

Art Basel Miami Beach

Booth H7, 7 – 10 December 2017



Image: **Milton Avery**, *Angular Self-Portrait*, 1950
Oil on canvas. 76.2 x 61 cm, 30 x 24 in
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Victoria Miro is delighted to participate in Art Basel Miami Beach with works by Milton Avery, Yayoi Kusama, Alice Neel, Chris Ofili, Do Ho Suh, Chantal Joffe and Hernan Bas. The presentation explores themes of portraiture and identity in painting, works on paper and sculpture.

While he was one of the leading figurative artists of the twentieth century, **Milton Avery** (1885 – 1965) completed relatively few portraits, making examples such as *Belle Gross*, 1943 – a portrait of the wife of artist Vincent Spagna – of exceptional interest. By contrast, music and musicians were recurring motifs, and *Mandolin Player*, 1931, which was included in Avery's first solo exhibition at the Valentine Gallery in 1935, is an important early example. The presentation brings together three portraits of Avery's wife, Sally Michel, from across his career: *Girl in Red Sweater*, 1929, an early portrait completed three years after they were married; *Female Artist*, 1945, in which he portrays Sally at work on a portrait of Avery himself; and *Green Stockings*, 1964, one of only a few paintings completed by Avery in early 1964 before he was admitted to Montefiore Hospital, The Bronx, New York, where he died the following January. *Green Stockings* is the last major painting Avery made of Sally and, as with his late landscapes and seascapes, in this portrait he refines and condenses to achieve an image of intimacy and power. The presentation also includes *Angular Self-Portrait*, completed in 1950, in which Avery, with wit and humility, paints himself wearing a beret and Breton shirt, geometricising his features and face, neck and torso, and setting himself against an abstract background. Published by Victoria Miro at Art Basel Miami Beach, *Milton Avery: Home and Studio/A Sketchbook*, is a special-edition, two-volume book that includes a facsimile of an unpublished sketchbook completed in the South of France during Milton Avery's only visit to Europe in 1952, and a unique picture essay of the artist's New York home and studio by photographer Gautier Deblonde.

Ever concerned with the proliferation and repetition of image and self-image, **Yayoi Kusama's** art is inextricably linked to ideas of self-identity, and notions of the individual and aggregate. Vibrant and psychedelic, *SELF-PORTRAIT TOBBLO*, 2010, sees the artist create a self-portrait with dizzying intensity of form and colour, with no part of the composition left untouched or un contemplated. The Yayoi Kusama Museum, featuring specially-conceived installations of paintings from Kusama's *My Eternal Soul* series and other important works, opened in Tokyo on 1 October 2017. *Yayoi Kusama: Infinity Mirrors*, the most significant North American tour of Kusama's work in nearly two decades, is currently on display at The Broad in Los Angeles (until 1 January 2018), before travelling to the Art Gallery of Ontario (March – May 2018) and the Cleveland Museum of Art (July – October 2018). Works from Kusama's *Infinity Nets* series are currently at the Judd Foundation, New York, in a display curated by Flavin Judd (until 2 December 2017). The solo exhibition *Yayoi Kusama: Life is the Heart of a Rainbow*, a collaboration between National Gallery Singapore and Queensland Art Gallery/Gallery of Modern Art, Brisbane, Australia, is at Queensland Art Gallery until 11 February 2018. Her work is included in *Etre Modern: Le MoMA à Paris*, an exhibition of some 200 works that trace the history of MoMA's unparalleled collection of modern art, at Fondation Louis Vuitton, Paris (until 4 March 2018).

Intimate, casual, direct and personal, **Alice Neel**'s portraits exist as an unparalleled chronicle of New York personalities – both famous and unknown – and the extraordinary diversity of twentieth century New York City. While candour and empathy are hallmarks of Neel's art, her paintings of women and children, such as *Josephine Garwood*, 1946, *Mother and Child*, 1938, and *Julie and the Doll*, 1943, are especially expressive of intimacy and compassion, as seen through the prism of her own experience as a woman and a mother. Equally, Neel was unflinching in her depiction of the female body, often in states of awkwardness and unease, as seen in the painting *Childbirth*, 1939. *Alice Neel: Painter of Modern Life*, a major survey of the artist's work featuring some seventy paintings, was organised by the Ateneum Art Museum, Helsinki, in 2016. It subsequently travelled to the Gemeentemuseum, The Hague, the Fondation Vincent Van Gogh in Arles, France, and is currently on view at the Deichtorhallen Hamburg (until 14 January 2018).

