



SKARSTEDT
Art | Basel

June 15 – 18, 2023
VIP: June 12 – 14, 2023
Booth E6



Georg **Baselitz**

Jean-Michel **Basquiat**

George **Condo**

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Fischli & Weiss

Keith **Haring**

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KAWS

Martin **Kippenberger**

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Richard **Prince**

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Andy **Warhol**

Sue **Williams**

Christopher **Wool**

SKARSTEDT



Georg Baselitz

Trinker (Drinker)

1981

oil on canvas

51 x 38.3 inches

129.5 x 97.3 cm

signed and dated *G.B. 81* (lower right); signed, titled and dated *G Baselitz Trinker 26.*

Sept. 81 (on the reverse)

(Inv #7494)





"The '80s helped me to rearrange everything; I was able to set up a whole range of ideas and experiences anew, which meant I was able to break everything down so I could make something out of it again." [1]

Painted in a vibrant palette and energetic brushstrokes, *Trinker* (Drinker), 1982 signifies a remarkable period in Georg Baselitz's artistic production. The painting is part of an extended series that Baselitz developed in the early 1980s. Faithful to the artist's signature inversion of the figure, these works are enlarged portraits of subjects engaged in decisively elementary acts of eating oranges and drinking from blue-colored bottles. Departing from the profound melancholic subject matter of Baselitz's works from the 1960s and '70s, the *Trinker* flaunts the enigmatic yet brutal expression.

The *Drinkers and Orange Eaters* series was unveiled in Baselitz's first exhibition in the United States at Xavier Fourcade Gallery in 1981 to great critical acclaim. As the critic Donald Kuspit wrote: "Baselitz's paintings are not only upside-down, they are inside-out: the figures have a flayed, raw look that goes with spiritual nakedness." [2]

The early 1980s were marked by a resurgence of interest in painting as a crucial artistic medium. Coinciding with the landmark exhibition titled *A New Spirit in Painting* (1981, The Royal Academy London), curated by Norman Rosenthal that foregrounded the works by Baselitz, the criticism turned to articulate this phenomenon in terms of emerging artistic movements. In effect, Baselitz's work became situated under the broad term of Neo-Expressionism. Animated by strong expressive gestures, *Trinker* engages in a provocative dialogue with the notion of German Expressionism, encouraging a more nuanced approach to the suggested categorization.

Evoking the intense technique of such masters of twentieth-century Expressionism as Emil Nolde and Ernst Ludwig Kirchner, *Trinker* nevertheless depicts a distinctly contemporary subject, acknowledging the spirit of younger artists such as Walter Dahn. The humorous consonance of the drinker's spiky hair and the red nose, as well as the emphatic defiance of the laws of physics exemplified in the exaggerated contours of the bottle, give an absurdist dimension to Baselitz's performative synthesis of art from the past and present. Meditating on the possibility of art historical lineage in the century ruptured by the Second World War, *Trinker* thus marks another crucial phase in Baselitz's articulation of stylistic individuality. "The challenge for Baselitz was to find a way to break loose from the subject and yet remain true to himself as an artist, and especially as a painter." – as Rosenthal points out – "His problem was how to be part of the Zeitgeist and yet also to remain outside it."

The series includes twenty-seven paintings, which represent eleven "Drinkers," fifteen "Orange Eaters," and one "Clown." Works from the "Drinkers" series can be found in Staatsgalerie, Stuttgart, and Sprengel Museum, Hannover collections.

[1] G. Baselitz quoted in P. Kort, 'Georg Baselitz talks to Pamela Kort - '80s Then – Interview,' *ArtForum*, April 2003

[2] Donald Kuspit, "Georg Baselitz at Fourcade," *Art in America*, February 1982, pp. 130-140.

SKARSTEDT



Georg Baselitz

Franz im Bett (Franz in Bed)

1982

oil on canvas

98 1/2 x 98 1/2 inches

250 x 250 cm

signed and dated 1.IX.82 G.B. (lower center); signed, titled and dated

Franz im Bett 1.IX.82 G. Baselitz (on the reverse)

(Inv #7878)



One in a series of only eight paintings made on the occasion of the landmark 1982 *Zeitgeist* exhibition and also featured in his 1995-1996 traveling retrospective, *Franz im Bett* (*Franz in Bed*) (1982) captures the most iconic elements of Georg Baselitz's practice: frantic brushwork, an overwhelming sense of isolation and vulnerability, and a singular inverted figure. This literal upending of the figurative tradition forged through the inversion creates a unique relationship between subject and style, aiding in the sense of destabilization that permeates the canvas.

Zeitgeist was an ambitious exhibition at the time. Curated by Norman Rosenthal and Christos Joachimides, who the year prior had curated the influential *A New Spirit in Painting* exhibition at the Royal Academy in London that also featured Baselitz, the show aimed to capture the energy and themes of a radical new trend in contemporary art while refuting the dominance of Minimalism and Conceptual Art that had taken hold in the 1960s and 1970s. Taking Joseph Beuys as its starting point and including noteworthy figurative painters of the day, *Zeitgeist* additionally focused on a group of German painters, including Baselitz and his contemporaries such as Anselm Kiefer and A.R. Penck. The exhibition spawned a renewed interest in figurative painting and, in many ways, ushered in a new era of blockbuster exhibitions in Europe. *Franz im Bett* hung over the entrance door of the industrial Martin-Gropius-Bau during *Zeitgeist*, evoking the placements of stained-glass windows in a church and providing viewers with an almost spiritual, albeit unsettling, experience.

