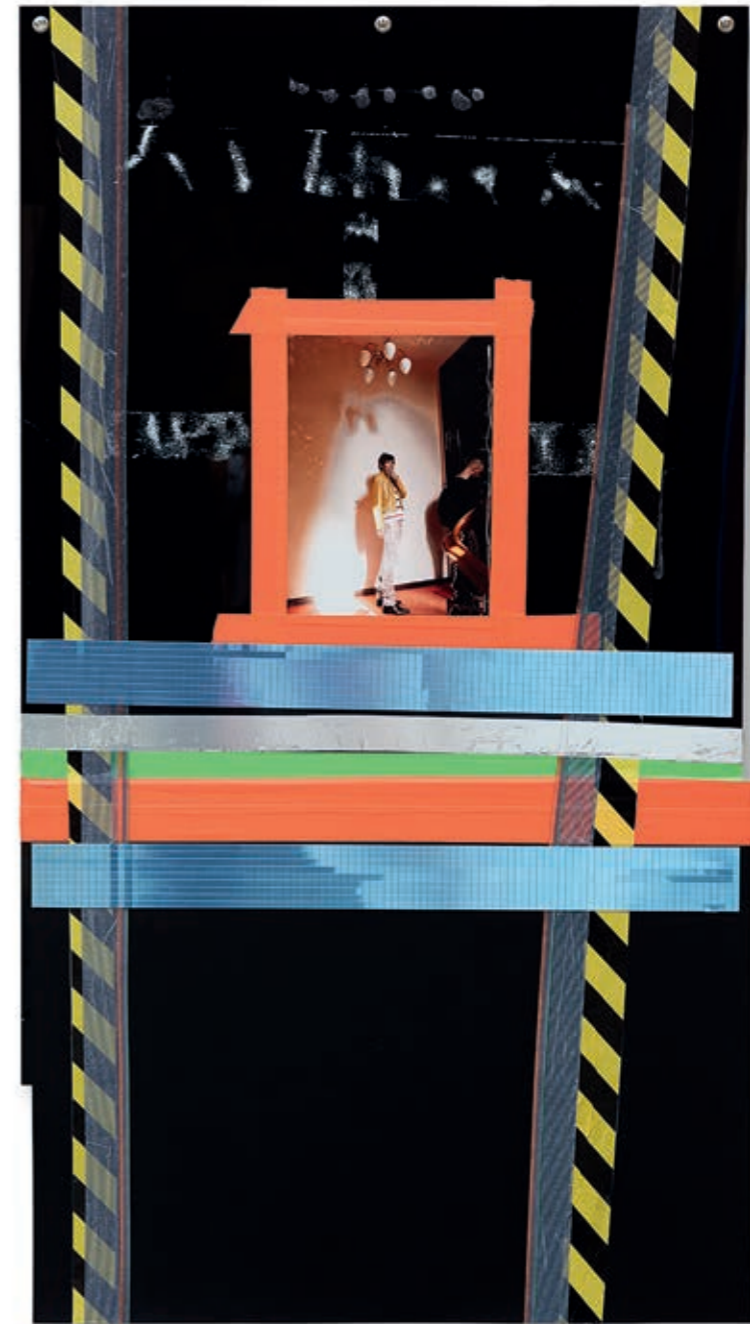
Untitled

mirror foil, adhesive tape, photograph and acrylic on panel
171 by 100 cm. 67³/₈ by 39³/₈ in.
Executed in 2015.

PROVENANCE

Donated by the artist

† £ 80,000-120,000





Monumental in scale, *Untitled* from 2015 is the perfect exemplar of Isa Genzken's oeuvre. Born in Germany in 1948, Genzken grew up in Hamburg before moving to Dusseldorf to study at the well-known Kunstakademie whose faculty at the time included Joseph Beuys, Bernd and Hilla Becher, Benjamin H.D. Buchloh and Gerhard Richter. Her move to Dusseldorf exposed her to Minimalism and ignited her fascination with the geometries of modernist architecture. In the early 1990s Genzken moved to New York and her practice saw a radical shift. She began to work with collage and assemblage, while playing with the idea of texture as well as connotations of mass-produced industrial materials, packaging, and everyday objects. Through this new body of work, Genzken began to explore themes of art history, politics, architecture, and social space. Since then, Genzken's work confronts the conditions of human experience in contemporary society and the uneasy social climate of capitalism.

The present work is a striking example of this facet of Genzken's artistic practice. The artist's unorthodox use of industrial materials, such as adhesive tape and mirrored foil, and the structural nature of the work, showcase her unique approach to collage and emphasise her obsession with the architectural possibilities of art. Assembled with what shapes our everyday existence and recognition, *Untitled* presents Genzken's ability to create extraordinary new environments for viewers to enter. The reflective surface of the foil draws the viewer into the composition, creating pictorial and spatial illusion. Thus, *Untitled* challenges the viewer's self-awareness by means of physically altering the perception, bringing bodies together in spaces while engaging with the pressing socio-political and economic issues of the present.

ROBERT GOBER

b. 1954

Rat Bait

signed, titled, dated 1992 and numbered 1/10 on the reverse
casein and silkscreen ink on cast plaster
23.2 by 15.6 by 5 cm. 9¼ by 6¼ by 2 in.

† £ 80,000-120,000

PROVENANCE

Donated by the artist

EXHIBITED

New York, Dia Center for the Arts, *Robert Gober*,
September 1992 - June 1993, pp. 20, 30, 47 and 57,
illustrated in colour (installation view) (edition no. unknown)
San Francisco, San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, *Into
a New Museum: Recent Gifts and Other Acquisitions of
Contemporary Art, Part II*, May - October 1995 (edition no.
4/10)

Minneapolis, Walker Art Center; Malmö, Rooseum Center;
Washington, Hirshhorn Museum; and San Francisco, San
Francisco Museum of Modern Art, *Robert Gober: Sculpture
+ Drawings*, February 1999 - September 2000, p. 23,
illustrated in colour (edition no. unknown)

San Francisco, San Francisco Museum of Modern Art,
*Between Art and Life: The Contemporary Painting and
Sculpture Collection*, July 2004 - February 2005 (edition
no. 4/10)

Houston, The Menil Collection, *Robert Gober: The Meat
Wagon*, October 2005 - January 2006, pp. 16, 27, 32, 37
and 49, illustrated in colour (installation view) (edition no.
unknown)

