

JUDY CHICAGO

Art | Basel

JESSICA
SILVERMAN

Jessica Silverman is proud to present rare works by Judy Chicago, an artistic innovator who has made a significant impact on art history as a feminist and critical postmodernist. Chicago is best known for *The Dinner Party*, an ambitious multi-media installation which toured a dozen cities from 1979-1984 and is now on permanent display at the Brooklyn Museum in New York. After acclaimed museum solo retrospectives in California, New York, Britain, France, and Germany, however, the entire oeuvre of the 85-year-old artist is being re-appraised and celebrated. As the *Financial Times* declares, **"The feminist artist finally takes her deserved place in the modern canon."**

As part of **Art Basel Feature (D16)** on the ground floor of the Messe, the booth will feature significant works made before 1999. The exhibition includes: feminist minimalist abstractions from the 1960s; porcelain "test plates" for *The Dinner Party* and a unique series of annotated Polaroids about Chicago's *Atmosphere Earthworks* from the 1970s; a rare *Birth Project* tapestry from the 1980s; and color pencil drawings from the artist's *Thinking about Trees* series from the 1990s.

Some of these works have been shown in the following museums exhibitions: de Young Museum, San Francisco; ICA Miami; LUMA Foundation, Arles; New Museum, New York; and Serpentine, London.



Chicago's iconic drawings and paintings from the late 1960s challenge the limited palette and stiff linearity of Minimalism. Indeed, they recast the perceptual and formalist concerns of her male contemporaries into a deeper exploration of subjectivity, gender, and the body.

Chicago's circular forms radiate with emotion and color. Their ombre shading creates a three-dimensional movement, suggestive of spirited pirouettes and the pulsing vibrations of female sexual pleasure. Prefiguring her famed "central core" images, these voluptuous wall works are arguably the world's first feminist abstractions. As *Beaux Arts* magazine put it, these pieces are "odes to women and their power."



Judy Chicago

Large Dome Drawing Blue/Green, 1968-1969

Prismacolor on paper on board

58 x 58 x 2 1/4 inches / 147.3 x 147.3 x 5.7 cm

(JCH00242DR)

\$360,000





Judy Chicago

Dome Drawing #4, 1968

Prismacolor on paper

Framed: 27 1/2 x 27 1/2 inches / 69.8 x 69.8 cm

(JCH00084DR)

\$110,000



The works in this spherical series are often titled *Domes*, referring to the hemispheres of two breasts and a pregnant belly. They are also called *Whirling Donuts*, referring to Sigmund Freud's *Interpretation of Dreams*, which declared that donuts were symbolic of vaginas. These works also occasionally go by the name "star cunts," a humorous conflation of the life-giving energy of suns and the biological origins of a baby.

Whether they are works on paper, exquisitely shaded with Prismacolor pencils, or paintings that display Chicago's dexterity with spray paint, these lustrous works are crafted with care and respect. As Chicago wrote in one of several manifestos: "The woman artist, seeing herself as loathed, takes that very mark of her otherness and by asserting it as the hallmark of her iconography, establishes a vehicle by which to state the truth and beauty of her identity."



Judy Chicago

Three Star Cunts, 1969

Sprayed acrylic lacquer on acrylic

28 x 28 x 1 1/2 inches / 71.1 x 71.1 x 3.8 cm

(JCH00542DR)

\$250,000





A sublimation of sexual desire through abstraction and political content through formal concerns, Chicago's domes, donuts, and star cunts are icons of feminist minimalism.

