

## Milton Avery

**Private View 6 – 8pm, Tuesday 6 June 2017**

Exhibition 7 June – 29 July 2017

Victoria Miro Mayfair, 14 St George Street, London W1S 1FE

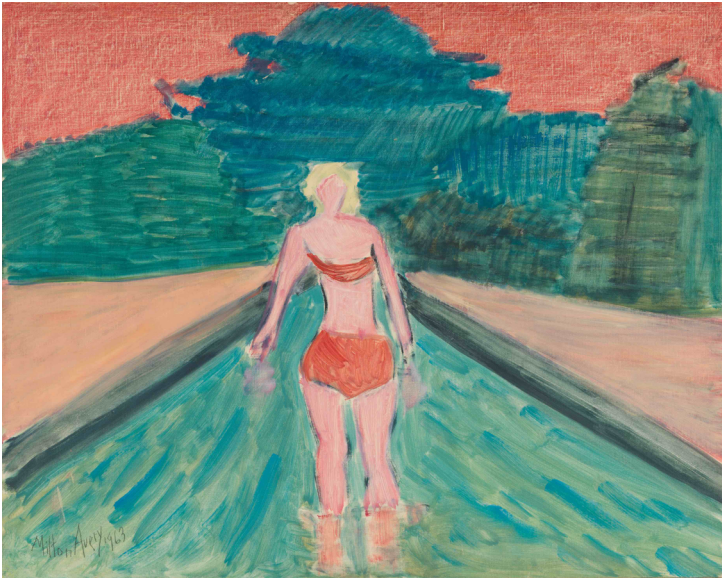


Image: *Wader*, 1963

Oil on canvas

60.96 x 76.2 cm, 24 x 30 in

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**Victoria Miro is delighted to announce an exhibition of works by Milton Avery at its Mayfair gallery.**

**A solo presentation will take place at Art Basel (15 – 18 June 2017).**

One of the most influential artists of the twentieth century, Milton Avery (1885 – 1965) is celebrated for his luminous paintings of landscapes, figures and still lifes, which balance distillation of form with free, vigorous brushwork and lyrical colour.

The gallery's first exhibition by Avery since announcing its European representation of Milton Avery's work, and also the first exhibition of the artist's work in London for ten years, features paintings and works on paper from throughout his career, ranging in date from the 1930s to the 1960s. Included are pairings of Avery's oils and associated works on paper, in addition to works created as a result of his sole trip to Europe in 1952, when he visited London, Paris and the South of France. Many of the works on display have never been exhibited outside of the US.

An accompanying publication will include an essay by Edith Devaney, Contemporary Curator at the Royal Academy of Arts and co-curator of the recent *Abstract Expressionism* exhibition (currently on display at the Guggenheim Museum Bilbao), examining the development of Avery's career and his influence within the canon of American art.

“Avery spanned, and to an extent became the link between, two significant twentieth century national movements: American Impressionism and Abstract Expressionism. His highly sophisticated understanding of colour was passed on, in particular, to Rothko and Newman.” – Edith Devaney

### **About the artist**

Born in Altmar, New York, in 1885, Milton Avery moved with his family to Hartford, Connecticut in 1905. After studying at the Connecticut League of Art Students, he worked in a succession of night jobs in order to paint during the daytime. Avery moved to New York in 1925 and in 1926 married Sally Michel, whose earnings as an illustrator enabled him to concentrate more fully on painting. His first exhibition in New York was in 1927, though it was not until 1935 that he had his first one-man exhibition, at the Valentine Gallery, New York. In 1944, his first solo museum exhibition opened at the Phillips Memorial Gallery, Washington, DC. In 1952, he visited Europe for the first time, travelling to London, Paris and the French Riviera. In the same year, a retrospective exhibition of Avery’s work opened at the Baltimore Museum of Art. In 1960, the Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, presented a retrospective exhibition; a second retrospective was held at the Whitney in 1982. In 1962, *Milton Avery: Paintings 1930-1960* by Hilton Kramer, the first monograph on Avery, was published. Milton Avery died on 3 January 1965 in New York, aged 79.

Avery pursued an independent and steadfast course throughout his career. Always drawing imagery from the world around him, in particular the landscapes and people he loved, his art is as intimate and accessible as it is towering in its ambition and achievement. With his focus on simplified forms and use of colour as a primary means of expression, in the 1930s he profoundly influenced and won the devotion of fellow artists including future abstract expressionists Mark Rothko, Adolph Gottlieb and Barnett Newman. Rothko in particular admired the “gripping lyricism” of Avery’s work. However, while seeking to express an idea in its simplest form, Avery never sought pure abstraction for himself. Above all, he is an artist who resists categorisation. “I never have any rules to follow,” he stated in 1952, “I follow myself.”

Avery’s work is represented in museums and private collections worldwide, including: Albright-Knox Art Gallery, Buffalo, NY; Art Institute of Chicago, IL; Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden, Washington, DC; Los Angeles County Museum of Art, CA; Metropolitan Museum of Art, NY; Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, MA; Museum of Modern Art, NY; National Gallery of Art, Washington, DC; National Gallery of Australia, Canberra; Philadelphia Museum of Art, PA; The Phillips Collection, Washington, DC; San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, CA; Smithsonian American Art Museum, Washington, DC; Tate, London; Thyssen-Bornemisza Museum of Art, Madrid, Spain; Walker Art Center, Minneapolis, MN; Whitney Museum of American Art, NY; Yale University Art Gallery, New Haven, CT.

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