Basel, Schaulager, *Robert Gober: Work 1976-2007*, May -
October 2007 (edition no. unknown)

LITERATURE

Exh. Cat., Umag, Galerija Dante Marino Cettina, *Robert
Gober: Come, Come Into The Traumatic Space of Reality*,
1995, p. 27, illustrated in colour (edition no. unknown)

Lynne Cooke and Karen Kelly, Eds., *Robert Lehman
Lectures on Contemporary Art No. 1*, New York 1996,
pp. 110-11, illustrated in colour (edition no. unknown)
Paul Schimmel, 'Gober is in the Details', in: Exh. Cat., Los
Angeles, The Museum of Contemporary Art, *The Geffen
Contemporary, Robert Gober*, 1997, illustrated in colour
(edition no. unknown)

Catrin Lundqvist, Ed., 'Robert Gober', in: Exh. Cat.,
Stockholm, Moderna Museet, *Wounds: Mellan Demokrati
och Förlösning / Samtida Konst [Between Democracy and
Redemption in Contemporary Art]*, 1998, p. 128, illustrated
in colour (edition no. unknown)

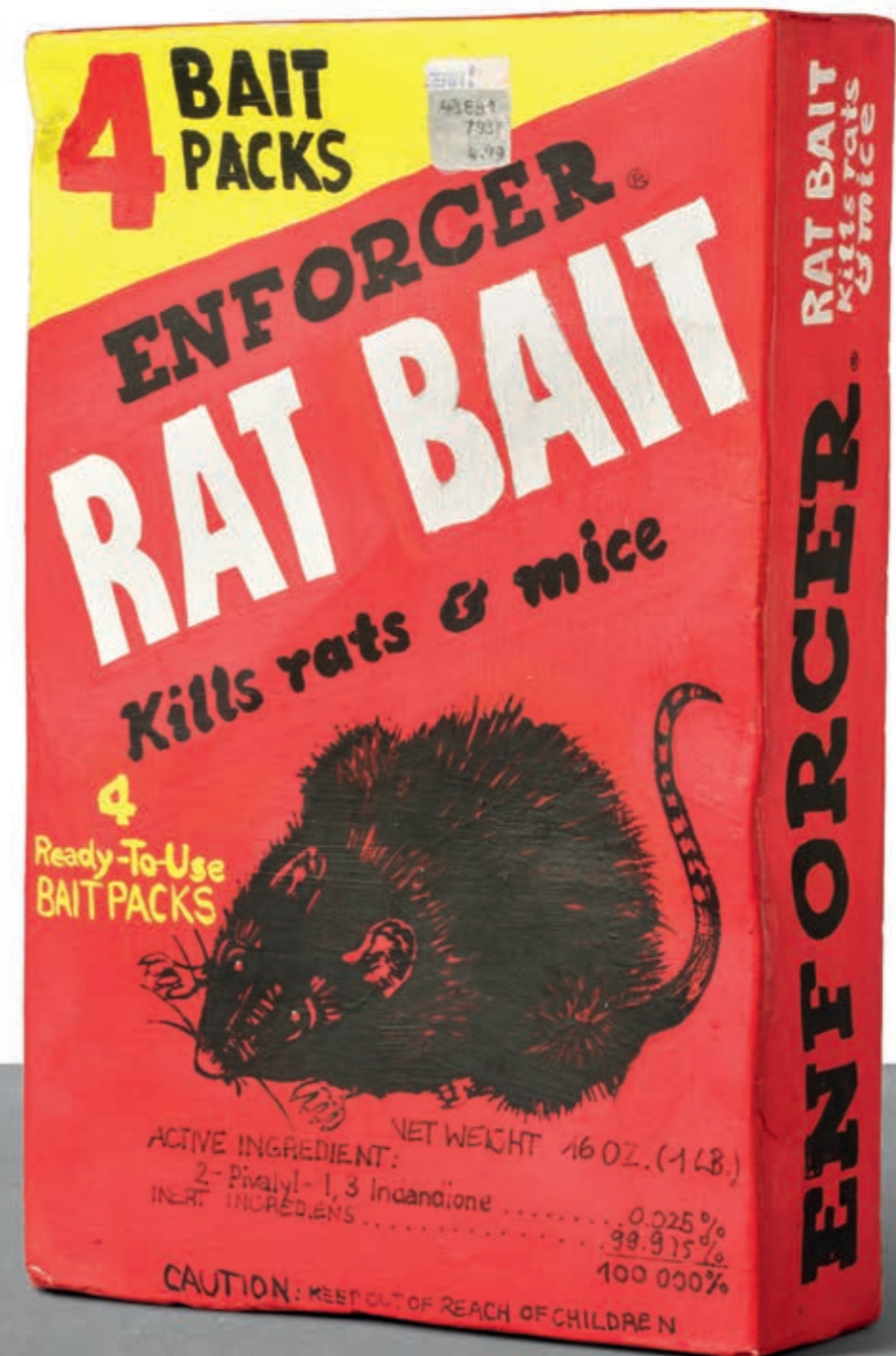
James Romaine, 'Closer to Heaven: The Art of Robert
Gober', *IMAGE: A Journal of the Arts and Religion*,
Autumn 2000, pp. 30-31, illustrated in colour (edition no.
unknown)

Robert Haywood, 'Robert Gober's Virgin and Drain',
Thresholds, No. 23, Autumn 2001, pp. 41-42, illustrated in
colour (edition no. unknown)

George Howell, 'Object/Installation: The Two Sides of
Robert Gober', *Sculpture Magazine*, Vol. 20, No. 5, June
2001, p. 43, illustrated in colour (edition no. unknown)

Hal Foster, *Prosthetic Gods*, Cambridge 2004, p. 332
(text) and p. 333, illustrated in colour (installation view)

Theodora Vischer, Ed., *Robert Gober: Sculptures and
Installations 1979-2007*, Basel 2007, pp. 308, 310, 316-17,
no. S 1992.04, illustrated in colour (edition no. unknown)



“Gober appropriates neither norms nor forms from the straight world, but replaces them, literally constructs them all - the sinks, the plywood sheets, the newspapers, bringing nothing ‘readymade’ across the abyss of difference. Reincarnating these artifacts as extensions of his own true nature, he colonizes the straight world with them - so that, finally, if nothing else in the world of false facture confirms Gober’s presence in it, these objects do.”