Judy Chicago

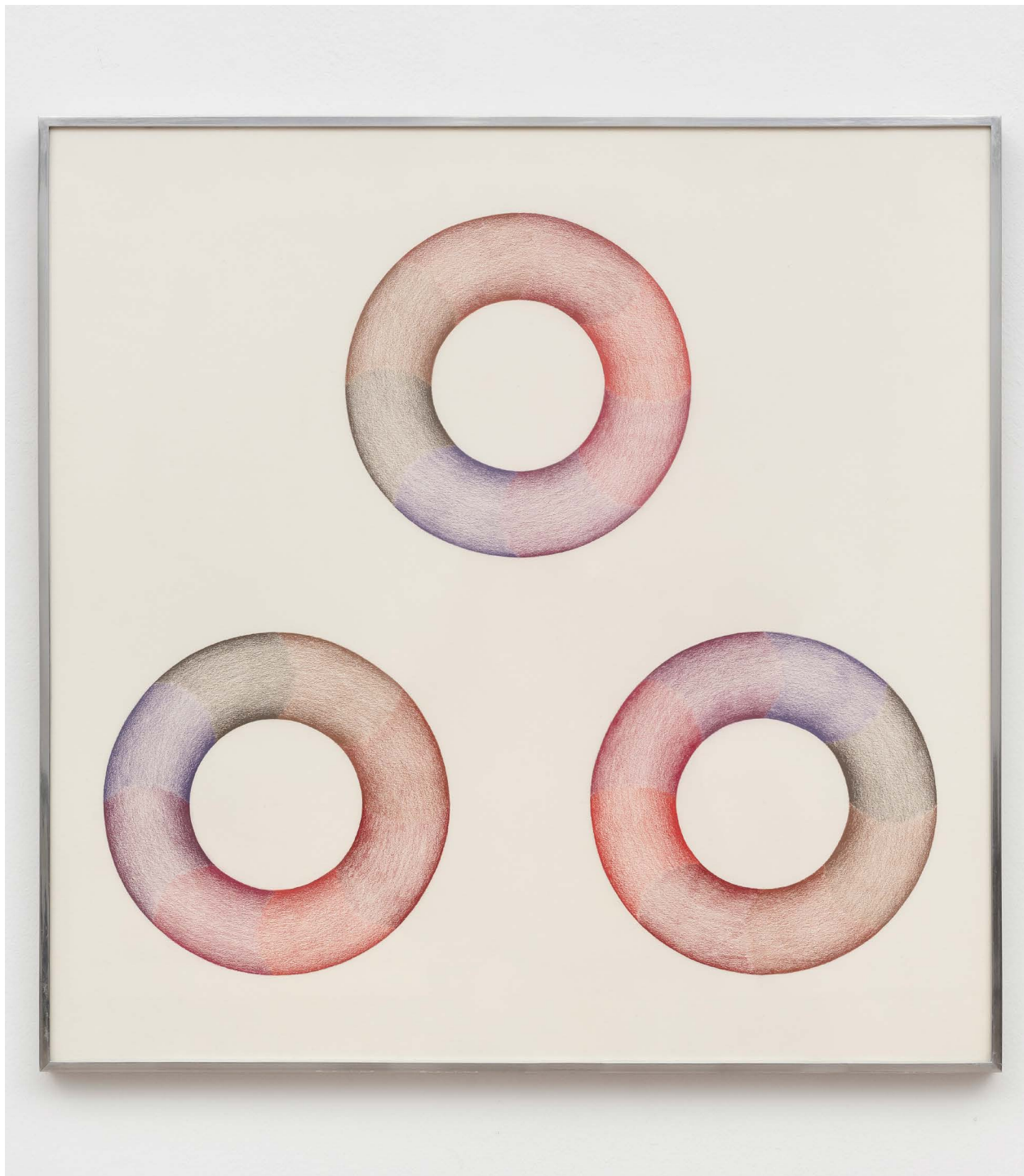
Donut Drawing #7, 1968

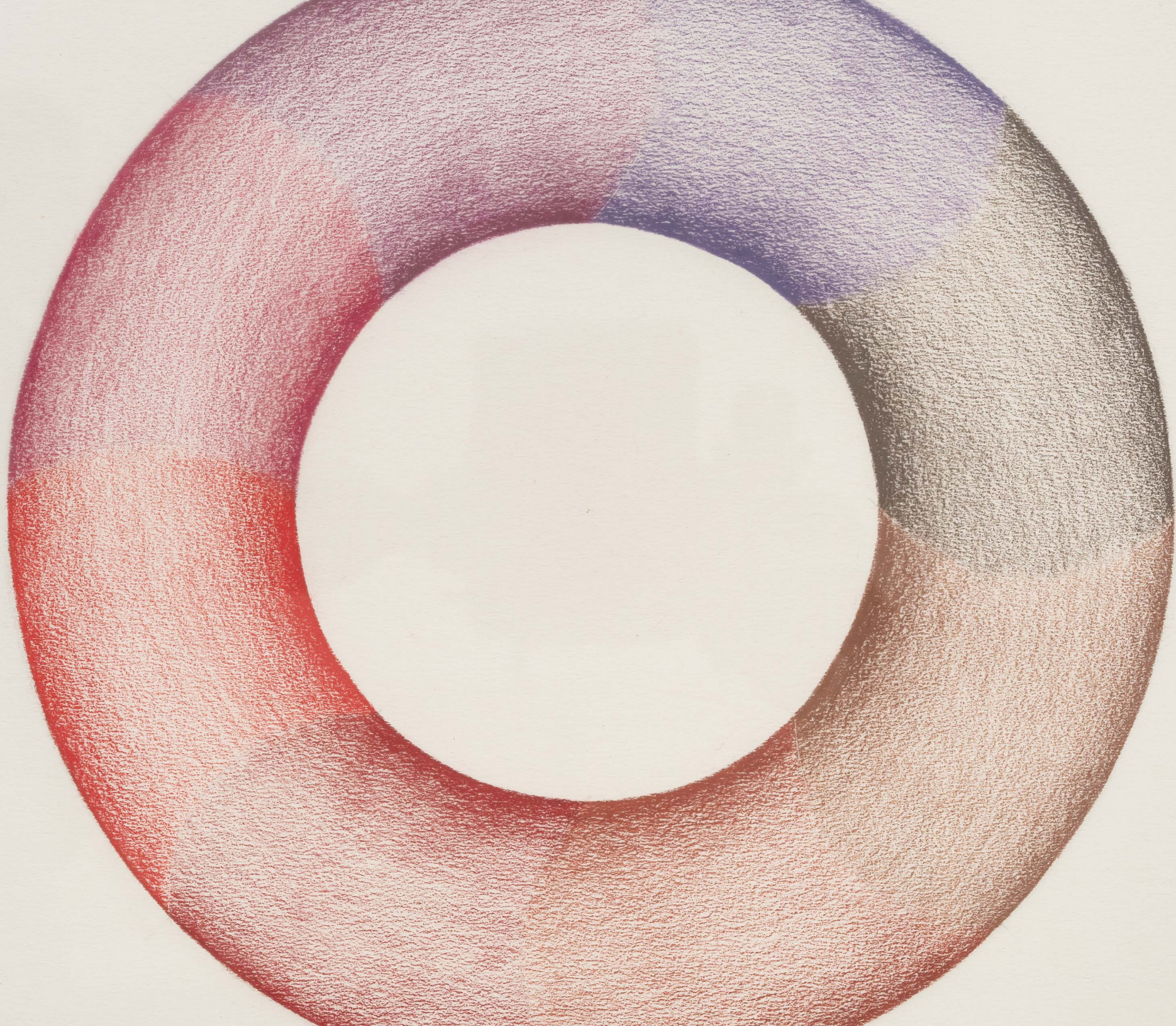
Prismacolor on paper

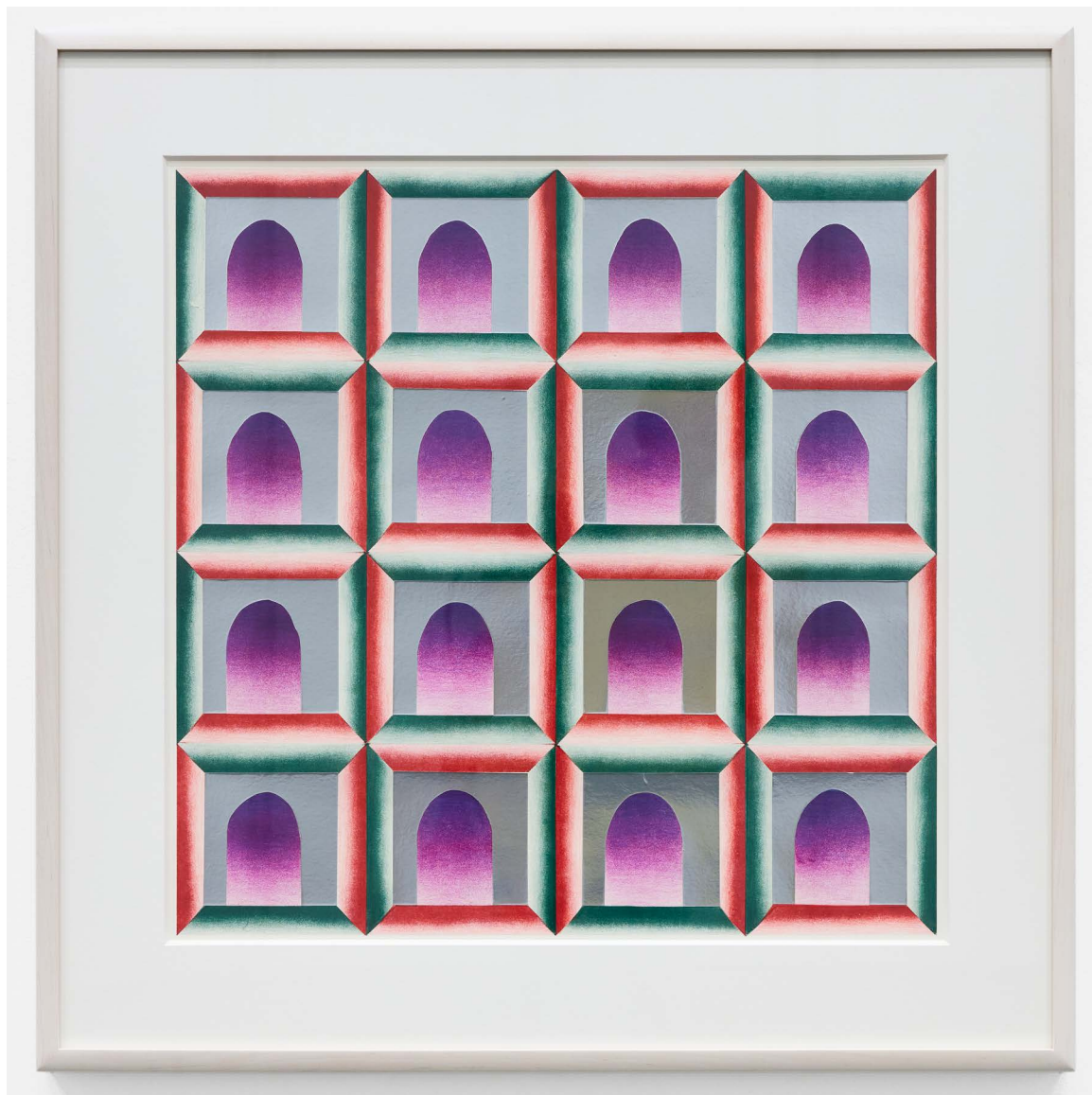
27 1/2 x 27 1/2 inches / 69.8 x 69.8 cm

(JCH00083DR)