In the *Zeitgeist* paintings such as *Franz im Bett*, all of which are now housed in museums or prominent private collections, a lone, bird-like figure either lies in bed or against a window, seemingly confined to a cell-like space from which he either cannot or will not escape. Made in the summer of 1982, *Franz im Bett* reflects the increased sense of psychological tension that pervaded much of Baselitz's work at the time. This may have been, in part, a reflection on his own sense of isolation as a former East German now living in the West, who never felt he quite fit in anywhere but was always cognizant of the historical implications of this divide. "What no one could escape, what I could never escape, was Germany, and being German,"[1] Baselitz once remarked, and his painting style was partially an attempt to ensure his fellow Germans did not forget the legacy of the Second World War. This would have been especially pertinent to Baselitz while creating *Franz im Bett* for the *Zeitgeist* exhibition, as the Martin-Gropius-Bau was situated near the border of East and West Germany, adjacent to the site of Himmler's SS and Gestapo headquarters.

Meditating on the artistic climate of the 1980s and the influence on his own work, Baselitz stated that, "The new spirit was a provocation and, in hindsight, an innovative provocation. Everyone was talking about the end of painting, and then there was this new beginning." [2] *Franz im Bett* exemplifies this provocation through its raw, painterly style and innovative use of the figure, both of which have come to define Baselitz's oeuvre.

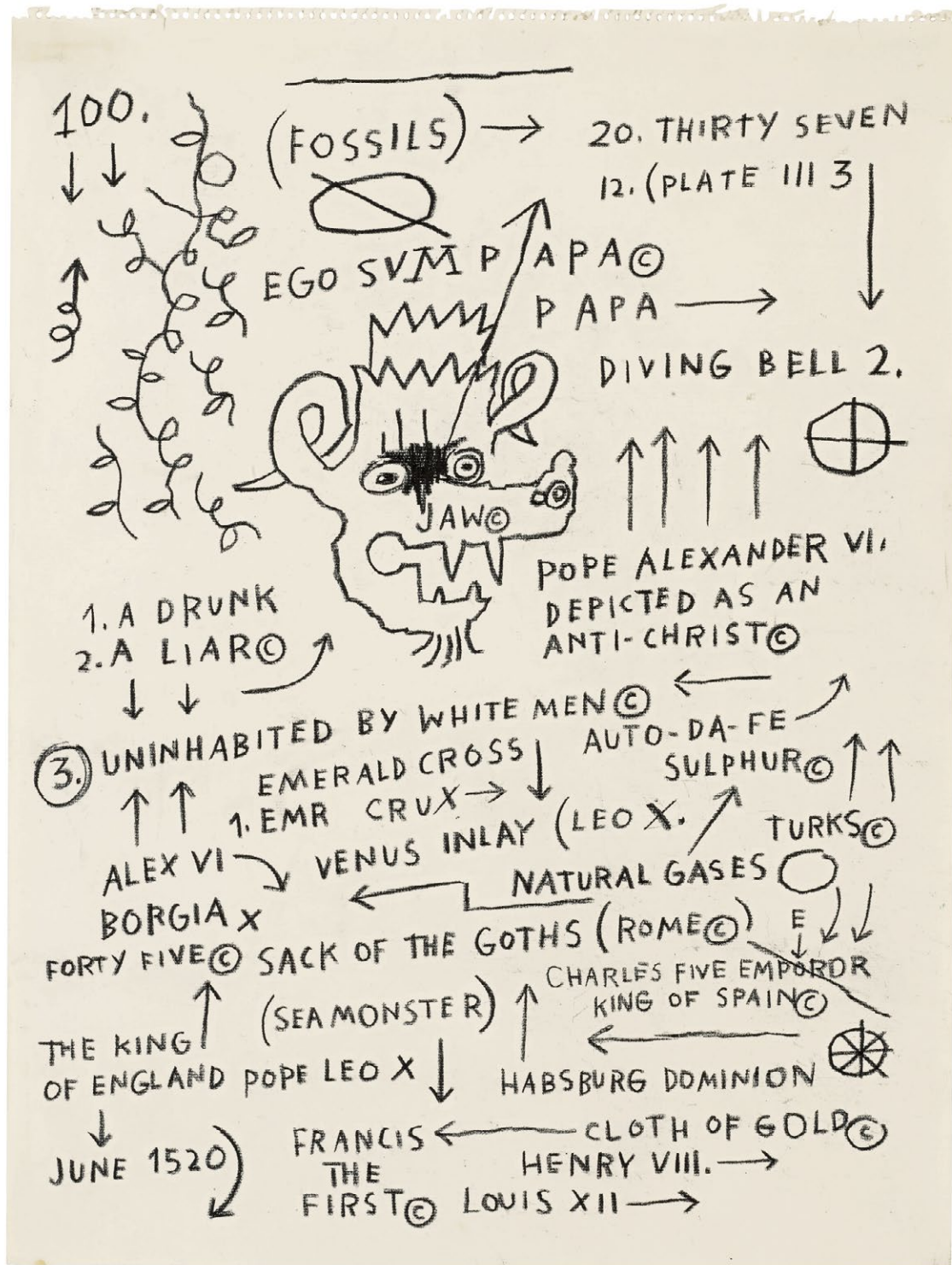
1. Georg Baselitz quoted in *Georg Baselitz*, exh. cat., London, Royal Academy of Arts, 2007, p. 11.