(Dave Hickey quoted in: Los Angeles, The Museum of Contemporary Art, *Robert Gober*, 1997, p. 54.)

Deftly toying with the tension between reality and the conceptual, Robert Gober’s iconic *Rat Bait* from 1992 seeks to explore the divergent processes of differentiating between manufactured, commercialised product and hand-crafted artworks. Broadly recognised as among the most important living American artists, Gober’s widely influential

oeuvre is distinguished by its conceptual rigour and a disquieting facility for probing the essential binaries of functionality and dysfunction, presence and absence, art and life. Initially created for Gober’s installation at the 1992 DIA Center for the Arts in New York, the artist made 9 other editions, itself a remark on the multiplicity of an artwork.

“With great subtlety, Gober raises these seemingly common objects to another level. By detaching them from their iconographic context and manipulating them to the point of alienation, he changes their identities. They break out of their representative role. Abstraction (form) and metaphor (meaning) merge. Even if the objects look introvert, intimate and modest, they activate and create space in a dynamic manner.”

(Karel Schampers, *Robert Gober*, Rotterdam, 1990, p. 33.)

Whilst appearing like a found object sculpture, *Rat Bait* is painstakingly crafted out of wax, paint and plaster, almost fetishising an everyday household item and elevating it by virtue of his meticulous craftsmanship. Following the traditions of the father of Conceptualism, Marcel Duchamp and his objet trouvé sculptures, Gober presents our habits back to us, a mirror to the ironic reality of existence within a world that promotes mass-production and consumerism. The dichotomy between art and irony is something that the artist purposely explores in his work, stating that “[irony gives] you different information, a different slant on it. I don’t think irony’s all that an important an issue. It’s such a given now. I mean, what isn’t ironic?” (Robert Gober in conversation with Jarrett Earnest, *The Brooklyn Rail*, December 2014, online).

Gober’s desire to arouse a sense of recognition or familiarity in the viewer plays with the tension between the neutered forms and the strong emotional and physical connotations we attach to them. In the alchemy of transforming these objects, Gober transforms a viewer’s reality; the common made uncommon. *Rat Bait*’s uncanny familiarity is disturbing and intriguing, reflecting Gober’s continuous interest in simulating and moulding reality. Speaking on his work, Gober explains, “I don’t know how else you would understand it without metaphor. It is one essential way to experience and feel something about the pieces” (Robert Gober quoted in: *Ibid.*).



Installation view of *Rat Bait* at New York, Dia Center for the Arts, *Robert Gober*, September 1992 - June 1993
Image: © Russell Kaye, Courtesy of the artist and Matthew Marks Gallery
Artwork: © Robert Gober



Installation view of *Rat Bait* at New York, Dia Center for the Arts, Robert Gober, September 1992 - June 1993
Image: © Bill Jacobson, Courtesy of the artist and Matthew Marks Gallery
Artwork: © Robert Gober

ANTONY GORMLEY

b. 1950

Lift 2 (Meme) IV

incised with the artist's initials and dated 2018 on the underside of the head
cast iron

30.8 by 9.3 by 12.2 cm. 12 $\frac{1}{8}$ by 3 $\frac{5}{8}$ by 4 $\frac{3}{4}$ in.
Executed in 2018, this work is unique.

PROVENANCE

Donated by the artist

† £ 65,000-85,000





Antony Gormley, *Full Bowl* (1977-78), *Bread Line* (1979), *Fruits Of The Earth* (1978-79), *Floor* (1981) and *Fourth Tree* (1981), exhibited as part of the ICA as part of the group exhibition *Objects and Sculpture* in 1981
© Antony Gormley

“The ICA has always championed the new and with its galleries, bookshop, café and performance space offers platforms in which art in all its forms can be shared and discussed. The ICA has always been a catalyst for a full engagement with life and art. My life as an artist amongst other artists was initiated in the 1981 ‘*Objects and Sculpture*’ show curated by Sandy Nairne and Iwona Blazwick – it was a launchpad like no other.”

Antony Gormley, 2022

Antony Gormley’s *LIFT 2 (MEME) IV* belongs to his renowned series of small solid iron works, ‘Memes’, which use the formal language of architecture to create forms that call on the body. The work’s stacked blocks articulate, investigate and re-describe the form of the human body, carrying “the invitation of empathy and the transmission of states of mind”.

Executed in 2018, *LIFT 2 (MEME) IV* forms part of this distinctive series, begun in 2009, which currently features 60 body postures. The title of the series borrows a term coined by evolutionary biologist Richard Dawkins in his pivotal book *The Selfish Gene* (1976). Dawkins defines the ‘meme’ (‘imitated thing’) as the cultural analogue of a gene and uses the term to describe the self-replicating and infinitely mutable dissemination of cultural ideas from one individual to another through behavioural acts, such as speech or gesture. Gormley draws on this principle in his

‘Memes’, creating sculptural units that propagate cultural information through a multitude of delicately rendered body postures and expressions. In this way, each ‘Meme’ is made from the same set of 19 blocks which are then skilfully re-positioned by the artist in order to render the dramatic effect of minor compositional shifts and their emotive potential for the viewer.

LIFT 2 (MEME) IV is an outstanding example of Gormley’s idiosyncratic sculptural practice; assembled in an intimate scale, it retains the artist’s characteristic fascination with the relationship between architecture and the human body. Here, anatomy is replaced by architectonic volumes and the viewer is asked to consciously consider the sculpture in relation to themselves, through the framework of their own physicality.

MERLIN JAMES

b. 1960

Truth

signed with the artist's initials and dated '22; signed, titled, dated 2022 and variously inscribed on the reverse of the frame; signed, titled and dated 2022 on the reverse acrylic on canvas, in artist's frame
84.6 by 105 cm. 33¼ by 41⅜ in.

