

## Contemporary Istanbul

Booth A1-114, 14 – 17 September 2017



Image: **Elmgreen & Dragset**, *Couple, Fig. 23*, 2017  
MDP, PVC, aluminum, stainless steel  
220.3 x 48 x 32 cm (each), 86 3/4 x 18 7/8 x 12 5/8 in

**Victoria Miro is delighted to participate in Contemporary Istanbul. In celebration of Elmgreen & Dragset's curation of the fifteenth Istanbul Biennial, the gallery presents a number of works by the artists, in addition to work by Secundino Hernández, Idris Khan, Yayoi Kusama, Grayson Perry, Conrad Shawcross, Do Ho Suh and Francesca Woodman. Diverse in form and content, the works on display are united by the theme of monochrome.**

Throughout their career, **Elmgreen & Dragset** have redefined the way in which art is presented and experienced. Their *Self-Portraits*, are representations of museum wall labels of other artists' works, including Barry Le Va and David Hockney, among others. While wall labels ordinarily are not an integral part of a work of art, the artists have appropriated and transformed them into art works in their own right – over-sized and constructed from some of the most art-historically time-honoured materials, such as marble. The title of these works signal a personal layer of reference, in which each title relates to a special experience or emotional development in the artists' own lives. They question what a 'self-portrait' can be in our current cultural climate. In a similar vein, *Couple, Fig. 23*, 2017, a pair of diving boards attached vertically to a wall, assumes figurative connotations, while making reference to Minimalist art. The fifteenth Istanbul Biennial, curated by Elmgreen & Dragset and entitled *a good neighbour*, opens to the public on 16 September 2017.

Monochrome paintings by **Secundino Hernández** are energised through linear dynamism and derived in part from a process of removing paint with a pressure washer. Almost archaeological in nature, this method involves the artist erasing pigment to expose the canvas beneath. Redolent of the urban environment, the resulting 'wash' paintings have a dramatic, exploratory quality and openly display the triumphs and struggles of the artist's practice. Discussing the tension between calculation and spontaneity in these works, the artist says: 'When the works succeed I don't see geometric shapes any more. I see a dance between pictorial languages and a balance

between something which is very much under control and something else which is accidental.’ His work will feature in *The Art Show – Art of the New Millennium in Taguchi Art Collection*, at the Museum of Modern Art Gunma, Japan (16 September – 12 November 2017). Forthcoming solo institutional exhibitions will be held at CAC Málaga, Spain, and at Kunsthalle Helsinki, Finland, both in 2018.

Drawing inspiration from the history of art and music as well as key philosophical and theological texts, **Idris Khan** investigates memory, creativity and the layering of experience, as witnessed in the C-print work *Numbers*, 2015 – a composite image made of overlapping cross-hatched lines – and *Untitled No. 2*, 2010 – a lightjet print mounted on aluminium, in which musical notation is overlaid and upended, making reference to the exalted bars and stripes of minimalism. Paintings such as *A Day Like This*, 2015, are gradually built up with strands of text applied on top of one another in oil based paint. The results are intensely dark with a dense radial constellation of words creating an image that suggests a contained energy emanating from a central point. *Idris Khan: Absorbing Light*, an exhibition of new works, opens at Victoria Miro, London, on 3 October 2017. Khan has been appointed an OBE for services to Art in the Queen’s Birthday 2017 Honours List.

Works by **Yayoi Kusama** reflect her lifelong preoccupation with the infinite and sublime, as well as the twin themes of cosmic infinity and personal obsession as found in pattern and repetition. Covered with proliferating patterns of dots, eyes, faces in profile and frond-like forms, the monochrome silkscreen works on canvas *Birth, Ageing, Sickness and Death*, 2007, and *Entrance to Heaven*, 2007, distil the themes and obsessions that characterise Kusama’s art, while encapsulating a surreal and humorous, as well as instinctual approach to art making. As with her renowned *Infinity Net* paintings, such as *INFINITY-NETS [SOTOA]*, 2017 – a pale blue field covered with an intricate lattice of white paint – these works are characterised by the obsessive repetition of certain motifs. *Yayoi Kusama: Infinity Mirrors*, the most significant North American tour of Kusama’s work in nearly two decades is currently at Seattle Art Museum (until 10 September 2017) and will subsequently travel to The Broad in Los Angeles (21 October 2017 – 1 January 2018), Art Gallery of Ontario (March – May 2018) and the Cleveland Museum of Art (July – October 2018). *Yayoi Kusama: Life is the Heart of a Rainbow* is at the National Gallery of Singapore until 3 September 2017. The Yayoi Kusama Museum will open in Tokyo on 1 October 2017.