2. Georg Baselitz quoted in Théo de Luca, "Georg Baselitz in Conversation with Théo de Luca," in *A New Spirit of Painting, 1981: On Being an Antimodern*, Cologne, Walther König, 2020, p. 135.



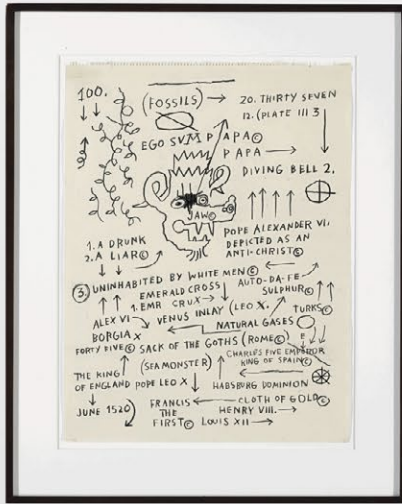
Installation view: *Georg Baselitz: The Retrospective*, Centre Georges Pompidou, Paris, 20 October 2021 - 7 March 2022.

SKARSTEDT



Jean-Michel Basquiat
 UNTITLED (SEA MONSTER)
 1983

oilstick on paper
 24 x 18 inches
 61 x 45.7 cm
 (Inv #8613)



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 2. LACTOS

“Basquiat’s great strength is his ability to merge his absorption of imagery from the streets, the newspapers, and TV with the spiritualism of his Haitian heritage, injecting both into a marvelously intuitive understanding of the language of modern painting.” – Jeffrey Deitch

These two works on paper were executed in 1983, an crucial year that saw Basquiat grappling with the sudden influx of attention and success he garnered in 1982—from sold-out solo shows to inclusion in that year’s Documenta and the beginnings of a fruitful collaboration with Andy Warhol. However, even as he rose higher and higher in his celebrity, Basquiat remained acutely aware of the precarity of his position as a young Black man in the United States. This understanding emerges subtly in his references to Hollywood, California and Leon Schlessinger, a notable Old Hollywood producer, in *Untitled (Cruel Aztec Gods)*. Hollywood, and the people who populate it, are known for their love of all things fame and their resistance to inclusion and diversity. Similarly, the teeth and their surrounding labels allude not only to the origin story of Basquiat’s car accident, but to one’s ability to have their voice heard—something that is often not afforded to people of color. References to European explorers furthers Basquiat’s ideas about the prosecution of people of color, with names like Sugar Ray Robinson and other successful boxers serving as a counterbalance in their success. *Untitled (Sea Monster)* echoes many of these same themes in its imagery and text, with a large monster anchoring the center of the composition. Arrows pointing in all directions allow the eye to move around the text, while also referencing Henry Dreyfuss’s *Symbol Sourcebook*, a compilation of symbols used by the unhoused to communicate—again underscoring the precarious of Basquiat’s position, while simultaneously reminding viewers of his deft ability to create poetry from simple signs and symbols.

SKARSTEDT



Jean-Michel Basquiat
 UNTITLED (CRUEL AZTEC GODS)
 1983

oilstick on paper
 24 x 18 inches
 61 x 45.7 cm
 (Inv #8615)



SKARSTEDT



George Condo

Jean Louis

2005

oil on canvas

60 x 48 inches

152.4 x 121.9 cm

signed, titled and dated *Condo Jean-Louis Oct. 05* (on the reverse)

(Inv #8693)

SKARSTEDT



George Condo
Rodrigo and His Mistress
2007
oil on canvas
52 3/4 x 46 inches
134 x 116.8 cm
(Inv #9130)



Belonging to the cast of characters that comprise his *Existential Portraits*, *Jean Louis* (2005) and *Rodrigo and His Mistress* (2007) exemplify George Condo's poignant observations on humanity, politics, and culture seen through the lens of an individual's psychological complexity. Evoking Old Master portraiture while simultaneously highlighting the grotesque, both paintings see their figures set against nondescript or impoverished backgrounds as they gaze directly at the viewer. Whether set alone or with another, their eyes bulge, their mouths scream, and one can feel the extreme heights of whatever moment they are in.

One of his best-known figures, *Jean Louis* is something of an enigma. As Condo notes, "What is Jean Louis? Is he a waiter, a check, a driver? Is he a real person?" Set against a light blue, cloudy background, he appears stoic and at attention, ready to help. However, off to the side of his face, his mouth hangs open in a perpetual scream—a quintessential manifestation of Condo's Psychological Cubism. For Condo, the portraits of Jean Louis and their various permutations are a study of the notion of the self. As a character, Jean Louis evolved out of a memory; therefore, he exists autonomously, without any fixed point or source pinning him down. This, in turn, poses the question: can anyone ever really be himself? Which is the real Jean Louis? The readily attentive butler? Or the one screaming?