\$110,000







Judy Chicago

Silver Doorways Proof C, 1972

Hand-colored lithograph with PrismaColor and collage

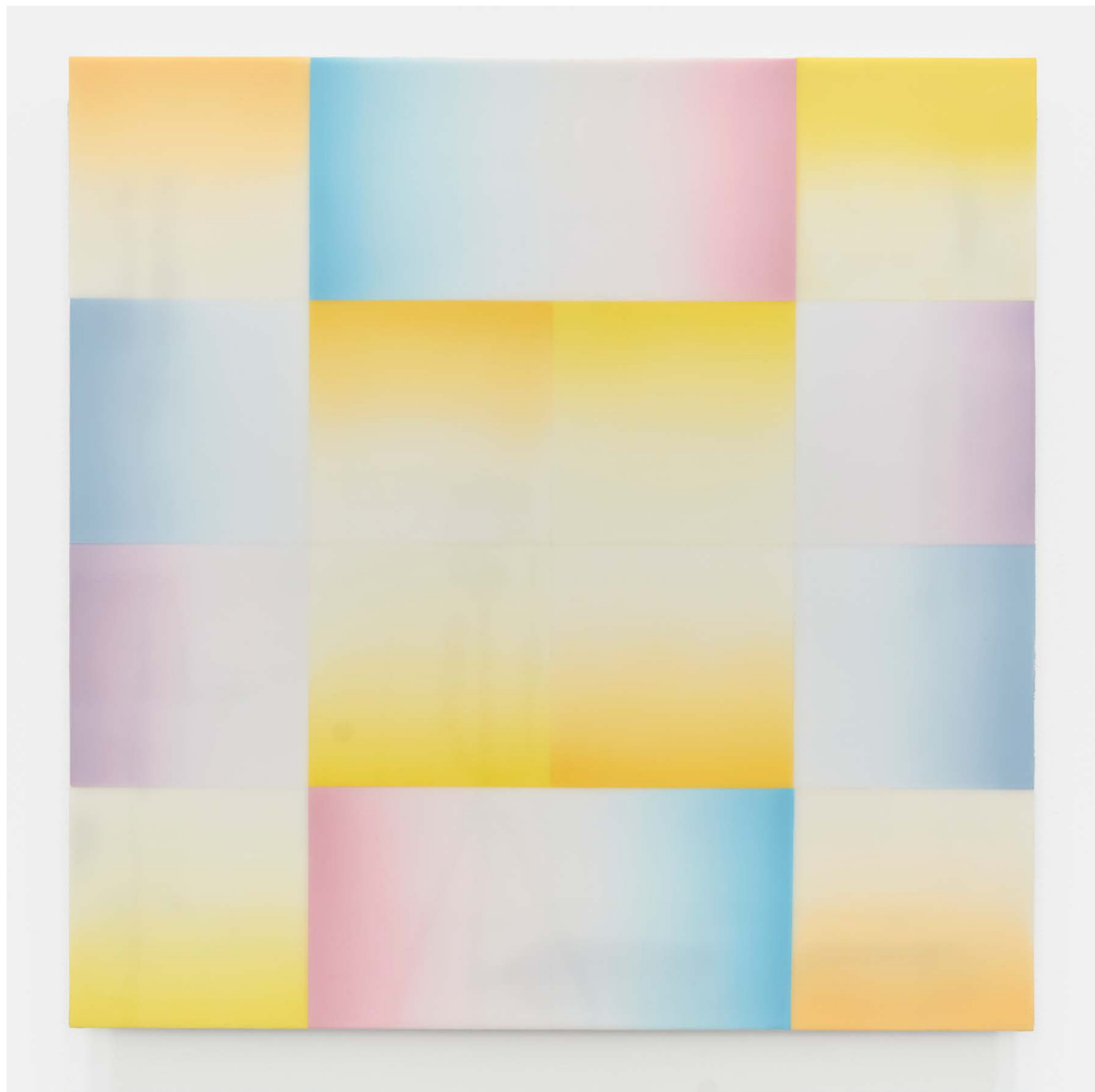
27 3/8 x 27 3/8 x 1 1/2 inches / 69.5 x 69.5 x 3.8 cm

(JCH00029PR)

