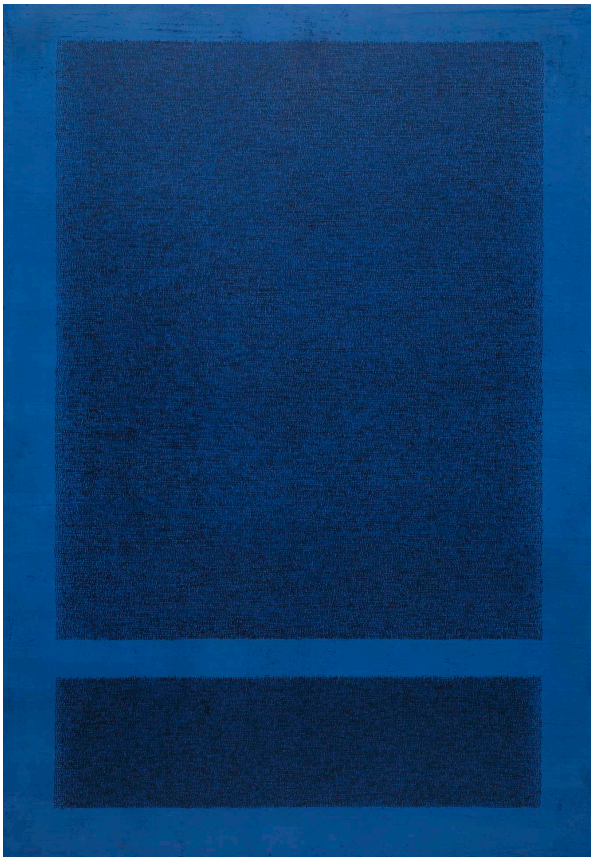


Victoria Miro

Frieze London

Stand C8, 3–6 October 2019



Idris Khan, *A Sense of Continuance*, 2019

Oil based ink on gesso on dark blue aluminium panel,
aluminium tray frame, dark blue powder-coated finish
252 x 175 cm
99 1/4 x 68 7/8 in
© Idris Khan
Courtesy the artist and Victoria Miro, London/Venice

Victoria Miro participates in Frieze London (Stand C8) with works by Doug Aitken, Njideka Akunyili Crosby, Secundino Hernández, Ilse D'Hollander, Isaac Julien, Idris Khan, Yayoi Kusama, Grayson Perry, Howardena Pindell, Conrad Shawcross, Hedda Sterne, Sarah Sze and Adriana Varejão.

The gallery's presentation features a number of new works, on view for the first time at Frieze London, with a strong emphasis on abstraction. Created especially for the fair, new work by the Spanish artist **Secundino Hernández** continues his spirited enquiry into the language, history and enduring potential of abstraction. Hernández's paintings pivot between spontaneity and improvisation, action and reflection. Foregrounding colour and gesture, partially erased through a process of washing the canvas with a jet of water, the work possesses a dramatic, exploratory quality redolent of both calligraphic mark-making and the timeworn urban environment. New, small-scale figurative works by Secundino Hernández are currently on view at Victoria Miro Venice (until 19 October 2019).

Also created especially for Frieze is a new painting, *A Sense of Continuance*, 2019, by **Idris Khan**. Made by using rubber stamps to apply words and sentences – a series of personal reflections by the artist often inspired by key philosophical and poetic texts – to the surface of the canvas, the painting becomes a rich palimpsest. The act of repetition and layering, meditative, at times even cathartic for the artist, in which language tend towards abstraction, invites a range of responses from the viewer. It is in this contemplative space that both the processes of Minimalist art and allusions to the role of repetition in the world's major religions are brought into focus – as a vehicle for transcendence and a conduit of the sublime.

Sarah Sze is widely recognised for works that are charged with flux and transformation. A new painting by the artist continues her exploration of the ways in which images function as tools to make sense of the world and how the proliferation of images – printed in magazines and newspapers, gleaned from the Web and television, and ultimately imprinted on our conscious and unconscious selves – fundamentally changes our relationship to physical objects, memories and time. Sze, who originally trained as a painter, has consistently looked through the lens of two-dimensionality, including colour, line, form and image-making, to consider aspects of her broader practice. Her latest paintings – dynamic and constellatory – are sites of experimentation, revealing the process of how images are generated, collected, appropriated and developed to create other images, that open up fertile new ground for the process of seeing images in time and space – not unlike the way we experience them in the ever shifting, complex, material yet ephemeral world in which we exist.