Meanwhile, *Rodrigo and His Mistresses* sees the butler Rodrigo standing beside a seated, masturbating woman. The composition evokes a family portrait, but the nefariousness of the situation lends a touch of irony, humor, and aggressiveness to the scene. Rodrigo, whom Condo has referred to as "a low life, the one who parks your car," is an apt figure to introduce into this sexualized environment. However, these images are not merely meant to shock and titillate. Indeed, their sexuality is meant ironically, affirmed through the grotesque nature of their union. Inspired by the hyper-conservative attitude of Americans in the early aughts, Condo has frequently returned to sexualized subjects as a means of reacting to the façade of morality that pervades our culture. That both Rodrigo and his mistress so unabashedly meet our gaze echoes this point. They do not invite us in per se, but they certainly force us to acknowledge our motives for staring.

Both Jean Louis and Rodrigo exist as serial characters in Condo's oeuvre, figures through which he lives vicariously and makes his ideas known.

SKARSTEDT



George Condo

Constructed Female Portrait

2017

oil on canvas

28 x 22 1/8 inches

71.1 x 56.2 cm

signed and dated *Condo 2017* (on the reverse)

(Inv #9133)



SKARSTEDT



George Condo
Study for Metamorphosis I
2006
oil on canvas
24 x 20 inches
61 x 50.8 cm
(Inv #9090)



SKARSTEDT



Eric Fischl

The Parade Returns

2022

acrylic on linen

68 x 96 inches

172.7 x 243.8 cm

signed, titled and dated *The Parade Returns* Eric Fischl 2022.002 (on the reverse)

(Inv #8605)



The Parade Returns (2022) belongs to a recent series of paintings inspired by the Ragamuffin Parade that takes place every Halloween in Fischl's home of Sag Harbor, New York. Having attended the parade for years, Fischl was constantly inspired and amused by the costume choices of the parade-goers, who range in all ages and choices. Throughout this time, Fischl had taken pictures of these costumed folk and stored them away, unsure of how to best use them (Fischl almost always begins with photographic sources that he collages into the eventual composition before laying it down in paint). When the pandemic hit, and suddenly we were left not only without ways to come together in groups but were torn even further apart by political events, the importance of a gathering such as the Ragamuffin parade became incredibly pronounced. The figures in *The Parade Returns* all appear worse for wear—whether hobbling along on crutches or walking around in disheveled clothing and makeup, the figures seem tired and lost, ambling in all directions yet not really seeing or acknowledging one another. It feels like the end of something, a return back to reality after a fun adventure and the exhaustion and disappointment that comes with it.

SKARSTEDT



Fischli & Weiss

4 Hostessen (4 Stewardesses)

1988

plaster cast over polyester resin

22 3/4 x 19 7/8 x 26 1/4 inches

57.8 x 50.5 x 66.7 cm

Edition of 6

(Inv #6047)



Following nearly a decade of collaboration and newfound successes, Fischli & Weiss' *4 Hostessen (4 Stewardesses)* was born from the artists' preceding series titled *Visible World* (1986-2012), wherein the duo traveled to and photographed famous sites and tourist attractions—quickly finding the modes of transport as intriguing as their destinations. Carefully constructed photographs of airplanes, ground equipment, fuel trucks, baggage carriers, runways, lounges, parking lots, and hangars alongside plaster sculptures of cars and stewardesses inspire an investigation on modern transportation, the reverberant theme within the *Airports* (1987-2012) series.

Poised and grouped in a familiar scene, the four stewardesses wear three-piece uniforms with short, styled hair reminiscent of the 1950s—elegant and evocative of the glamorous airline industry of that time. Yet expressionless gazes and the white, unfinished effect of plaster render these women insipid vessels for the viewer's (or passenger's) desires. Withholding individuality, they are generalized in character and small in scale, attributes consistent in all three variants of the stewardess sculptures within the *Airports* series. This play on anonymity, banality and the monotony of travel emphasizes the sculpture's larger commentary on the constructed systems that govern social classes, which are evermore apparent in the microcosm of an airport. A site-specific installation of the series was temporarily on view in 1990 at the Glasgow Airport, refreshing the perspectives of passing travelers.

"We do take steps to show things in their true light. Which is also what makes it interesting: we don't want to be rid of it altogether, but we don't want to leave it as it is either. That's true of many of our works: we want to take things out of the niche where they belong and transport them somewhere else, but without denying their origins. It is about taking but also about giving back." [1]

[1] P. Fischli, quoted in "The Odd Couple", *Frieze Magazine*, Issue 102, October 2006.

SKARSTEDT



Keith Haring

Untitled

1985

acrylic and enamel on canvas tarp

116 x 179 3/4 inches

294.6 x 456.6 cm

(Inv #8929)



In 1981, consummate New Yorker Keith Haring noticed that the electrical company used by most of the city, Consolidated Edison, used vinyl tarps to protect their equipment on the streets of New York. For an artist who is known for creating work on unconventional supports—most notably the spaces typically reserved for advertisements in the New York City subway stations—this observation was inherently intriguing to Haring, and he quickly went about sourcing a distributor who would supply him with large-scale white and colored pieces of tarp.