First shown at the National Gallery, London, as part of his exhibition *Weaving Magic*, which featured his tapestry *The Caged Bird's Song*, 2014 – 2017, works on paper by **Chris Ofili** reflect the artist's ongoing interest in classical mythology and contemporary 'demigods', together with the stories, magic and colour of Trinidad, where he lives. The figure of footballer Mario Balotelli, 'a troubled figure,' as Ofili puts it but also 'kind of magical,' appears in several works, adding a powerful contemporary resonance to Ofili's Arcadian landscape. Ofili transforms Balotelli into a heavenly cocktail waiter who pours an elixir from on high. A new installation of paintings by Ofili will form part of the opening displays of the new ICA Miami, which opens to the public on 1 December 2017.

Do Ho Suh considers his fabric sculptures as a cumulative self-portrait – one revealed through delicately weightless impressions of place. Meticulously replicating the architecture of the places in which he has lived and worked, such as his childhood home in South Korea and Western apartments and studios, Suh's one-to-one scale translucent fabric structures give form to ideas about migration, transience and the porous boundaries of identity, while drawing parallels between architectural space and the body. These ideas are further conveyed in his *Hub* works, such as *Hub, Unit G5, Union Wharf, 23 Wenlock Road, London, N1 7SB, UK*, 2015; *Hub, Wielandstr. 18, 12159 Berlin*, 2015; and *Corridor-3, Wielandstr. 18, 12159 Berlin, Germany*, 2016, where transitory, connecting spaces speak metaphorically about movement between cultures and the blurring of public and private. Three *Hubs* will be installed, marking points of entrance and exits to the booth. In 2018, the Smithsonian American Art Museum, Washington, DC, will present *Do Ho Suh: Almost Home*, the most comprehensive presentation of the artist's work on the East Coast to date (16 March – 5 August 2018). Work by the artist is currently included in *Out of Sight! Art of the Senses* at Albright-Knox Art Gallery, Buffalo, NY (until 28 January 2018). *Do Ho Suh: Passage/s*, the artist's first solo exhibition in Scandinavia, is at Bildmuseet, Umeå, Sweden (until 15 April 2018). A major work by Do Ho Suh comprising 86,000 figurines was recently unveiled at the Wilshire Grand Center, Los Angeles.

Chantal Joffe brings a combination of insight and integrity, as well as psychological and emotional force, to the genre of figurative art. Transcending time, and utilising a range of source material, Joffe's paintings of relatives, friends, literary heroines and historical figures are united by a sense of mobile immediacy. Works on display include new family portraits such as *Self Portrait with Esme (study for Looking Towards Bexhill)*, 2017, and *Esme, Vita and Moll on the Beach in St Leonards*, 2017, both summer beach scenes. *Mrs Joffe*, 2014, one of a number of works made for Joffe's celebrated exhibition at the Jewish Museum, New York, in 2015, depicts the artist's great-grandmother, whom Joffe never knew. Self-portraiture, one of the cornerstones of Joffe's art, is represented by two recent examples: *Self Portrait in a Striped Shirt*, 2017, and *Self Portrait (large head)*, 2016. Joffe's work is featured in the exhibitions *ISelf Collection: The End of Love* at the Whitechapel Gallery, London (until 26 November 2017); *Hope and Hazard: A Comedy of Eros*, curated by Eric Fischl, at Hall Art Foundation, Reading, Vermont (until 26 November 2017); and *From Life* at the Royal Academy of Arts, London (11 December 2017 – 11 March 2018).

New paintings by **Hernan Bas** continue the artist's interest in figuring historical and mythological narratives within the imagery and iconography of popular culture, fashion, the decorative arts, queer culture and mysticism. Loosely based on vintage men's fashion magazine covers, *Monsieur (Falling Fans)*, 2017, and *Adam (Spring Cleaning)*, 2017, each depicts a male 'cover star' surrounded by a choreographed array of artefacts, accessories and architectural elements that point to the idea of identity and meaning as being collage-like in their construction and dispersal. Permeated by an aura of eroticism and decadence, and loaded with codes and double-meanings, the works further point to the intricacies of self-identity, while celebrating moments of transformation – the ordinary becoming extraordinary. Hernan Bas will be the subject of a solo exhibition at CAC Málaga, Spain, opening in May 2018.

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