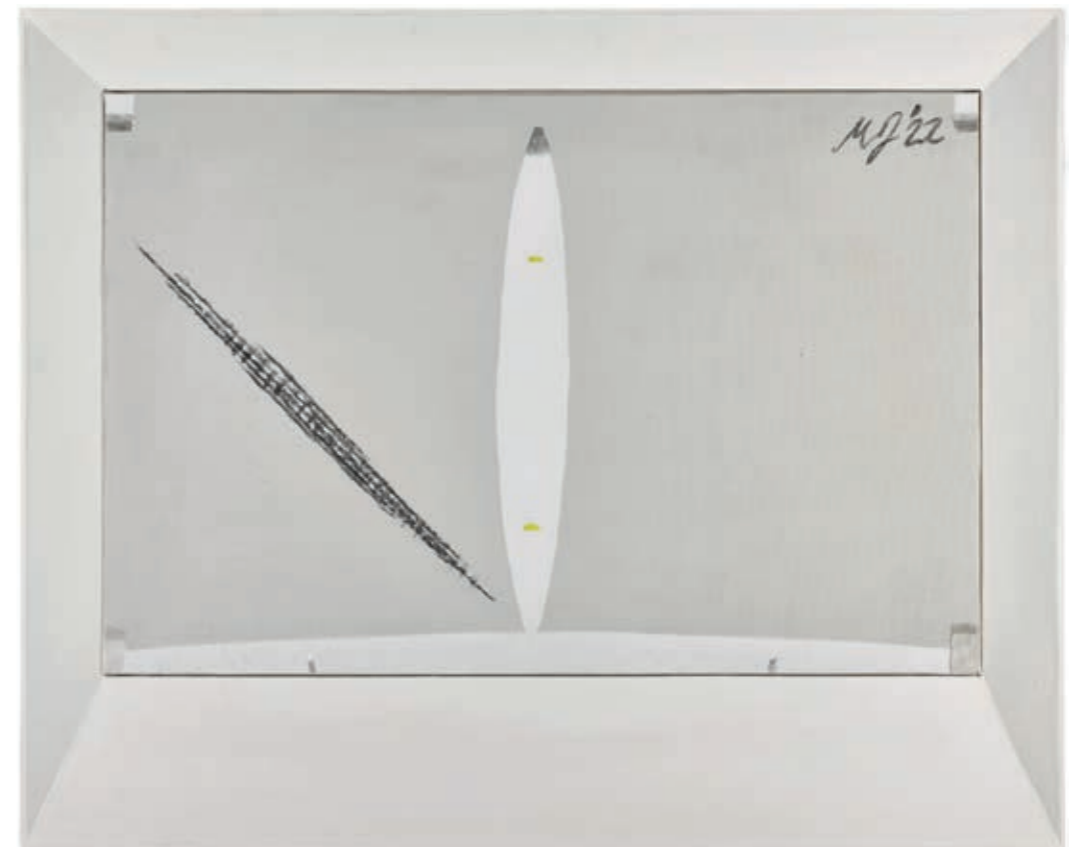
PROVENANCE

Donated by the artist

† £ 4,000-6,000

“I started going to the ICA as soon as I got to London at the end of the '70s. It always felt bohemian despite, or because of, its unlikely location in the foundations of grand regency London. I remember things like the *Women's Depictions of Men* exhibition and the Richter, and there was always a great film programme. Painting didn't seem high on the agenda, but I had catalogues from earlier eras when they had shown, say, Jean Fautrier. And then they suddenly did an Alex Katz show when a lot of people here were only just waking up to him, and a Thomas Scheibitz show...”

Merlin James, 2022





ANISH KAPOOR

b. 1954

Untitled

signed and dated 7 July 2019 on the reverse

gouache on paper

66 by 101 cm. 26 by 39¾ in.

framed: 104 by 138 cm. 41 by 54⅜ in.

PROVENANCE

Donated by the artist

† £ 50,000-70,000

“The ICA has been a vital part of London's contemporary world since 1946. It has since its inception championed the new, the inventive and the daring. Today across our world the contemporary is under assault from right wing conservatism and neo nationalism - the ICA thankfully is one of the few institutions that continues its work to re-establish the modern, the multicultural, the progressive. It is needed now more than ever. I wholeheartedly welcome the ICA's new director Bengi Ünsal and wish her to know of the support of many, many artist colleagues.”

Anish Kapoor, 2022



RAYMOND PETTIBON

b. 1957

No Title (However I am...)

signed and dated 2022 on the reverse
acrylic, gouache and ink on paper
127 by 76.2 cm. 50 by 30 in.

PROVENANCE

Donated by the artist

† £ 200,000-300,000





Left, Katsushika Hokusai, *Under the Wave off Kanagawa (Kanagawa-oki nami-ura)*, also known as *The Great Wave*. 19th century

Right, Surfers photographed in the 1960s.
Image: © ClassicStock / Alamy Stock Photo

Raymond Pettibon's *No Title (However I am...)* is a paradigmatic example of the artist's most cherished and celebrated series, *The Surfers*. An image that simultaneously allures and terrifies, the present work successfully juxtaposes the unequivocal coolness and counterculture of surfing with the awesome might and force of Mother Nature. Reminiscent of the infallible hand of Cy Twombly and the graphic endeavours of Charles Addams, in the present work, Pettibon intriguingly marries nineteenth century literature with the intoxicating Californian landscape.

The present work sees the singular surfer depicted as an anonymous silhouette rendered in fiery hues of yellow and red; a thrill seeker, seemingly riding an impressive and monstrous wave with ease. He represents the conquest of man over nature in a Friedrich-esque fashion. However, this triumph is necessarily transitory: as the cresting wave towers above the lone figure, the jagged loops and heavily worked surface strike a potent contrast with the ephemeral application of the surfer's body, reminding the viewer of the eventual crash of the wave that will inevitably engulf him. A notion eerily echoed by the 'Fell Flat' signature scrawl in the lower right of the composition. Pettibon often draws upon literature and other media to craft these notes, which are a trademark component of his surfer paintings; these missives appear like "desperate messages slipped out of their bottles" (Carlo McCormick, "Waveform: Riding the Sublime to the Song of the Sea", in: *Exh. Cat.*, New York, *Venus over Manhattan, Raymond Pettibon: Surfers 1985-2015*, 2015, p. 14).

