

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

ART BASEL

15 – 18 JUNE 2023

VIP DAYS: 13 – 14 JUNE 2023

GALLERIES | BOOTH C7

UNLIMITED | SERGE ATTUKWEI CLOTTEY: U73; MAI-THU PERRET: U8



Simon Lee Gallery is delighted to return to Art Basel with a curated selection of Modern and Contemporary pieces focusing on colour, process, and materiality in the Galleries sector, as well as two large-scale installations in the Unlimited sector by **Serge Attukwei Clottey** and **Mai-Thu Perret**.

Master artists represented in the Galleries booth include **Jean-Michel Basquiat**, **Mel Bochner**, **George Condo**, **Luciano Fabro**, **Isamu Noguchi**, **Michelangelo Pistoletto**, **Niele Toroni**, **Cy Twombly**, and **Yun Hyong-keun**.

The spotlight will likewise be turned on new and historic works by gallery artists **Winston Branch**, **Angela Bulloch**, **Werner Büttner**, **Serge Attukwei Clottey**, **Olivier Debré**, **Anna Freeman Bentley**, **Paul Georges**, **Rachel Howard**, **Sherrie Levine**, **William Mackinnon**, **France-Lise McGurn**, **Mai-Thu Perret**, **Georg Karl Pfahler**, **Jim Shaw**, and **Chibuike Uzoma**.

GALLERIES

Among the canvases by **Jean-Michel Basquiat** that will be on view, a 1984 work, from a series that the artist made during his first visit to the Hawaiian island of Maui, explores the legacies of colonialism. Two paintings by **George Condo** feature the artist's signature, distorted figures in his 'psychological cubism' style. **Michelangelo Pistoletto's** *Uomo di spalle con cappello* (1970) is an early example of Pistoletto's renowned 'Mirror Paintings', which collide real and spectral worlds through the reflective surface of the artwork. **Mel Bochner's** 'Blah Blah Blah' paintings reconceptualise language as a mode of graphic and visual expression. Featuring black marks made systematically at measured intervals, **Niele Toroni's** 1990 work on cloth demonstrates his experiment with freeing painting from authorship and its mimetic, representative conditions. A 1976 **Cy Twombly** work on paper features brusque lines rendered in crayon, watercolour, and pencil.

Exemplifying the artist's sensitivity to material and playfulness with form is **Isamu Noguchi's** granite-and-wood sculpture *The Comb* (1962). At the centre of the stand will be **Luciano Fabro's** sculptures — prime examples of the Arte Povera artist's melange of materials such as aluminium and marble with light.

Experimental approaches to colour are evident in **Olivier Debré's** *Untitled* abstract paintings from the 1990s where the artist harnesses luminosity and subtle hues to convey emotions and sensorial experiences tied to

times and places, reflecting the themes in Debré's exhibition in the London gallery space. Two canvases by **Yun Hyong-keun** — featuring blocks in the artist's hallmark umber and ultramarine, signifying earth and heaven — conjure spaces with succinct gestures. Extending the focus on abstraction and process-driven paintings, **Rachel Howard** pushes paint through lace curtains, creating imprints of flowers and leaves that appear to glitch as they slide down the canvases of her new works. Departing from the natural world, **Winston Branch**'s abstractions experiment with the possibilities of paint and mark-making. **Georg Karl Pfahler** punctuates the presentation with bold geometric forms in his abstractions from 1967–68. *Thin Stripe #12* (1986) by **Sherrie Levine** appropriates the visual language of Russian Suprematist and American minimalist painting to comment on the male-dominated art historical canon.

Placed within this cross-generational dialogue are artists from the gallery's programme. Ahead of their November exhibitions at the London space, **Anna Freeman Bentley** and **William Mackinnon** are represented with new paintings. Based on photographs of a film set in Saudi Arabia, Freeman Bentley's *Next moment* (2023) explores the shifting functions of the film's various locations and the sense of artifice within them. Mackinnon's surreal landscape experiments with a rich variety of textures.