The present untitled work belongs to this important series of impressively sized tarp paintings. Brimming with the quintessential figures that have made Keith Haring such an instantly recognizable artist, the present work sees a robot-like figure set against a dotted horizon, out of whose head brims three other figures, two snake-like and one with a red X burnished against his chest. Surrounding all of them are the classic radiating lines of energy. The playfulness of this scene—emphasized by the graphic lines, sense of movement, and cartoonish representation of the figures—is juxtaposed with an underlying darkness brought on by Haring's staunch political activism and keen social awareness. Tackling subjects such as sexuality, the AIDS epidemic, technology, and capitalist greed, Haring was decidedly optimistic yet undoubtedly aware of the issues of his day.

These themes manifest themselves within the artist's key motifs and iconography. For example, the red X on the upper figure's chest marks him as a target, hinting at the marginalization Haring must have internalized as a gay man in a conservative 1980s America, and also as someone who would later be diagnosed with the deeply misunderstood AIDS virus. The advent of modern-day technology also figures prominently within the work. Exploding heads like the one seen here symbolized for Haring the proliferation of information thanks to rising technology and its effects on media consumers. The head further symbolizes the Russian nesting dolls, known as Matryoshkas, which represent change, transition, and transformation in Haring's work. A fear of new technology is supported by the robotic look of the lower figure's face. Haring gave much thought to the role computers and robots would play in our daily lives, and these thoughts were met with equal parts trepidation and excitement. Pulsating lines of energy surround the scene, including the snake-like figures that slither out into the sides of the composition, similarly evoking change, transformation, and the natural cycle of life.

SKARSTEDT



Chantal Joffe

Fraser in a White T-Shirt

2023

oil on canvas

84 5/8 x 39 3/8 inches

214.9 x 100 cm

(Inv #9166)



SKARSTEDT



KAWS

BLACKOUT

2019

acrylic on canvas

72 x 96 inches

182.9 x 243.8 cm

signed and dated *KAWS*, 19 (on the reverse)

(Inv #9091)



BLACKOUT (2019) is the namesake painting of KAWS's exhibition held that same year at Skarstedt, London—his first solo exhibition in London and the only time this series has been exhibited publicly. Comprised of ten vividly colored abstractions, *BLACKOUT*, and its related paintings continued the artist's lengthy investigation into the possibilities of morphing recognizable imagery into subsequently unrecognizable abstractions. By obscuring the narrative possibilities of his characters and their related iconography, KAWS uniquely brings to the fore the emotional content of his work. At the same time, the vestiges of figuration that can be discerned throughout the composition suggest traps, pathways, bridges, and boundaries. The smooth linework, bold colors, and underlying sense of positivity that the artist culls from mainstream cartoons are juxtaposed with a scratchy, immediate drawing style that evokes the DIY aesthetic and cultural cynicism of more underground artists such as Robert Crumb and Raymond Pettibon. This dichotomy alludes to the fact that common languages can be spoken with different voices, along with the artist's underlying concern about the divisions within and across societies—themes he further probes in his most recent body of work. Works such as *BLACKOUT* remind us that despite living in a time of connectivity and constant communication, we are separated by the toxic nature of the current political and public discourse that also permeates social media.

SKARSTEDT



KAWS

CHUM (KCO7)

2016

acrylic on canvas mounted on panel

60 x 50 inches

152.4 x 127 cm

signed and dated *KAWS*, 16 (on the reverse)

(Inv #9138)



“There is also the happy logo turned aggressor. KAWS’s CHUM (a variant of the ‘friendly’-titled COMPANION) is a character formed from the chubby, amiable logo for Michelin Tires, originally developed in the nineteenth century. ‘I was interested in him’ the artist has said, ‘because he was the first cartoon logo that was a made-up cartoon-like personality.’ Typically, the artist changed the mood of this cheerful, anthropomorphized pile of tires, giving him a slightly evil and intimidating personality... KAWS’s use of super-saturated color (burning red or deep black) also gives CHUM its sense of weight and radiance...CHUM stands before us like a toy overdosed on steroids...CHUM dominated the room and holds our gaze.” [1]

[1] Michael Auping, “America’s Cartoon Mind,” *KAWS: WHERE THE END STARTS*, exh. cat., Fort Worth, Modern Art Museum of Fort Worth, 2017, p. 69.

SKARSTEDT



KAWS

SEEING

2022

bronze, paint

75 1/2 x 29 1/2 x 39 3/8 inches

191.8 x 74.9 x 100 cm

Edition 1 of 1, with 1 AP

pink colorway

(Inv #9149.1)

SKARSTEDT



KAWS

WATCHING

2022

bronze, paint

75 x 29 1/2 x 33 1/2 inches

190.5 x 74.9 x 85.1 cm

Edition 1 of 1, with 1 AP

grey colorway

(Inv #9150.1)

SKARSTEDT



Martin Kippenberger

Untitled

(from the *Egg Paintings* series)

1996

oil on canvas

47 1/4 x 39 1/4 inches

120 x 99.7 cm

signed with the artist's initials, inscribed and dated *M.K. 96 Graz* (on the reverse)

(Inv #8165)