Coming of age in Los Angeles in the 1970s, Pettibon drew extensively on the work of Blake, Daumier, Hogarth, and Goya to create an idiosyncratic style and visual vocabulary that is unapologetically his own. Turning to flyers and album covers as a means of creative output, Pettibon began promoting Punk musicians across downtown LA, most notably Black Flag, and Sonic Youth. It was however the beauty and force of the ocean that captivated the artist throughout his childhood; it's powerful palette of cobalts and azures and beguiling motion preoccupied the artist, who commented, "To me, [waves are] natural. I grew up with ocean views—not even so much from the shore in real life but rather from surf magazines. It's imagery that, for a lot of people around here anyway, is pornography" (Raymond Pettibon in conversation with Nicholas Gazin, *Vice Magazine*, November 2010, Vol. 17, No. 11, p. 71).

This is the ethos at the core of Pettibon's surfer paintings: yes, they are a depiction of a pastime, but they hold significance beyond that; as the artist recalls, "it can also be the way something like surfing describes a society, and the people in it. I've done a lot of large drawings and prints of that imagery. It has that epic nature, that sublime nature, that almost asks you to reproduce it full sized on the wall" (Raymond Pettibon in conversation with Dennis Cooper, in: Robert Storr, *Raymond Pettibon*, London 2001, p. 25). Indeed, the rushing wave, rising like a mountainous crest in the sea, is both daunting and exhilarating, urging the viewer—like the surfer—to become immersed within it.



RICHARD PRINCE

b. 1949

Untitled

acrylic, oilstick and inkjet on canvas
147.5 by 152.5 cm. 58½ by 60 in.
Executed in 2020.

PROVENANCE

Donated by the artist

‡ £ 250,000-350,000

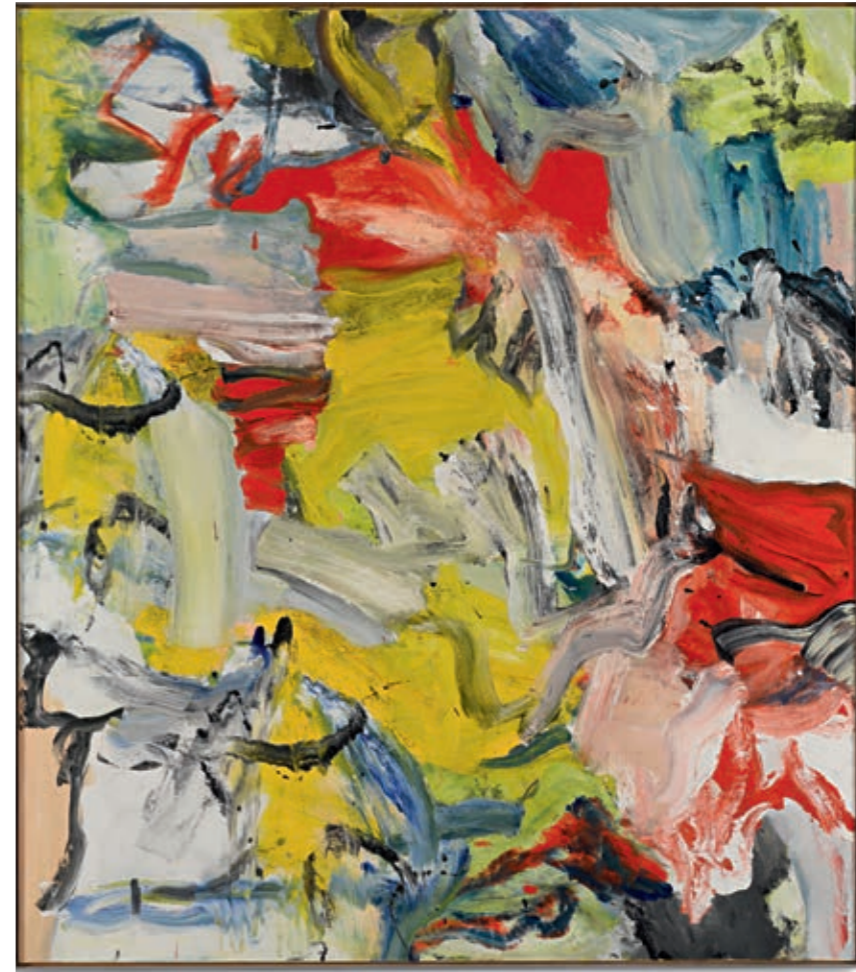






Right, Willem de Kooning,
Untitled XXI, 1976
Private Collection
Artwork: © The Willem de
Kooning Foundation / Artists
Rights Society (ARS), New
York and DACS, London 2022

Left, Jean-Michel Basquiat,
Versus Medici, 1982
Private Collection
Artwork: © The Estate of
Jean-Michel Basquiat /
ADAGP, Paris and DACS,
London 2022



Striking in its chromatic intensity and provocative in compositional form, *Untitled* ranks amongst the most exceptional works from Richard Prince's celebrated corpus of recent paintings that engage with the canonical imagery of 20th century art history. Endowing Prince's homage with a graceful and rhythmic plasticity, the present work, executed in 2020, is abundant with spontaneous, gestural marks that speak of the immediate engagement of the artist. A kaleidoscopic triple portrait of sorts, the present work is rendered in sumptuous hues of emerald green, fuchsia and deep crimson, as a triumvirate of Dubuffet-esque art brut figures dominate the canvas upon a seemingly spray painted graffiti style background. Here biomorphic forms, replete with Basquiat inspired anatomy, transform and swell into gigantic, elongated limbs; a cumbersomely angular and primitive translation of the human form that is at once endearing and grotesque.

Inspired by the imagery of Abstract Expressionists and titans of the 20th Century art historical canon, Prince began sketching and doodling over the paintings of yesteryear, using graphite and oil crayons, adding outlines, textures and silhouettes. Applying collage fragments, Prince sought to cut and paste images from such literature, catalogues and vintage magazines, embellishing the figures with facial features, body parts and limbs, building hybrid of characters. Prince further painted over the canvases in oil and graphite in sweeping gestures, resulting in intricate surface and maimed imagery manifest simultaneously as an ode to the late Abstract Expressionists and a rigorous interrogation on the mythology of American pop cultural life. Prince's methodology is certainly discernible in the present work, as the artist divides the canvas with distinct dynamic textural layers that come together harmoniously to achieve a perfect equilibrium of art historical references.