\$110,000





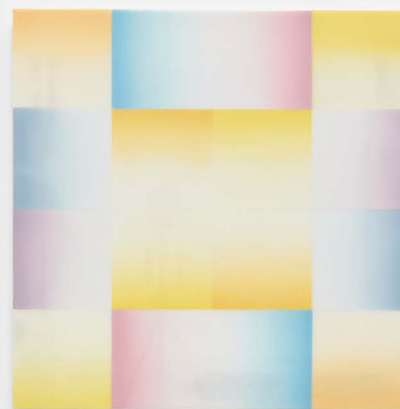


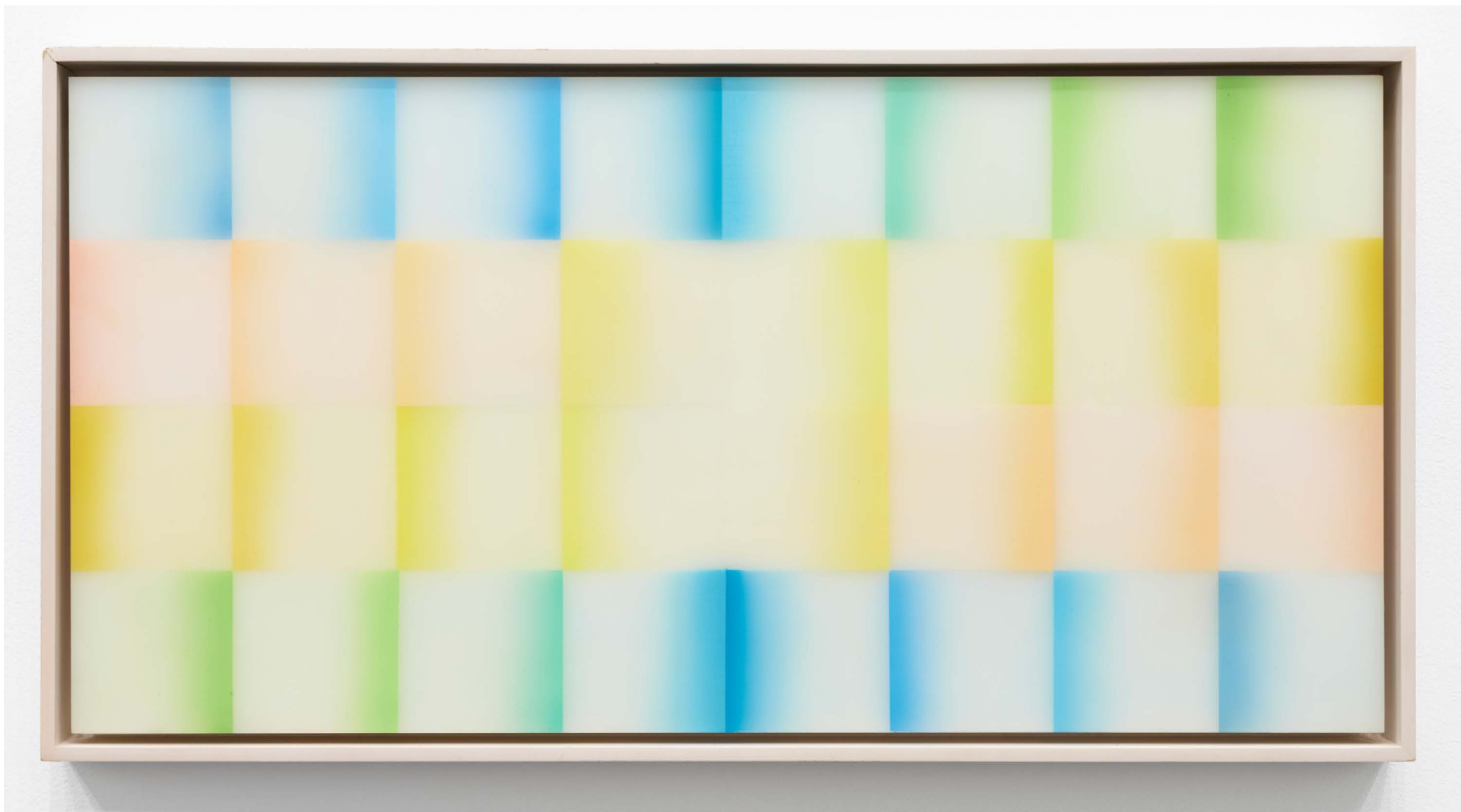
Judy Chicago
Model For Flesh Garden, 1971
Sprayed acrylic lacquer on acrylic
30 x 30 inches / 76.2 x 76.2 cm
(JCH00906PNT)
\$300,000

In the early 1970s, Chicago was part of the Light and Space movement of Southern California. Through experimenting with soft, rolling ombres, she merged flesh and landscape.

When Chicago went to auto-body school to learn how to spray paint, she was the only woman in a class of 250 men. She then used the macho industrial technique to pursue subtly revolutionary feminine forms.

In *Model for a Fresno Fan* (1971), a grid of oranges, yellows, greens, and blues pulsates and succumbs to a central void. In *Model for a Flesh Garden* (1971), Chicago reinterprets Josef Albers' *Homage to a Square*, pitting the highly gendered pink and blue against each other in a wash of golden summer light.





Judy Chicago

Model for Fresno Fan #6, 1971

Sprayed acrylic lacquer on acrylic

16 1/4 x 31 3/8 x 2 inches / 41.3 x 79.7 x 5.1 cm

(JCH00880PG)

\$240,000





The history of land art tends to be one of destruction, wherein male artists used bulldozers, chainsaws, and other heavy machinery to permanently disfigure the landscape. An environmentalist concerned with flora and fauna of all kinds, Chicago sought to create earthworks with a light touch on the land that respected the ecosystem and blew away with the wind.

Titled *Atmospheres*, these works used fireworks and non-toxic colored smoke to gently adorn Mother Earth. Sometimes, the atmospheres were accompanied by women-centered performances or happenings that evoked pagan goddesses and honored the female body.

Northwest Coast Atmospheres is a unique piece that combines eight Polaroid photographs taken during a road trip the artist took during the Summer of 1970 with diaristic reflections about the trip written in 1975. The trek began in northern California and concluded in Vancouver, B.C., Canada.



To you the summer of 1970. I had moved to Los Angeles. I had come to change my name to a pattern of liberation and I was making plans for the tomorrow class that eventually grew to be the first of a series of classes that I taught. I was determined to reclaim that lost part of myself that had been lost in becoming a professional artist. I have said that the way I had then managed to make my art more direct, spontaneous and free was the freedom that I had found in the days of my youth and around California with my husband, Fred Hamer, and I decided to take a trip to the Grandditch Coast, I decided to take my own chance.

W. M. Coast Atmosphere #1 - Northern California Beach - 20 May



I had bought Lloyd an antique camera for his birthday and I had given him a little book of pictures. With what was a rather modest collection of my own photographs in the California Museum of Science and Industry. I had been taking a lot of interesting and rather naive analogies to my then developing desire to transform my art, but related and he was commentating so that the human value of the work was not lost. I had been so feminine. Could be understood, even still though. Remains of this culture. I asked Lloyd to take a lot of nature photographs. I had been taking a lot of really photo images of landscapes and animals. However, pictures were taken of the domestic scene. These were quite important in a domestic sense. I had been taking a lot of pictures of the domestic scene. I had been taking a lot of pictures of the domestic scene. I had been taking a lot of pictures of the domestic scene.