“... the stupidest things suddenly turned into something quite individual. It’s such a comic process. Always get to the heart of the matter, to things that are so close that you wouldn’t think of them. Like an egg, or that sort of thing, and mess about with that ... You don’t have to painstakingly pull things apart, discover something somewhere or other. Some things are never used up because there’s still so much in them.” [1]

Painted in 1996, *Untitled* is from Kippenberger’s acclaimed *Eierbilder* (*Egg Paintings*) series. Exhibited in the 1997 solo show titled *The Eggman and his Outriggers* at the Städtisches Museum in Abteiberg, which due to his untimely death that year, was his last, *Untitled* occupies a meaningful place within the artist’s celebrated oeuvre. In its astute juxtaposition of symbolic material, the work demonstrates Kippenberger’s ability to suggest and confound meaning simultaneously. The striped background, redolent of a child’s wallpaper, is overlaid with images that both complement and contradict its connotation of playfulness. The egg itself is halved and held by two hands, one on top of the other, revealing a lamb-like creature. Kippenberger often used hands to denote the presence of the artist, yet here the notion of creative power seems to take on new levels of meaning, playing off implications of supernatural metamorphosis against allusions to a magician’s rabbit-in-a-hat trick. At the same time, the combined presence of the Greek letter Pi and the number three recasts this transformative act as a mathematical conundrum, appealing to the world of numerical logic. Yet if Kippenberger’s teasing compositional structure appears to set up a puzzle, it is ultimately an unsolvable one. In a manner typical of the artist, the work is underpinned by a sense that this seemingly cryptic—almost hieroglyphic—arrangement of symbols may be little more than a prank to mislead the viewer. A masterful exercise in semantic subversion, *Untitled* illustrates Kippenberger’s ability to transform the picture plane into an arena for his own enigmatic play.

[1] M. Kippenberger in an interview with D. Baumann, “Completing Picasso,” Martin Kippenberger, Tate Modern, 2006, p. 65.

SKARSTEDT



Barbara Kruger

Repeat After Me

1985 - 1994

silkscreen on vinyl

94 1/2 x 94 1/2 inches

240 x 240 cm

(Inv #9145)



Kruger's striking disconnect between text and image has persisted and evolved throughout her career. Boldly demanding the viewer to, *Repeat After Me*, Kruger overlays her text upon an image of a ventriloquist dummy holding a hypnotic spiral, luring us into submission. Her questioning of American ideals, commercialization, greed, and consumerism reach full force in this image, sardonically questioning whether the source of our likes and wants comes from ourselves or the companies who try to sell us their goods. "The goal for every human being, including myself, is to live an examined life—to really think about what makes us who we are in the world and how culture constructs and contains us. That's what I'm interested in." [1]

[1] B. Kruger, quoted in I. Forster, "Resisting Reductivism & Breaking the Bubble: An Interview with Barbara Kruger," *Art21*, 2018.

SKARSTEDT



Albert Oehlen

Untitled

1993

oil on printed fabric

36 1/4 x 25 1/2 inches

92 x 65 cm

signed and dated *A. Oehlen 93* (on the reverse)

(Inv #9058)



“In painting, you really have a completely absurd way of going about things. You’ve got something three-dimensional reduced to two dimensions, and that’s abstraction. Without this abstraction, you’d have to try painting on the object itself, or even to become the object. The work you do, the reshaping of reality into the picture, is such a remarkable transformation that it really doesn’t matter much whether an apple is still recognizable as such or not...If you understand the accomplishments of abstract painting, then you don’t have to paint abstract at all anymore. With hindsight, the difference is not that great.” [1]

With its daubs and lines of earthy browns, deep blues, and white painted atop floral-patterned fabric, *Untitled* (1993) belongs to the series of *Fabric Paintings* Albert Oehlen produced in the 1990s that has come to define so much of what has made him one of the most important painters of the latter half of the twentieth century. Using found fabric as a support instead of a pristine blank canvas, Oehlen complicates the notion of the artist’s hand as central to modern painting. By including pre-determined motifs and compositions, the focus moves away from the subject or finished result towards the process of painting and the questioning of its conventions. Having begun to work in abstraction only five years before embarking on the *Fabric Paintings*, Oehlen was deeply consumed with the term “abstraction” itself and how it was defined in an art-historical context. Through works such as *Untitled*, he has laid bare the absurdity of the sheer act of painting.

[1] Albert Oehlen quoted in *Albert Oehlen* (New York: Taschen, 2009), 188.

SKARSTEDT



Marco Pariani

Sweet Mountains

2023

oil, acrylic and spray paint on linen

85 x 66 inches

215.9 x 167.6 cm

(Inv #9124)



In Marco Pariani's latest painting, *Sweet Mountains* (2023), a dappled hazy, lavender gray ground supports an amorphous, abstracted landscape. A chocolate brown mass appears out of a deep blue horizon, highlighted with warm white, orange, black, red, and pink tones. A line of white additional appears on the top of the mountain like snow caps. Having recently produced a series of figures inspired by the absurdity of Christmas inflatables, Pariani is now turning his focus to the natural world around him, beginning a new body of work inspired by landscapes.