Along with his contemporaries from the Pictures Generation of the 1970s and 1980s, Prince rose to prominence at a time when his artistic predecessors had already stripped the art-making process from its representational, durational and even material constraints. In belonging to an image-saturated and highly commercialised culture, Prince addresses the visual vernacular that characterised his generation. Faced with an abundance of pre-existing pictures, Prince "never thought of making anything new"; as he has stated, "I am very much against making anything new in a modernist approach" (Richard Prince quoted in Carl Haenlein, Ed., *Richard Prince, Photographs, 1977-1993*, Hanover 1994, p. 32). The artist's manipulation of found and readymade images vacillates between a Warholian fascination with pop-culture and criticism of the myths they propagate; in the profound inauthenticity of his re-worked images and academic references, Prince critiques the excesses and opulence of an age devoted to crass materialism and illusion.

Indeed, the present work professes its myriad of sources, declaring its debt to Abstract Expressionism and creative output of the Post-War era, whilst simultaneously expressing a close sympathy with, and perhaps a nostalgia for, the grand painterly statements of Modernism. By mirroring these artists in both philosophy and technique, Prince presents a prism of refracting binaries including creation and destruction, high and low art, puritanism and mass pop culture.

PREM SAHIB

b. 1982

Horizons VI

silicone, rubber and steel
10.5 by 29 by 13.5 cm. 4 $\frac{1}{8}$ by 11 $\frac{3}{8}$ by 5 $\frac{1}{4}$ in.
Executed in 2015.

PROVENANCE

Donated by the artist

† £ 4,000-6,000



YINKA SHONIBARE CBE

b. 1962

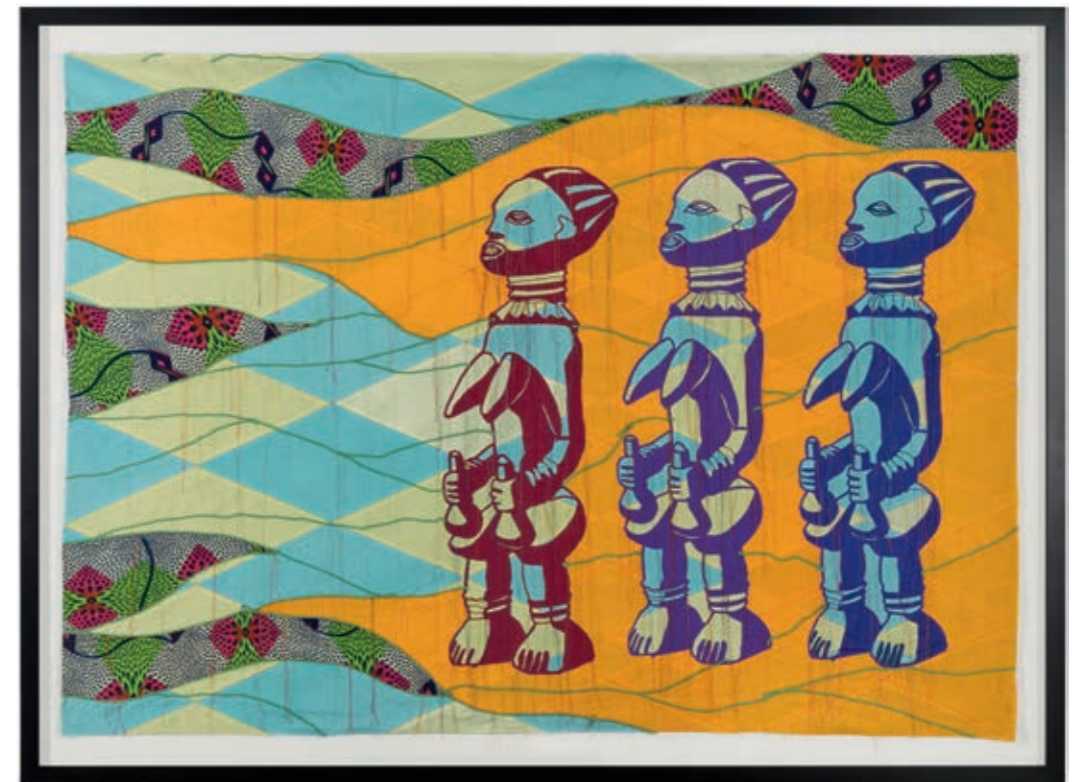
Modern Magic (Bangwa Queen)

patchwork, appliqué, embroidery and Dutch wax printed cotton, in artist's frame
155 by 208 cm. 61 by 81⅞ in.
Executed in 2022.

PROVENANCE

Donated by the artist

† £ 40,000-60,000



“Batik is Indonesian-inspired fabric which was subsequently factory-produced by the Dutch and then traded in Africa. I use this fabric to explore the complex relationship between Africa and Europe, particularly the complexities of contemporary hyphenated identities.”

(Yinka Shonibare quoted in: 'Interview: Yinka Shonibare and the point of art', *Artimage*, 5 July 2018, online.)



THOMAS STRUTH

b. 1954

Curved Wave Tank, The University of Edinburgh

c-print, in artist's frame

213.2 by 157.6 cm. 84 by 62 in.

Executed in 2010, this work is number 1 from an edition of 10.

PROVENANCE

Donated by the artist

† £ 20,000-30,000

"For me, initially, the question was: how do you live with history? Then I began to ask: how is history embedded in the architecture of a city? How does a community represent itself in its architecture, truthfully or otherwise?"

(Thomas Struth quoted in: Sean O'Hagan, "Thomas Struth: photos so complex 'you could look at them forever'" *The Guardian*, 3 July 2011, online.)



TENANT OF CULTURE

b. 1990

Residual Hue

textiles, thread, Jesmonite, pumice stone and acrylic on
recycled shoe
14 by 30 by 15 cm. 5½ by 11¾ by 5⅞ in.
Executed in 2022.

PROVENANCE

Donated by the artist

† £ 3,000-4,000



WOLFGANG TILLMANS

b. 1968

Freischwimmer 102

signed on a label affixed to the reverse
inkjet print on paper mounted on Dibond aluminum,
in artist's frame
229.5 by 171.5 cm. 90³/₈ by 67¹/₂ in.
Executed in 2004, this work is the artist's proof, aside
from the edition of 1.