WS Coast Atmosphere #2 - Near the Calif/Oregon border - 7c 11/1/00

[illegible]

NW Coast Atmosphere #3 - An Oregon Beach - 7/11/15

[illegible]

N.W. Coast. Atmosphere #4 - Another Oregon Coast - J. 1972-73

[illegible]

NW Coast Atmosphere #3 - Washington Pond - K 1810-55

[illegible]

From Seattle we took a ferry across to the Olympic Peninsula. Here, we discovered that our first stop was to be made through a soft slough, which the heavy rain had made much more difficult than it had been in the summer. The boat never did and placed some anchors to be lifted up out of the slough forest, a team of eight men and a crane were used to lift the anchors. A provincial description of Heaven, the landscape and a super. There all added into one with a few more words and a few more words, writing all this while Lloyd is on a plane. I was not used to photograph a place he built up there. Lloyd now, I am feeling just as nervous because I am not used to photograph a place he built up where his plane landed. I hope he will not regret

NW Coast Atmosphere #7. The Rain Forest - JR 1170-75

[illegible]

Judy Chicago
Northwest Coast Atmospheres, 1970-1975
 Photography and graphite on board
 Photo by Lloyd Hamrol
 Installation size: 41 x 60 inches / 53.3 x 152.5 cm
 (JCH00056PG)
 \$350,000



This image was made in a section of Washington State that had been intensively logged. Both of us became quite upset at the endless rows of tree stumps. There were also acres of blackened trees, burnt by fire. The desecration of the

of pieces in and among the rocks. The smoke seems to gush up from the nipple of that breast-like rock. I call it a Mother Rock. Back in L.A., when the slides were developed, I realized that with the exception of this piece, I had unconsciously put smoke into every hole, crevice, nook and interior space that I could find all the way up the Northwest Coast.



Raised Paste - Mix Hancock's Raised Paste with
 Paste medium to pie crust consistency. Add clean
 turpentine. Proceed mixing and application as with
 enamel. Use mainly for dots and scrolls.
 raised paste and then apply Roman
 only. Two firings of gold are
 ally required or apply one
 it, let it dry, then apply
 and coat and fire.

Raised Enamel - Mix Enamel pigment
 enamel medium to pie crust consistency. Add clean
 turpentine to stringing consistency. If too wet, let
 to evaporate. Use small brush with long hair. Dry
 quickly, so add turpentine regularly and mix contin

Add little color as color fires darker. No more than
 two firings. If used with china painting
 save enamel for last. Color can be
 intensified by painting over fir
 fire of enamel with china p
 Used for line and dot w

Flown Enamel -
 Enamel, adding more
 with small square
 hit edge of object
 flow.



Mix as for Raised
 turpentine. Apply
 shader and then
 to make enamel

Fire all at 018

This historically significant painting on porcelain foreshadows the artist's masterpiece, *The Dinner Party*. Butterflies symbolize metamorphosis, flight, and freedom. Emblematic of feminine beauty and orgasmic joy, the butterfly plates also wink wryly at Margaret Atwood's first novel, *The Edible Woman*. At a time when art rejected ceramics and *Playboy* revealed all, Chicago was fearless in placing feminist erotica on the table and subverting traditional hierarchies of art and craft.

This butterfly plate embodies many of Judy Chicago's stylistic signatures. It is shimmeringly precise, uses feminine colors, and features her Palmer-method handwriting. A high-concept, high-design artist, Chicago was obsessed with perfecting her skills in diverse modes, including glaze painting. Her concern for perfection is evidenced here by the care with which she documents her methods.



Judy Chicago

China-painting test plate, *Raised Paste/*
Raised Enamel/Flown Enamel, 1972-1974

China paint on porcelain

Framed: 16 1/2 x 16 1/2 x 3 inches / 41.9 x 41.9
 x 7.6 cm

Diameter: 10.25 inches

(JCH00738ST)

\$175,000



Raised Enamel - Mix Enamel pigment with enamel medium to pie crust consistency. Add clean turpentine to stringing consistency. If too wet, blow to evaporate. Use small brush with long hair. Dries quickly, so add turpentine regularly and mix continuously.

Add little color as color fires darker. No more than two firings. If used with china painting, save enamel for last. Color can be intensified by painting over first fire of enamel with china paint. Used for line and dot work.



Mix as for Raised turpentine. Apply shader and then to make enamel

The Dinner Party (1979) is a monumental, multimedia artwork that recalls and honors 39 women from ancient times to the 20th century. Carefully chosen and represented for their strength, intelligence, power, and virtue, these women inspire respect and enhance female self-esteem. Together, they prove that women have been striving for empowerment for millennia and that the time for women's human rights is now.





Judy Chicago

Elizabeth Blackwell Test Plate #9, 1975-1978

China paint on porcelain

Plate: 14.5 x 14.5 x 3 inches / 36.8 x 36.8 x 7.6 cm

(JCH00199ST)

\$225,000

British-born Elizabeth Blackwell (1821-1910) was the first woman to receive a medical degree in the US. Despite facing dreadful discrimination, such as being excluded from labs and forced to sit separately at lectures, Blackwell graduated first in her class in 1849. Dr. Blackwell emphasized preventative care and personal hygiene, recognizing that her colleagues contributed to the spread of illness by failing to wash their hands between patients.

Elizabeth Blackwell Test Plate #9 arguably upstages the plate in *The Dinner Party* at the Brooklyn Museum, as its rainbow colors are more vibrant than the darker purples and ochres of the final work. One of the most singular and aesthetically resolved of *The Dinner Party* ceramics, the Blackwell Plate sits in the 33rd spot of 39 place settings between Susan B. Anthony and Emily Dickinson.





Early Test Plate for Virginia Woolf
Built by G. Keyes / L. Skuro
Painted by L. Kagan / J. Chicago - 1977

Judy Chicago

Virginia Woolf Test Plate, #1, 1975-1978

China paint on porcelain

Plate: 14.5 x 14.5 x 4 inches 36.8 x 36.8 x 10.2 cm

(JCH00197ST)

\$225,000

Virginia Woolf is an influential English novelist whose works have been translated into over 50 languages. She broke new ground using stream-of-consciousness techniques in novels like *Mrs. Dalloway* (1925) and *To the Lighthouse* (1927). The 38th heroine in the series of 39 pioneering women honored by place settings in *The Dinner Party*, her plate rises in full three-dimensional splendor, symbolic of her greater autonomy and relative freedom. This first Woolf test plate offers the viewer insight into the early stages of Chicago's creative process, a journey particularly relevant to Woolf, whose famous essay *A Room of One's Own* (1929) concerns the requirements and methods by which women can innovate.