However, more important than the subject matter is the way the image is built up on the canvas. For all the spontaneous energy that emanates from the picture, Pariani's practice is an intensive labor or love through which he claims fealty to color, texture, layering, and contrast. He begins with layers of tinted and sanded gesso to build up the background and create a uniquely textured surface, a preparation that takes many days to complete. Through this method, he foregrounds the significance of color and process in his work. Resting on top of this ground resides an abstracted image that often draws inspiration from screenshots of found online images. Rendered in frenetically calligraphic strokes, one can barely make out the original motifs, revealing the strangeness and absurdity of his source images in the process of their deconstruction. In contrast to the ground, these elements are applied quickly with spray paint. Despite this intensive process, Pariani leaves room for feeling and intuition to guide his actions—what color may feel right one day ultimately becomes a different color the next. This disparity in tempo between fast and slow application, thoughtful and spur-of-the-moment approaches, results in the sense of adrenaline in his work reminiscent of graffiti.

SKARSTEDT



Richard Prince

Nurses of the Tourist Service

2003

oil, acrylic and inkjet on canvas

34 x 24 inches

86.4 x 61 cm

(Inv #9131)



In his appropriations of distinctly American subject matter, Prince's nurses represent the collective, archetypal fantasy. With starch-white uniforms and matching caps, these standardized beauties present the artist's continued investigation of gender, fetish, and identity. The solitary figures, overlain on polychromatic grounds of pink, purple, orange, and yellow, vary in pose and proximity—an inauspicious disconnect and pervasive anonymity are sanctioned by obstructive surgical masks. On arriving at these themes, Prince notes, "I made a mistake painting all this white...After I had wiped off some of the painting, it looked like a mask on the nurse's face and suddenly it was one of those moments...It was a way of unifying and also talking about identity." [1]

A bibliophile and avid collector of pulp romance novels, Prince digitally scanned, projected, and printed the covers of these 1950s-60s paperbacks onto canvas, the typeface of the original titles overhead, taglines, and dime-store prices veiled by Prince's expressionistic strokes of color, introducing the artist at his most painterly. The combined appropriation of sultry medical fiction and Abstract Expressionism plays on Prince's love of high and low, feminine and masculine—the dichotomy questioning both mass culture and the post-war aesthetic. With this twist of irony, Prince defies trumped-up performative sexual tropes, offering a counterpart to the machismo of his re-photographed Marlboro cowboys.

[1] Richard Prince quoted in N. Shukur, *Russh Magazine*, 2014.

SKARSTEDT



Richard Prince

Untitled (Cowboy Fixing Chaps)

1980-83

Ektacolor print

20 x 24 inches

50.8 x 61 cm

AP 1 from an Edition of 2 with 1 AP

(Inv #9132)



“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* has 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 a national 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.

A moment of quiet reprieve, here a cowboy fixes his chaps while smoking a cigarette, his horse patiently waiting by his side as dry blades of grass sprout up in front of him, a rugged mountain appearing in the hazy distance. The noble 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



Paula Rego

Five Generations of Muses

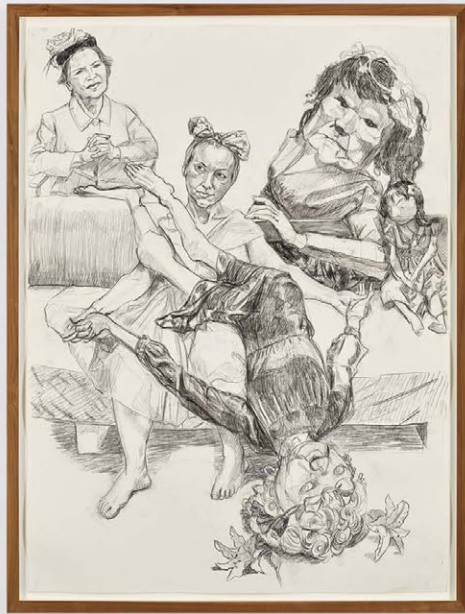
2007

graphite & Conté pencil on paper

54 x 40 inches

137.2 x 101.6 cm

(Inv #8998)



SKARSTEDT



Cindy Sherman

Untitled #209

1989

color coupler print in artist's frame

65 1/4 x 49 inches

165.7 x 124.5 cm

Edition 1 of 6

signed, numbered and dated *Cindy Sherman 1989 1/6* (on the backing board)

(Inv #6518.1)



Created in 1989, *Untitled #209* belongs to Cindy Sherman's series of *History Portraits*, a continuation of Sherman's investigations into persona, transformation, femininity, and culture, seen here through the lens of Old Master portraiture. The idea for the series came as Sherman was living in Rome, surrounded by the history and relics of the Renaissance. Yet, it was a part of French history that ultimately launched the series: a visit to Limoges' porcelain factory and viewing items designed by Louis XV's mistress, Madame de Pompadour, led Sherman to explore historical characters. As with all of Sherman's work, *Untitled #209*, and the *History Portraits*, more broadly, are not inspired by any one particular reference work. Instead, they evoke feelings, personas, atmospheres, and ideas. Indeed, Sherman intentionally did not visit the museums and churches of Rome while devising this series, preferring to derive ideas from reproductions.