Two early works by **Grayson Perry** provide a rare opportunity to witness emergent themes and processes in the artist’s work. Made of raku ceramic, *Untitled (Bowl)* and *Untitled (Chalice)*, both completed around 1986, combine ancient forms and time-honoured techniques to reveal the rich array of motifs and references for which he has become celebrated. A new tapestry, *Red Carpet*, 2017, will also be on display. Its title evoking formal and reverent welcomes, and its style influenced by Afghan war rugs, the imagery depicts a map of British society, distorted by the artist in part to reflect the density of the country’s population. It is covered in words and phrases that typify the national discourse at the time the work was made – ‘buy to let’, ‘retail park’, ‘revenge porn’ – while its background weave is derived from photographs of tower blocks. *Grayson Perry: The Most Popular Art Exhibition Ever!* is currently at the Serpentine Galleries, London (until 10 September 2017) and will subsequently travel to Arnolfini, Bristol (27 September – 24 December 2017). His work will also feature in *Age of Terror: Art Since 9/11*, the UK’s first major exhibition of artists’ responses to war and conflict since the terrorist attacks on 11 September 2011, which opens this autumn at the Imperial War Museum, London (26 October 2017 – 28 May 2018).

**Conrad Shawcross’** *Paradigm Exploded*, 2015, and *Paradigm Optic (Stainless)*, 2017, are part of his ongoing exploration of the four-sided tetrahedron. Works from the *Paradigm* series elicit a subtle line between structure and nature, the metaphysical and the molecular and make reference to the notion of the paradigm shift – a leap of imagination that jolts scientific enquiry forwards. Both *Paradigm Exploded*, its mirrored surfaces reflecting and refracting its surroundings, and *Paradigm Optic (Stainless)*, which makes use of a disruptive surface recently developed by the artist that draws on maritime camouflage, Cubism and Op Art, convey movement through stasis, in addition to addressing sculpturally paradoxical ideas of entropy and disappearance. Also on display is a work from Shawcross’ *Plosion* series, which takes theories of cosmic expansion and contraction as its starting point. A new commission by the artist features in *Into the Unknown: A Journey Through Science Fiction* at the Barbican Centre (until 1 September 2017). In June 2017, the Royal Academy of Arts and St Pancras International unveiled the major site-specific installation, *The Interpretation of Movement (a 9:8 in blue)*, Shawcross’ most ambitious mechanical work to date for the station’s *Terrace Wires* platform for contemporary art.

Constructed from white fabric and displayed in lightboxes, works from **Do Ho Suh's** *Exit Series*, 2016 – replicas of household fixtures and fittings such as lightbulbs, doorknobs and entry buzzers – such as *Exit Series: Certificate of Inspection Visits, 348 West 22nd Street, New York 10011, USA*, 2016, appear ghostly, seeming almost to disappear from view. Suh's work always stems from the measuring of space and the processes, rational yet sensual, that enable him to determine and connect with his surroundings. Marking Suh's permanent departure from his New York residence after twenty years the Exit Series speaks to memories associated with the apartment he first moved into in 1997, and to the warm relationship between the artist and his former landlord. *Basin, Apartment A, 348 West 22nd Street, New York, NY 10011, USA*, 2015, is an example of a work created by a new process for the artist, in which his signature architectural pieces are compressed into two-dimensional 'drawings'. Using gelatin tissue, the works are sewn in the same way as Suh's architectural fabric pieces. Once immersed in water, however, the gelatin dissolves, fusing with the paper to leave an image in which the threads appear like a skeletal framework against the coloured form of the object. Residual yet highly visceral, these works draw parallels between architectural space, clothing and the body, making explicit Suh's fascination with the interconnected spaces we inhabit. Do Ho Suh was recently awarded the Ho-Am Prize for the Arts. His Whitney Museum billboard commission is currently on display in New York City. In 2018 the Smithsonian American Art Museum will present *Do Ho Suh: Almost Home*, which will include a major installation of the artist's *Hub* sculptures (16 March – 5 August 2018).

Photographs by **Francesca Woodman**, including *Self-deceit #6, Rome, Italy*, 1978, *Untitled, Providence, Rhode Island*, 1975-1978, and *Untitled, New York*, 1979-80, reveal the artist's body in various stages of transformation, deformation, alteration and effacement. In some images, Woodman quite literally becomes one with her surroundings, with the contours of her form blurred by movement, or blending into the background, wallpaper or floor, revealing the lack of distinction of both – between figure and ground, self and world. In others she uses her physical body literally as a framework in which to create and alter her material identity. The major touring exhibition *Francesca Woodman: On Being an Angel* continues at The Finnish Museum of Photography, Helsinki (24 August – 15 October 2017). Her work is also included in the exhibition *Feminist Avantgarde of the 1970s from the Sammlung Verbund Collection* at Mumok, Vienna (until 3 September 2017).

**For further press information please contact:**

**Victoria Miro** Kathy Stephenson | Director of Communications | [kathy@victoria-miro.com](mailto:kathy@victoria-miro.com) | +44 (0) 20 7549 0422

**Rees & Company** Alice Evans | [alice@reesandco.com](mailto:alice@reesandco.com) | +44 (0) 75 1547 5411