Judy Chicago

Mary Wollstonecraft Test Plate #5, 1975-1978

Bisque porcelain

Plate: 14 3/4 x 14 3/4 x 3 inches / 37.5 x 37.5 x 7.6 cm

(JCH00243ST)

\$175,000



Mary Wollstonecraft (1759-1797) is a British philosopher regarded as the foremother of English-language feminism. In 1792, she published *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman*, in which she contends that women are not inherently inferior to men, but only appear so because they lack education. She also argues that women should not be seen as property to be traded in marriage, but as human beings deserving of the same fundamental rights as men.



Judy Chicago

Hrosvitha Test Plate #2, 1975-1978

Glazed porcelain

14 x 2 inches / 35.6 x 5.1 cm

(JCH00101ST)

\$175,000



Hrosvitha (c. 935–973) is considered the first woman writer from the Germanosphere. A poet, playwright, and historian, she is famed for her accounts of saints' lives. She lived in Gandersheim Abbey, a community of unmarried women leading a godly life but not under monastic vows. Worldly, well-educated, and likely noble, she took vows of chastity and obedience, but not poverty. The restrained, symmetrical forms of her porcelain plate suggest the peaceful self-sufficiency of virginity and prayer.



Judy Chicago

Eleanor of Aquitaine Test Plate #1, 1975-1978

Bisque porcelain

Plate: 15 x 15 x 3 inches 38.1 x 38.1 x 7.6 cm

(JCH000370ST)

\$175,000

At 13, Eleanor of Aquitaine was the Queen of France; then at 30, she was the Queen of England. Such were the heights of her politically complex life. In 1137, as the eldest child without brothers, Eleanor inherited a significant portion of Southwest France. That same year, she took the throne alongside her husband, Louis VII. In a controversially unladylike move, she joined the Christian crusades to Constantinople. Later, Louis had their wedding vows annulled due to "her" failure to produce a male heir. Vulnerable to abduction and forced marriage, the cast-off queen sent envoys to young Henry, the Duke of Normandy, requesting marriage. Eight weeks after the annulment, she was transferring her land holdings from Louis VII to Henry, who went on to become the King of England. Despite bearing five sons and three daughters, Eleanor eventually fell afoul of Henry and was imprisoned for over a decade. Following his death, she was released and served as the Dowager Queen and regent to her sons, King Richard I and King John. During a time when 40 years was a long life, Eleanor is thought to have lived to 80.

In *The Dinner Party*, Chicago represents Eleanor with an elegant fleur-de-lis, an emblem of French monarchs and Christian chastity that suits the artist's central core imagery. The final plate, installed in Brooklyn, is glazed in somber blues, grays, and greens and features a raised pair of testes or ovaries, befitting the fearless survivor of a misogynist era. However, this first test-plate portrait of Eleanor is pure white porcelain with decorative linear cut-outs. This early work in the artist's creative process appears to represent the teenage Eleanor – the wide-eyed virgin bride whose strength had yet to be put to the test.

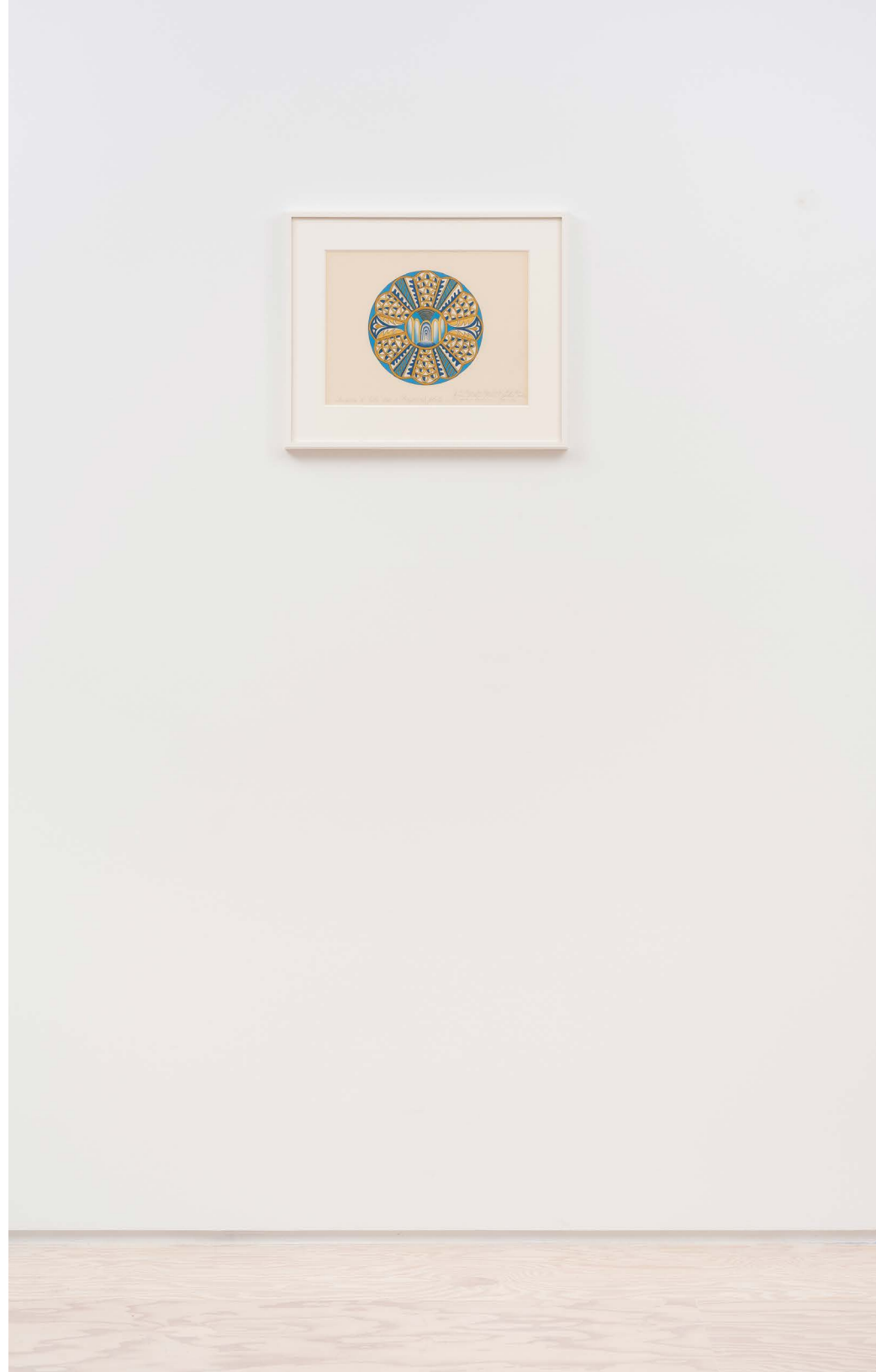




Judy Chicago
Isabella d'Este as a Majolica Plate, 1976
Prismacolor on Somerset Paper
16 5/8 x 19 3/4 inches / 42.2 x 50.2 cm
(JCH00753DR)
\$85,000

