



CHRISTIAAN CONRADIE

PEINTURE | PHOTOGRAPHIE



Exposition No.21

CATALOGUE

Galerie 55Bellechasse
55 rue de Bellechasse - 75007 PARIS





PRÉFACE

Pour simplifier la compréhension des mouvements dans l'histoire de l'Art, on utilise souvent un mot simple pour les décrire. Ainsi, on a l'impressionnisme, le symbolisme, l'expressionnisme, l'abstrait, le futurisme, le brut, le cubisme, le dadaïsme, le romantique, le pop art, etc. qui chacun décrit un style marquant ou notable de l'histoire de l'Art.

Souvent, les artistes savent qu'ils ont intérêt à surprendre, à innover, à intellectualiser leur Art pour obtenir un mot, puis des articles et une reconnaissance « académique » ou l'inverse. Ce travail se fait parfois au détriment de l'émotion, d'une forme de souplesse, de liberté et finalement de générosité, voire même d'altruisme du peintre envers la société, au profit d'une certaine uniformisation derrière des concepts, compréhensibles uniquement par les rares initiés.

Christiaan Conradie est un autodidacte dans le domaine de l'art et un champion dans son sport de prédilection, le surf.

Aujourd'hui, cet artiste sud-africain venu du Cap, vit et travaille à Mexico. C'est là qu'il affine son style, si unique, et s'imprègne d'une nouvelle culture riche et dense comme celle de son pays natal.

Lorsque « Stew » m'appelle pour m'encourager à découvrir le travail de son pote, je sais que nous n'avons ni place, ni date pour une exposition avant 18 mois. Mais, dès la première image qui s'affiche, c'est le choc. Immédiatement, je pense à Lucian Freud et je me dis que l'image s'est glissée par mégarde. Un artiste qui sait peindre un corps vieux, sans aucune complaisance, mais qui loin de repousser, attire un regard admiratif et étonné, c'est un artiste rare.

A mesure que les images défilent, je suis de plus en plus surpris car le style change, se personnalise, se renforce, et finalement s'affirme. L'impact des tableaux est immédiat, leur force incontestable. Puis, arrive la période mexicaine. Là, c'est l'explosion de couleurs, l'arrivée du relief et l'usage du néon sur les toiles. Vite, un mot m'envahit, celui d'essence. En effet, Christiaan Conradie ne peint comme aucun autre avant lui. Il scinde et unifie, il distille les émotions. Ainsi, pour certaines, partant d'un modèle, souvent issu de son imagination, il crée des détails extrêmement fidèles (yeux, bouche, mains, etc.) et le reste est coloré et abstrait. Ainsi, l'artiste nous propose ce qu'il appelle l'essence de son personnage.

Nous avons fait connaissance par téléphone et l'aventure a commencé à New-York par une vente et depuis l'émerveillement continue. Ce n'est qu'un début, merci Christiaan ! Surtout, reste libre et fais nous surfer avec toi sur cet océan de surprises, de détails et de sensations.

Bertrand SCHOLLER

Septembre 2015

Iver, 2014
Mixed media on paper, 78 x 108 cm

CHRISTIAAN CONRADIE
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55Bellechasse



PREFACE

To make the evolution of visual arts clearer, words have been chosen to describe styles and movements. Thus emerged Impressionism, Symbolism, Expressionism, Futurism, and so on, each of them describing a key moment in the history of Art.

Artists usually know that they have to be surprising, to innovate and to intellectualize their work to find their own voice, then maybe to be quoted in the press and eventually to gain academic recognition. But classifying artistic styles might also be detrimental to the emotion, liberty and generosity of spirit that artists try to convey and thus create concepts that only a specialized audience would understand.

Christiaan Conradie is both a self-taught artist and an avid surfer, his sport of choice. Today, the South-African, born in Cape Town artist lives and works in Mexico City. There he refines his unique technique and immerses himself in a culture as rich and vibrant as in his native country.

When Stew called me to promote his friend's work, I knew that the gallery was full of exhibitions over the next 18 months. But it was a real shock when I saw the first visual. I immediately thought of Lucian Freud's work and even wonder if some of his paintings slipped in the file by mistake. An artist who knows how to paint an old body without complacency or making it unpleasant is undeniably a rare artist.

As I was discovering the visuals, I found the style amazing: it changes, becomes more personal, gets stronger and asserted. His paintings have an indisputable force and an immediate effect on the viewer. Then comes the Mexican period with an explosion of colors and the use of neon lights on his canvases. Christiaan Conradie paints like nobody else. He divides and connects elements, distills emotions. All the bodies he paints, often coming straight from his imagination, are full of very realistic details. At the same time, the rest of the canvas is almost left blank with touches of colors here and there, thus highlighting the whole essence of the painted character.