Premiering at the fair are sculptures from a new body of work by **Conrad Shawcross**. *Schism* is the latest work by the artist to investigate the beguiling geometric and philosophical qualities of the tetrahedron. Each *Schism* consists of twenty tetrahedrons bolted together to form a near perfect polygonal form. While some sides mate perfectly, the form is covered with a deep chasm and a series of cracks. The rational order of the working geometry is violently contrasted with a sense of a deep problem that is ripping the ideal apart. This rupture, this schism, could be seen by some as proof of a godless world, or of a god that is certainly mischievous. By others, it could be seen as a timely symbol of our turbulent times.

The presentation features a number of mixed media works on cardboard from the early 1990s by **Ilse D'Hollander**. In her short life, D'Hollander (1968–1997) created an intelligent, sensual and highly resonant body of work, drawing upon her impressions and experience of place, particularly the Flemish countryside where she spent the last, highly productive years of her life, to produce paintings and works on paper that reveal a masterful command of graphic and painterly touch. D'Hollander's works on cardboard possess a markedly different character to her canvases. David Anfam, writer, critic and Senior Consulting Curator at the Clyfford Still Museum, writes: 'The extraordinary mixed media studies on cardboard project an almost manic energy. Greens, blues, deep red and other vivid tints clash and commingle in lapidary facets, by turns glinting and sombre, that bear a resemblance to landscapes by Gustav Klimt and Egon Schiele.'

An important work from **Yayoi Kusama**'s iconic, ongoing *My Eternal Soul* series of paintings will be on view. Speaking about *My Eternal Soul*, Kusama has commented that 'The paintings are filled with an overflowing abundance of ideas that just keep bubbling up inside my mind.' Each painting abounds with imagery including eyes, faces in profile and more ambiguous forms recalling cell structures or grand geological patterns – a reading accentuated here by the mineral hue of painting's shimmering copper-coloured ground. *INFINITY-NETS [FVFYTA]*, 2017, is a recent example of Kusama's iconic *Infinity Net* paintings. Forging a path between Abstract Expressionism, then the dominant style, and the nascent Minimalist movement, Kusama first showed her *Infinity Nets* in New York in the late 1950s, to great critical acclaim. In these works, Kusama responded to the bravado of Abstract Expressionist painters such as Jackson Pollock and Willem de Kooning, redefining the heroic gesture as a smaller, incremental, highly sophisticated loop – obsessional, meticulous and labour-intensive. There is a link, in turn, to the character of the hallucinations first experienced by Kusama during childhood, in which her surroundings were overtaken by a proliferating pattern that engulfed her field of vision. Kusama continues to develop the chromatic and emotional possibilities of her *Infinity Nets* in works such as *INFINITY-NETS [FVFYTA]*, completed in a contrasting palette of yellow and black.

Works on view by **Howardena Pindell** reveal the extent of her ongoing formal analysis and material innovation, and underline a preoccupation with the grid and the circle, which have been mainstays of the artist's enquiring, vital art over the past five decades. To create the spray painting *Untitled*, 1971, the artist used as templates discarded cardstock, manila folders and heavy watercolour paper, from which holes were then punched. Spraying paint directly through these perforations, and repeating the process across her large-scale canvas, Pindell arrived at a sublime abstract work, rigorous yet ethereal in appearance, that unfolds as a series of shifting sensations – a kind of pointillism freed from the burden of figurative description. Collage has played a key role in Pindell's art since the 1970s, her engagement with the paper chads that result from the hole punch process emerging organically from the process of creating her spray paintings. The circles and ovals she corrals into service in recent works, some punched out of colourful drawings created by the artist over several years, abut and overlap, with many individual parts standing on their edges, bursting out of the notional picture frame. While the grid format remains present in a number of works, the forms of these layered, detailed works tend towards the amorphous, creating dynamic tension between aggregate and whole.