PROVENANCE

Donated by the artist

EXHIBITED

Hanover, Kestner Gesellschaft, *bali*, February - May 2007
(edition 1/1 exhibited)

LITERATURE

Wolfgang Tillmans and Karl Kolbitz, Eds., *Wolfgang
Tillmans: Abstract Pictures*, Ostfildern 2015, n.p., no. 143,
illustrated in colour

‡ £ 120,000-180,000

"Having been a Londoner for three decades now, I can't think of a single year in which the ICA didn't enrich, surprise and contribute to my understanding of art in the context of the UK and the wider world around us. It is an honour to be part of this ongoing journey in its 75th year. The ICA is needed now more than ever as an independent advocate and platform for the next generation of artists, whose work strives to answer to the pressing challenges of our time."

Wolfgang Tillmans, 2022



“At the most basic level, all I do everyday is work with pieces of paper. I shape colours and dyes on paper, creating objects that carry more meaning than just the content of the image on their surface. This idea is at the beginning of all my work. How does meaning take hold of a piece of paper? How can a piece of paper carry this much charge? The material itself is industrially manufactured without any inherent expressive means. It’s our humanity, our brain that brings life to it. What matters is how we shape the things on the paper for it to somehow become a representation of life and make intentions and emotions visible” (Wolfgang Tillmans quoted in: Wolfgang Tillmans & Karl Kolbitz, Eds., *Wolfgang Tillmans: Abstract Pictures*, Ostfildern 2015, p. 23).

Monumental and sublime, *Freischwimmer 102* belongs to one of Wolfgang Tillmans’ most renowned group of works which transformed the artist’s oeuvre at the turn of the century. Formed by the manipulation of light directly onto the paper’s chemical surface, thin strands of purple swirl across the composition, coming into focus before melting into blurs. The present work epitomises the artist’s persistent engagement with the technical and aesthetic potential of photography, an approach that has remained constant across the extraordinary breadth of Tillmans’ practice. The *Freischwimmer*

works see Tillmans’ return to photography’s fundamental principles, the alchemical transformation of light into line.

The *Freischwimmer* works take their name from the swimming certificate awarded to children in Germany, but also translates directly as ‘free swimmer’. Adding poetic aspect to the series, the title mirrors the fluid, liberatory movement embodied in the present work. Despite allusions in the title and the image, the works are not made with liquid but light, which in Tillmans’ hands ripples and pools on the paper. *Freischwimmer 102* magnifies this to a monumental scale, engaging with the legacy of post-war Abstract-Expressionist and Colour Field painters. As a realisation of the sublime, the present work conveys a similar phenomenological impact as Morris Louis’s abstractions, the photographic equivalent of paint poured directly onto canvas. Discussing the *Freischwimmer* works Tillmans explained: “It is important that these are not paintings, as the eye recognizes these as photographic, the association machine in the head connects them to reality, whereas a painting is always understood by the eye as mark making by the artist. This connectedness of ‘evidence’ as in photographic reality, and an obviously painterly process frees them from being read only as a product of the artist’s hand” (*Ibid.* p. 24).



Left, Morris Louis, *Lambda II*, 1960
Private Collection
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Right, László Moholy-Nagy, *Fotogramm*, 1925
Private Collection

Rising to international prominence in the 1990s, Tillmans has continually probed the possibilities and limitations of photography. The *Freischwimmer* works have occupied a pivotal place within the artist’s celebrated oeuvre from the series’ beginning in 2000. Dating from 2004, *Freischwimmer 102* was created entirely in the darkroom, by moving “light-sources and light-emitting tools and toys” over light-sensitive paper (*Ibid.* p. 25). Forgoing a camera and negative, Tillmans recalls the camera-less experiments of his predecessors László Moholy-Nagy and Man Ray, who similarly manipulated light to create compositions. Stripped of the traditional apparatus of photography, Tillmans continues this interrogation into the very nature of his medium, reducing it to its essential components of light and paper. While a traditional definition of photography denotes a reproduction of the reality in front of the camera, *Freischwimmer 102* has no point of reference beyond its own making. Tillmans writes: “for me, an abstract work is representational because it exists as an object that represents itself. The image can’t be isolated from the surface it is on” (*Ibid.* p. 23).

Tillmans explained “with the abstract pictures, I feel myself liberated from the obligation to represent – that compulsion to represent”, yet the *Freischwimmer* works do not signify a departure from the punkish realism of earlier photographs, but rather a continuation of the artist’s thrillingly subversive approach to his medium (Wolfgang Tillmans quoted in: Exh Cat, London, Tate Modern, *Wolfgang Tillmans*, 2017, p. 40). Notably, the artist describes his photography as balancing between control and chance from his lens-based pictures to the monumental abstraction of the present work, where unpredictability is inherent to the image. “It is central to how I work, being open to what’s there and working in this intersection, interplay of intention and chance, control and coincidence. It is important that I do allow both and that I don’t insist on only one rhetoric, on only one method of working... I think art is most interesting when it’s somehow a co-existence of chance and control, of what I know, what I try to control, and what I can’t—for me of course, it’s always somehow about representing what I see with my eyes” (Wolfgang Tillmans quoted in: Jan Verwoert, Ed., *Wolfgang Tillmans*, London 2014, p. 148).