Other artists take inspiration from nature. **Angela Bulloch**'s LED installation replicates a constellation from an impossible perspective. **Paul Georges**' two paintings from the 1950s reflect the influence of Picasso, Cezanne, and Matisse on Georges when he lived in Paris and began to experiment with abstraction and loose brushwork.

Known for their acerbic commentaries on contemporary society, **Werner Büttner** and **Jim Shaw** confront inequity in their mixed-media works.

In **France-Lise McGurn**'s paintings, dynamic figures spill out, erotically charged, no form is captive. Time, movement, and intimacy play out in shifting compositions. Bearing the word 'Poortrait', **Chibuiké Uzoma**'s *Paintings From A Week Ago* (2023) plays on our proclivity to anthropomorphise images.

The booth will also feature work by **Serge Attukwei Clottey** and **Mai-Thu Perret**, complementing their presentations in Unlimited. Clottey melds figuration and assemblage in *Rain dance* (2022), with a grid of plastic squares depicting the silhouette of a person. Perret's ceramics explore the malleability of clay and its indexing of the artist's gestures.

UNLIMITED

Serge Attukwei Clottey's monumental installation *Sea Never Dries* (2022) is a tapestry that cascades towards viewers in undulating waves. Spanning 25 metres in length, the work is made up of thousands of yellow squares cut from plastic containers, ubiquitous in Ghana. Originally used to import cooking oil from the West, the vessels are frequently repurposed by locals for the collection of water and fuel. In his work, Clottey celebrates the vital instrument, tracing its history and shifting significances as it circulated in globalized networks, while exploring ways to recontextualise and recycle the material, which he sources with the help of local communities. The installation not only highlights the necessity of re-use but articulates the resilience of modern Africa through the reimagining of everyday objects. *Sea Never Dries* is an iteration of the artist's 'Afrogallonism' project, which also encompasses *Time and Chance* (2023), a rippling large-scale work on view at the 18th International Architecture Exhibition – La Biennale di Venezia.

Covering a 15-metre-wide wall, **Mai-Thu Perret**'s *Untitled* (2022) installation features 29 yellow neon hands arranged in varying orientations. The motif of the hand opens up chapters from across cultural history, from the handprints that women left alongside ancient cave paintings of animals or hunting scenes, to the hamza, also known as the Hand of Fatima or Miriam, a symbol associated with fertility or protection across paganism and the Abrahamic religions. Referring to Franz Kafka's aphorism 'A cage went in search of a bird', Perret uses the image of the hand to explore notions of protection and immobility, action and passivity, in relation to the position of women in society. The hand also nods to handicrafts and overlooked domains of labour typically associated with women – a longstanding interest of the artist. *Untitled* is co-presented with David Kordansky (Los Angeles), Francesca Pia (Zurich), and Barbara Weiss (Berlin).

NOTES TO EDITORS

ABOUT SIMON LEE GALLERY

Founded in London in 2002, Simon Lee Gallery represents artists of diverse generations whose practices explore a wide range of media, from sculpture and painting to video and photography, and who share a broad interest in an exploration of the conceptual. Aiming to provide a significant international audience for its artists, the gallery also regularly punctuates its programme with historical exhibitions and curated group shows, which present shifts in contemporary art practice and thought, whilst broadening the dialogue with artists outside of the gallery's core programme. In addition to its UK activity, in 2012 the gallery opened a space in Hong Kong, which introduced its artists to a wider public in Asia, with a fully independent programme.

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www.simonleegallery.com

Image: Anna Freeman Bentley, *Next moment*, 2023, oil on panel, 90 x 110 cm (35 3/8 x 43 1/4 in.). Copyright of the artist. Courtesy of Simon Lee Gallery.

For further press information, images and interview requests please contact: chloe@simonleegallery.com