

PHILLIPS de PURY & COMPANY ANNOUNCES THE HIGHLIGHTS FROM VALENCIA CONTEMPORARY ART COLLECTION IN CONTEMPORARY ART EVENING SALE FOLLOWED BY A SINGLE OWNER DAY SALE

FEATURING SIX IMPORTANT WORKS BY RUDOLPH STINGEL, ILIA & EMILIA KABAKOV, MARLENE DUMAS, GEORG HEROLD, ALBERT OEHLER & MARY HEILMANN

CONTEMPORARY ART EVENING AUCTION: FEBRUARY 17, 7PM

VALENCIA CONTEMPORARY ART COLLECTION FEBRUARY 18, 2PM

CONTEMPORARY ART DAY AUCTION FEBRUARY 18, 4PM

VIEWING: FEBRUARY 5- 17, 2011

LOCATION: Phillips de Pury & Company, Howick Place, London, SW1P 1BB

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

London – Phillips de Pury & Company, is pleased to announce highlights from the Valencia Contemporary Art Collection that will feature in the London Contemporary Art Evening Sale on the 17th February. The single owner sale will take place on the 18th February prior to the Contemporary Art Day sale.

"We are very excited at the prospect of offering the Valencia Contemporary Art Collection at auction. The collection represents a remarkable selection of contemporary art with particular emphasis on exploring the medium of painting over the past two decades and the genres with which painting is traditionally associated." Peter Sumner, Head of Contemporary Sales, London.

Highlights include:

Ilia & Emilia Kabakov's, *The Painting on the Easel*, 1998, estimated at £400,000-600,000. *The Painting on the Easel* is a powerful manifestation of Kabakov's ability to question the history of artistic practice and challenge the traditional perspective. The painting appears to be effortlessly positioned at eye level, it shows a landscape, an idyllic Russian village on a summer's day. However, typical to Kabakov it's not what it seems and the viewer's eye is pushed beyond the realm of the canvas to the easel that is suspended from the ceiling. The subject matter and the painting itself thus appears to lose substance or meaning as an object of contemplation and instead takes on an air of the unlikely or the absurd, the impossible existence of an 'ideal' Soviet landscape.

Marlene Dumas', *Equality*, 1993, estimated at £80,000-120,000. As a white South African born and raised during the tumultuous Apartheid years, Marlene Dumas



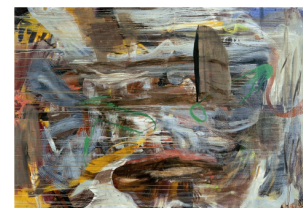
Ilia & Emilia Kabakov, *The Painting on the Easel*, 1998



Marlene Dumas, *Equality*, 1993



Georg Herold, *Untitled*, 1990



Albert Oehlen, *Untitled*, 1988

has always been preoccupied in her work with questions of race and identity. Small in scale but executed with thick impastoed brushstrokes, *Equality* is a poignant and strong example of Dumas' haunting portraits filled with multiple interpretations and meanings. Painted in 1993 along with two companion works titled *Justice and Liberty*, *Equality* represents the great virtue as embodied by a girl. However, unlike the numerous heroic representations of the virtues found throughout the history of art, there is nothing virtuous about this girl. Her skin colour and purpose are both highly ambiguous forcing the viewer to contemplate an unnerving scene where more questions are asked than answered.



Rudolph Stingel, *Untitled*, 2002

Beyond the title and subject matter, the work's date of execution, 1993, makes it clear that Dumas was toying with political ideologies as only a year later South Africa would hold its first democratic elections and elect a black president. As one of the finest examples of Dumas' work, *Equality* presents the viewer with a certain unabashed psychological disparity between the real and the imaginary where morality, representation and social convention are questioned.