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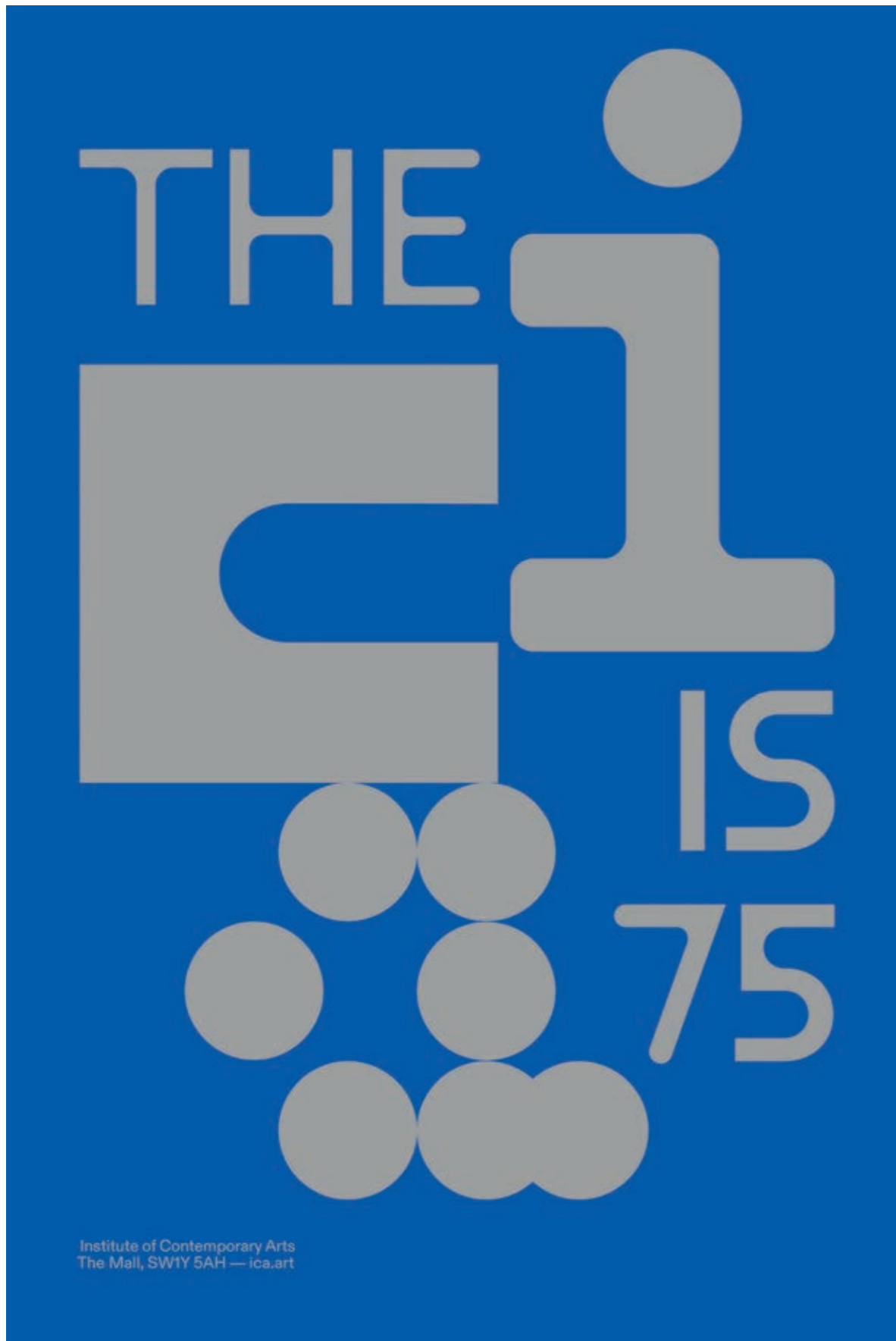
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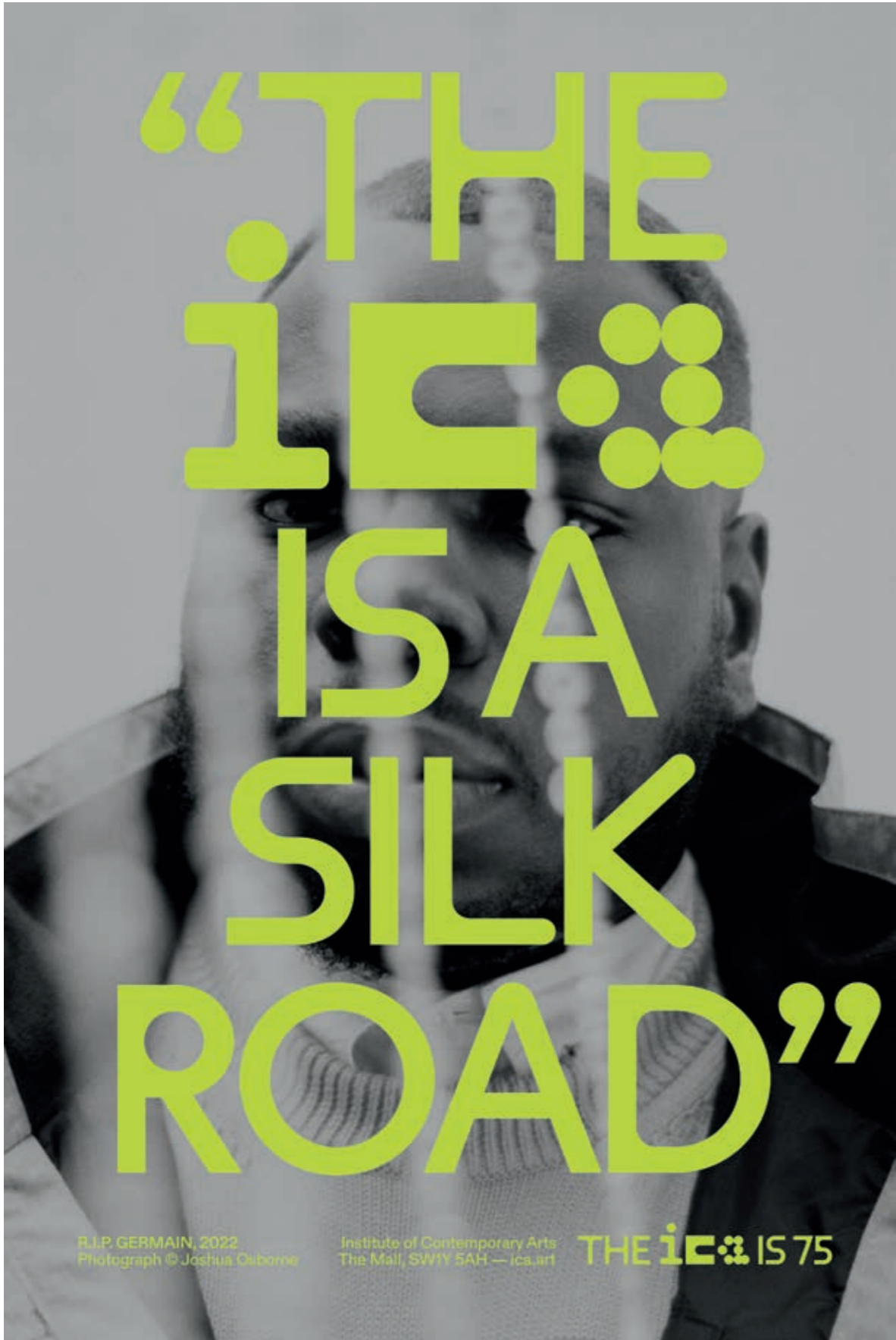
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The University of Edinburgh, 2010





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