Isabella D'Este (1474-1539) was an important diplomat, arts patron, and fashion icon of the Italian Renaissance. Once deemed "the first lady of the world," D'Este was an intellectual adept at discussing art, literature, music, and politics. As the Marchioness of Mantua, she ruled her city-state when her husband was away and her son was under twenty-one. As an art collector, she supported Bellini, Mantegna, Titian, Correggio, and Leonardo Da Vinci, who drew her portrait.

Chicago's golden yellow and blue design of the D'Este plate creates a flower pattern out of neo-classical arches. As the title of her autobiography, *Through the Flower*, suggests, Chicago was interested in the power of portals to transform and liberate those who venture to the other side.



While the Madonna and child are everywhere, images of the natural miracle of birth are rare. *The Crowning* is the iconic image in Chicago's attempt to supplant *Genesis* with a new feminist, visual mythology of creation. As Chicago expounds: "If men could give birth, there would be millions of representations of the crowning." The term "crowning" refers to the climactic moment in childbirth when the infant's head becomes visible, but it also describes the ascent to royalty – the moment when this goddess becomes queen.

In this handmade *Crowning Quilt*, a primordial mother merges with the landscape. Her hair is splayed as if it were the sun's rays. Her toes have deep roots. Her body radiates wave-like energy, rippling with batik energy. The crown of the baby's head is like a star in the middle of a heart-shaped and phallic abstract form. This Earth Mother's position is ambiguous; she could be squatting, or lying on her back, or soaring high in the sky. This mother is empowered, but vulnerable, both sacred and primal, cosmic and grounded.



Judy Chicago

Childbirth in America: Crowning Quilt 7/9, 1982

Quilting and embroidery over drawing and hand-painting on batik fabric

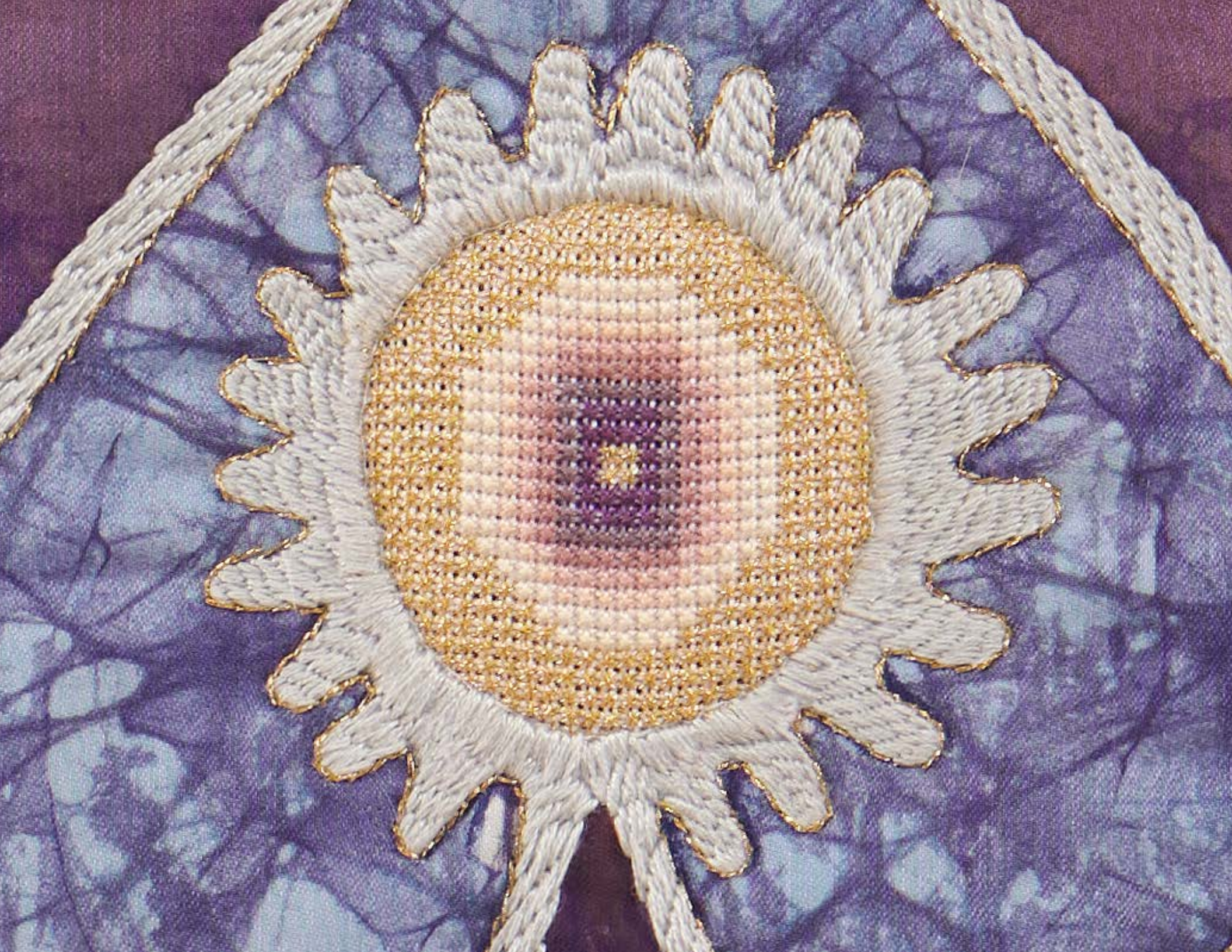
Drawing, hand-painting, and color specifications by Judy Chicago. Batik from Chicago's drawing by Dianne Barber, San Francisco, CA. Embroidery and quilting by Nora Bullock, Kuzton, PA.

36 x 52 1/2 x 2 inches / 91.4 x 133.3 x 5.1 cm

(JCH000323T)

\$450,000





Trees are the queens of the plant world. They serve as engines of oxygen and, due to their longevity, are regarded as bearers of wisdom in various religions, including the Abrahamic foundational text, *Genesis*. In the late sixties and early seventies, Chicago expressed her environmentalism through atmospheric land art. In the mid-1990s, she created colored drawings of petrified trees and deciduous trees in winter without leaves. The works on paper capture the beauty and dignity of this essential resident of our planet while also warning of ecological disaster.