Georg Herold's, *Untitled*, 1990, estimated at £40,000-60,000. Conceptually driven by rejecting traditional materials, German artist Georg Herold's artistic practice involves the creation of sculptures, assemblages and wall-based 'drawings' using bricks, baking powder, wood, vodka bottles, buttons and mattresses. The present lot is an early monumental painting from the Caviar series in which the artist laboriously lays countless Beluga eggs on the canvas and then meticulously numbers each and every one of them creating a haunting semi-abstracted composition that recalls the cosmos or a nuclear explosion. Having studied under the revolutionary German post war artists Werner Buttner, Albert Oehlen and Martin Kippenberger, Herold has always rebelled against the established bourgeois art scene. In the spirit of the Italian Arte Povera movement, Herold exalts the artistic qualities of raw, common materials. With the caviar paintings, Herold creates a striking abstracted landscape not from the traditional mediums of paint or watercolour but using an organic, edible material thereby provocatively reframing established categorizations found in art and everyday life.



Mary Heilmann, *Rude Boy*, 1998

Albert Oehlen's, *Untitled*, 1988, estimated at £100,000-150,000. With its monumental scale and vivid brushwork this early *Untitled* canvas from 1989 is a prime example of Albert Oehlen's artistic repertoire. Driven by an explosive collision of line, colour and form, Oehlen's highly layered composition lies on the cusp between abstraction and figuration. Behind its chaotic appearance lies an intense investigation of the possibilities and limits of painting. Emerging with Martin Kippenberger in 1980s Germany, Oehlen created a painting and artistic style which confronted the evident rift between art, ideology and politics at the time. The stirring darkness of this unsettling composition challenges the preconceived notions and expectations of conventional abstract and figurative painting. Presenting the viewer with a web of unobtainable or definite information, Oehlen entangles his audience into the painting's surface encouraging the viewer to consider and reflect upon the juxtaposition between the two primary modes of expression available to a painter.

Rudolph Stingel's, *Untitled*, 2002, estimated at £300,000-500,000. Over the last three decades, Rudolf Stingel has built an impressive oeuvre demystifying the idea of the work of art and the creation process. Stingel challenges the viewer to reconsider their preconceived notions about what constitutes a legitimate source of art through the very act of its origin and creation. He challenges the idea of the hand of the artist by including others in the creation process in some of his works. Clearly influenced by Arte Povera, Stingel turns on its head the traditional structure of painting by using ordinary ubiquitous materials to create objects of fine art. The present lot is the result of a performative installation in which members of the public were allowed to deface the surface of temporary Celotex walls installed in public spaces. The resulting destruction and accumulation was

then fragmented into many segments and then reassembled as a finished work of art to be exhibited in a gallery or museum. The additive and subtractive marks found across Stingel's reflective surfaces become poignant tableaux of contemporary life elevating the mundane and the everyday to high art.

Mary Heilmann, *Rude Boy*, 1998, estimated at £70,000-90,000. Since the early seventies, American painter Mary Heilmann has been a pioneer of Abstract painting. Working at the cutting edge, she has continually injected the movement with elements from popular culture and craft traditions. Her straight forward, seemingly loose and casual approach belies a witty dialogue with art historical preconceptions. Her practice is often defined as a synthesis of geometric abstraction, color field painting and minimalism tinged with auto biographical references drawn from her up bringing in California. Her brilliant and vibrant colour palette, her rhythmic compositions as well as her sense of boundless freedom are deeply influenced by Los Angeles area beaches and Bay Area beatnik clubs.

'For the past thirty years Mary Heilmann has been championed as the consummate artist's artist. Her un-fussy approach is as notable for the unremitting intimacy it admits as the quixotic sociability it invites... "casual" is one of the most common words describing Heilmann's paintings, which so gracefully traverse craft traditions popular culture and the fine arts. Owing in part to her works' messy assurance, by turns glib and erudite, Heilmann also confounds irony and sincerity. With their visceral convolutions of color, runny streaks of paint and riotous compositions, her recent paintings wear their pleasures on their sleeve.' (S. Hudson, Whitney Museum of American Art: 2008 Whitney Biennial Exhibition, New York, p. 153).

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