The presentation features *Vertical Horizontal*, 1963–1964, by **Hedda Sterne**, ahead of a solo exhibition of works by the artist to be held at the gallery in early 2020. An active member of the New York School, Sterne (1910–2011) is perhaps still remembered chiefly for her appearance in a now iconic photograph for *Life* magazine, published in 1951, of the 'Irascibles' – a group of artists who protested against the Metropolitan Museum of Art's failure to include abstraction in its exhibitions of American art. Sterne, notably, is the only woman to appear in the image. In fact, over the

course of a long and storied career, Sterne, who was born in Bucharest, Romania and fled to the US in 1941, created an extensive body of work that intersected with some of the most important movements and figures of the twentieth century. Early international recognition came when she was recommended to Peggy Guggenheim, and was included in five exhibitions at Guggenheim's The Art of This Century gallery. Sterne was also included in the exhibition *First Papers of Surrealism* in 1942, organized by André Breton and Marcel Duchamp in New York. Sterne described her work as a process of exploration and discovery and it can be considered as a visual diary of her experiences and philosophies, often with an attendant spiritual dimension, as they evolved over time. *Vertical Horizontal* is one of a number of significant works from the 1960s that portray multiple horizons within a single image.

Njideka Akunyili Crosby's *Facets: Screen Wall*, 2016, reveals the key role that architecture plays in the artist's work – not only as a context but also as an active protagonist. Just as in her paintings of people, where the artist uses details such as hairstyles, clothing and accessories to complicate the story, in *Facets: Screen Wall* she creates a layering of space, time and, consequently, narrative using architectural detail. The work depicts a lattice-like wall, one which might be familiar from any warm-climate country, which, for artist, signifies a specific type of architecture familiar from her childhood – the 1970s apartment buildings she became familiar with in her birthplace of Enugu, Nigeria. A key word for Akunyili Crosby is 'portals'; these semi-permeable screen walls, with their specific modernist vocabulary, invite viewers to consider spaces beyond, physically embodying the idea of looking through – and beyond – a surface, and of existing simultaneously in more than one space or time.

Since the mid-1990s **Adriana Varejão** has explored two juxtaposing motifs – flesh and tiles (*azulejos*) – drawing on the decorative tradition of her native Brazil to examine the confluence of cultures and underlying tensions: between beauty and violence, geometric order and the visceral body. Blurring the boundaries between painting and sculpture, the artist's *Ruína de Charque Brasília*, 2018 incorporates sections of trompe-l'oeil tilework that contain masses of material applied and painted to evoke bloodied meat. For Varejão, flesh occupies a symbolic position as a mediator of history, and in its ability to stir both seduction and repulsion. Resembling marble, the veins of fat and flesh in *Ruína de Charque Brasília* makes explicit the parallels in Varejão's art between architecture and the body, these fleshy, architectonic ruins laying bare the vulnerability of bodies, buildings and even entire cultures.

The gallery's Frieze presentation features artists connected to its autumn programme in London. The wall-mounted sculptural work *EVERY THING (flag)*, 2015, by **Doug Aitken**, whose exhibition *Return to the Real* is on view at Wharf Road (2 October–20 December 2019), takes the form of a flag in motion. It is, however, a flag of the living world which surrounds it, a series of constantly changing, kaleidoscopic reflections of the viewer and their surrounding environment. While the form of a flag represents community, geography and society, here it is reduced to its pure shape and form and from within we see a reflection of the living world. *EVERY THING (flag)* is a living image and constantly changing artwork.

The photographic work *Um maravilhoso emaranhado / A Marvellous Entanglement (Lina Bo Bardi - A Marvellous Entanglement)*, 2019, by **Isaac Julien**, curator of the group exhibition *Rock My Soul* at Wharf Road (2 October–2 November 2019), is drawn from his recent body of work about the visionary modernist architect and designer, Lina Bo Bardi, which premiered at the gallery this summer. The image features the Brazilian actress Fernanda Torres, one of two actresses who play Lina Bo Bardi at different stages of her life in Julien's film and photographic work, engaging with one of Bo Bardi's iconic motifs – a window of the Coaty Restaurant, situated in the Ladeira de Misericórdia (Mercy Slope), Salvador.

Monument to a Snapshot, 1996, by **Grayson Perry**, whose exhibition of new work, *Super Rich Interior Decoration*, is at Victoria Miro Mayfair (25 September–20 December 2019) is a richly decorated pot which incorporates transfer images and sgraffito drawing in its design. *Large Expensive Abstract Painting*, 2019, is a new tapestry in which the hands-on process of the painter is mimicked by computer-controlled weaving. Also contained within this complex work's layers are a collage of traditional fabrics from around the world, a schematic map of London and a series of labels, hinting perhaps at some of the social forces, tastes and codes that might lead to someone understanding, desiring, purchasing and displaying a 'Large Expensive Abstract Painting'.

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