Judy Chicago

Ghost Trees in the Gulf of Mexico, 1996

Mixed media on Magnani paper

24 3/4 x 32 3/4 x 1 1/2 inches / 62.9 x 83.2 x 3.8 cm

(JCH000407DR)

\$60,000



Judy Chicago

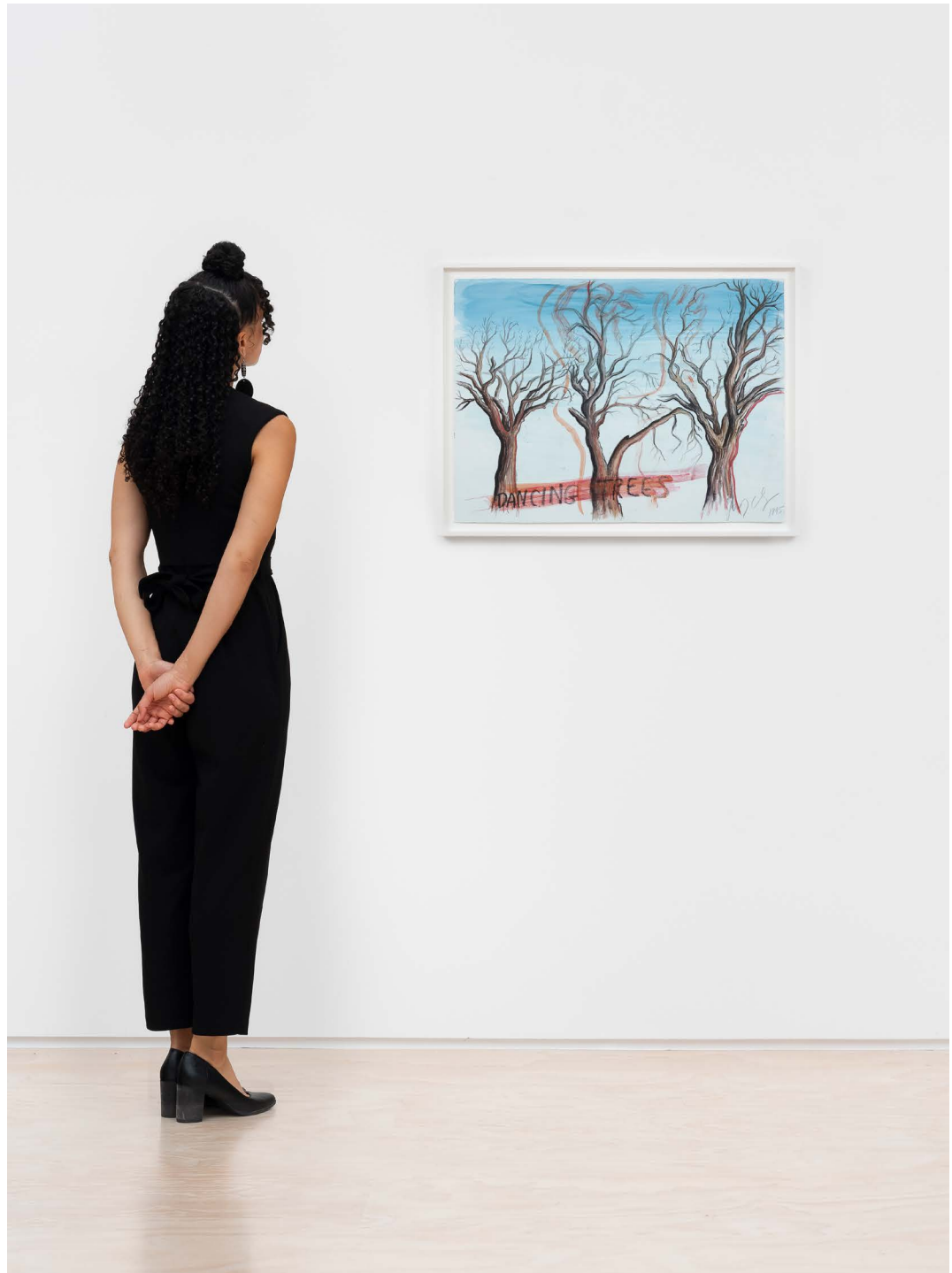
Dancing Trees, 1995

Mixed media on Magnani paper

24 3/4 x 32 3/4 x 1 1/2 inches / 62.9 x 83.2 x 3.8 cm

(JCH000402DR)

\$60,000







Judy Chicago

Study for Joy Trees - Pencil & Paint, 1996

Mixed media on Magnani paper

24 3/4 x 32 3/4 x 1 1/2 inches / 62.9 x 83.2 x 3.8 cm

(JCH00885DR)

\$60,000



A pioneering artist fearless in her aesthetic experimentation and pursuit of women's freedom.

Judy Chicago (b. 1939, Chicago, IL) is a pioneering artist who has made an irrevocable impact on art history. Over the past five years, she has enjoyed critically acclaimed solo retrospectives at the Kunsthalle Recklinghausen, Germany; LUMA Foundation, Arles, France; Serpentine, London; New Museum, New York; de Young Museum, San Francisco; National Museum of Women in the Arts, Washington, D.C., and ICA Miami. Her works are collected by many museums, including British Museum and Tate, London; Moderna Museet, Stockholm; Metropolitan Museum of Art and the Brooklyn Museum, New York; National Gallery, Washington D.C.; the Getty, Hammer Museum, LACMA, and MOCA LA in Los Angeles; Art Institute of Chicago and MCA Chicago; SFMOMA and the de Young Museum, San Francisco, CA; and over 25 university art museums. Since 2020, Chicago has collaborated with the international fashion house Dior on set design for Couture shows and Lady Dior handbags, with further projects to come. Chicago lives and works in Belen, New Mexico.

A surreal landscape featuring a vibrant rainbow sky transitioning from blue to red. The ground is covered in a thick, billowing cloud of bright pink smoke or powder, which partially obscures the horizon. The overall mood is dreamlike and artistic.

Art is *potential*

Upcoming Exhibitions and Fairs

Exhibitions

Margo Wolowiec
June 7-July 19, 2025

Andrea Bowers
June 7-July 19, 2025

David Huffman
July 24-August 30, 2025

Julia Chiang
July 24-August 30, 2025

Art Fairs

ARRIVAL Art Fair
June 13-15, 2025

Frieze Seoul
September 3-6, 2025

Untitled Houston
September 18-21, 2025

Art Basel Paris
October 24-26, 2025

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