The woman who appears before us in *Untitled #209* is dressed in regal-looking attire, with a ribbon around her head, her hands placed gracefully on her lap, and her long hair hanging over her shoulder. However, something is amiss: her hair is clearly a wig, and her dress is an amalgamation of multiple articles of clothing found in Roman flea markets. While seemingly inherent to Sherman's images, this intentional artificiality highlights the unrealistic nature of many Renaissance images, where babies look like wrestlers and women's bodies are out of proportion. In this way, Sherman is commenting on how and why we think these paintings are masterful. Approaching history with a mission to question its assumptions, Sherman's *Untitled #209* becomes a reorientation of the accepted sense of hierarchical order.

SKARSTEDT



Andy Warhol

New York Post (Judge Blasts Lynch)

1983

acrylic and silkscreen ink on canvas

11 x 14 inches

27.9 x 35.6 cm

stamped by the Estate of Andy Warhol and The Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts, Inc., and numbered VF PA93.006 (on the overlap); numbered PA93.006 (on the stretcher)

(Inv #7841)

WINA
\$50,000 EASIE
NEST EGO

NEW YORK POST

FRIDAY, APRIL 1, 1983

30 CENTS

© 1983 News Group Publications Inc. Vol. 180, No. 117
AMERICA'S FASTEST-GROWING NEWSPAPER

Race slay teen
gets 5-to-15 y

DEATH

Echoing his *Death and Disaster* series of the 1960s, such as *129 Die in Jet* (1962) or *Tuna-fish Disaster* (1963), *New York Post (Judge Blasts Lynch)* (1983) sees Warhol returning to earlier themes and motifs, a trend that defined much of the last decade of his life. Warhol was an avid collector of newspapers, filling many of his time capsules exclusively with headlines from various papers, but notably the *New York Post*, the cover of which Warhol himself graced in 1968 as news of his near-fatal assassination attempt broke. For an artist perennially in tune with the goings on of society, both high and low, newspapers lent an immediacy and accessibility to shifts in culture and politics that would have appealed to Warhol. Yet, he would have also been fascinated by the news's ability to numb a culture to specific ideas and tragedies and twist a story in certain, untruthful ways.

An often under looked element of these earlier headlines is their political nature, which is readily apparent in *New York Post (Judge Blasts Lynch)*. The present work replicates the headline of the *New York Post's* April 1, 1983 issue, which relayed the sentencing of Gino Bova, a white teenager accused along with three others of brutally beating a Black man, William Turks, to death in Brooklyn. The racial undertones of this work both harken back to Warhol's *Race Riot* paintings of the 1960s and precede the political events of the present day, evincing Warhol's keen understanding of the undercurrents that propel modern society, for better or worse.

SKARSTEDT



Andy Warhol

Heinz Tomato Ketchup with Campbell's Soup Can

1962

graphite on paper

23 1/2 x 18 inches

59.7 x 45.7 cm

signed and dated *Andy Warhol 62* (on the reverse)

(Inv #9165)

SKARSTEDT



Sue Williams

Ministry of Hate

2013

oil and acrylic on canvas

72 x 84 inches

182.9 x 213.4 cm

signed, titled and dated (on the reverse)

(Inv #6891)



Blending the political with the humorous, the figurative with the abstract, Sue Williams's *Ministry of Hate* (2013) is a prescient rumination on the political events of the first years of the aughts and their lingering effects on Williams personally and the rest of the world. Rendered in neon-hued colors, anthropomorphic abstractions coalesce with the hard geometries of the twin towers of the World Trade Center as they explode and collapse into chaotic oblivion. Painted a decade after that tragic event, it remained at the top of mind for Williams, who astutely saw the decisions made in the aftermath as the beginnings of a turn towards a society filled with hate—"more fascist society," to use her words. Nevertheless, the brightness of the palette subverts a purely pessimistic reading of the painting, imbuing it with a sense of necessary levity.

SKARSTEDT



Christopher Wool

Untitled

1991

alkyd on aluminum

90 x 60 inches

228.6 x 152.4 cm

signed and dated (on the reverse)

(Inv #PC167)



Created in 1991, the present work belongs to Christopher Wool's heralded series of *Pattern Paintings* and locates an intriguing tension between the pictorial content and the process of its realization. After witnessing a handyman in his apartment building applying wallpaper-like patterns to the walls in his foyer, Wool began the series in 1986 by using those same patterned rubber rollers found in hardware stores across the country in lieu of the traditional paintbrush. As such, Wool constructs a work that consciously oscillates between repetitive predictability and inconsistency of artistic touch.

Indeed, at first glance, the vines and leaves that twist across the canvas appear to be a representation of a natural landscape rendered in black and white, yet closer inspection reveals the composition to be a series of repetitions of the same vines, the same leaves, with no distinction between them other than the slight drips of paint that reveal the artist's hand. At first glance, what appears to be an illustration of the natural world that can be searched for meaning, symbolism, or narrative can now be read as pure abstraction, fundamentally altering our perceptions and expectations of the work.

Many artists have resisted the tendency for their work to be appreciated for its decorative qualities, and yet Wool chooses to tackle this dilemma head-on by deliberately using a decorative tool to create a wallpaper-like effect. However, context is key, and *how* these forms appear inherently complicates the image, adding additional layers of meaning, and making the composition anything but decorative as Wool forces his viewers to contemplate notions of abstraction, nothingness, seriality, and adornment. With product and process irrevocably fused, indexically pointing to and restricting one another, the work's meaning lies in the tension created therein.