We got to know each other by phone and the adventure started in New York with the sale of one of his paintings. Today, I am still filled with wonder and emotion when I discover new works. So this is just the beginning of a successful collaboration, thank you Christiaan!

And above all, stay free and let us ride with you the wave of thrill and amazement you always put in your work!

Bertrand SCHOLLER

September 2015

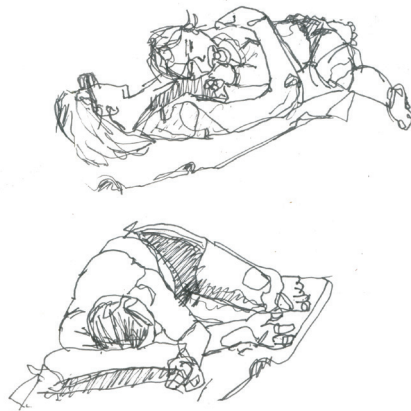


Klaus, 2012
Mixed media on paper, 78 x 108 cm

The Spanish and South-African period | 2010 - 2012



Icarus, 2011
Charcoal on paper, 108 x 78 cm



Joggels, 2011
Mixed media on canvas, 90 x 120 cm



Andrew, 2012
Mixed media on paper, 210 x 130 cm



Anne Calle Ample, 2012
Oil on canvas, 170 x 200 cm



Once, 2011
Mixed media on paper, 78 x 108 cm



Boesmans, 2012
Mixed media on giclée print, 78 x 54 cm



Election in the RCVA team

In 2012, Christiaan was selected to form part of the rvca artist network program, commonly referred to as the anp. It is an ongoing program which aims to showcase the talent of accomplished as well as unknown artists who inspire our generation and push the boundaries of creativity; providing something of substance and culture.

To rvca, an artist is not someone who just paints a picture, or writes a song, but someone who is dedicated to sharing with the world their life, emotions and soul through innovative and creative ideas. RVCA and the anp were developed to shake the very foundations of the business, by giving back to the artists and providing a voice for their creative growth.



The Mexican period | From 2012

Christiaan remains faithful to his own truth and encounter with the arts; his work stems from a sensitive creative process that transforms his ideas into creation. Surfing, listening to his favourite bands, admiring the creations and works of others which inspire him, travelling... are instances conserved in his experience which serve to make tangible his diverse ideas and artistic creations: painting, urban art, photography, drawing and installation.

His artistic activity commences at the moment in which he is confronted by the visible world; the space and time which at first presents itself as something inalterable. But, his artistic essence allows him to disrupt, mould, record and fictionalize it. This question of addressing the visible world as though it were his raw material, arises from a conscious, dynamic and fundamental need. Christiaan Conradie, from the conscious to the unconscious, from his lucid life to his dreams, is dedicated to his art and to his pieces.

His art is a transformation of the world into other forms, a poetic act in the sense that he takes ownership of reality, delineates where the borders lie between this reality and our understanding of it, and then plays with the multiplicity, the possibilities and the apertures to other configurations, other lives.

Christiaan's art doesn't pretend to understand reality, but rather recognizes the 'fragment', sees in it infinity, and takes it to other realities.

The various stages in Conradie's work correspond to essential needs, not as they occur chronologically, but rather in order of significance. A question often posed to him in interviews over the course of the last few years is, "Who are the subjects in your paintings? Why are they old?" Christiaan answers with a profound silence. It is always tempting for a spectator or a critic to hear an 'interesting' story or narrative. There isn't one. What is to be made of this decision by the artist? Sensitivity. That which recognizes the 'other'. The passing of time in the 'other'. And in some way it is a kind of mirror, which reflects those old, tired eyes, full of stories. It is this pathos which is inherent and at the core of his work. The purpose of his choice of subjects is not to express sentiment, but to give them form, to find a correlation between these lives and his own. The artist is not to be found at a distance from his subjects, but in constant connection with them. These old men are parts of the artist himself. Every stroke, layer of colour, of skin, gives life. A metaphorical act in which every brushstroke evokes new symbols, new areas of sensitivity and of contact with the 'other'.

Christiaan adopts symbols which he employs in his work, symbols which are preserved in the memory. Signs which he gathers in life, which he is surrounded by in all their richness, by virtue of form, colour and their position in space. Conradie is an aesthetic being, absorbed by

form, image and emotion. He moves in this way along his own paths, taking on symbols as he goes, transforming them into his own language: the lightening bolt, the droplets, the birds, the dots of colour, the Mexican flowers, the saints – symbols which he inserts into his work, giving them new meaning.

In addition to this, Christiaan lends a participative role to the spectator, confronting him with disproportion, decomposition; inviting him to complete that with which he is presented as though it were a suggestion, or a fragment. The spectator, with his gaze, is empowered to bring the artwork to its culmination, the point at which it sparks into life.

Beyond his astonishing technical ability, his works are about moments. He himself has said, 'I often compare my working process to that of CPR; the minute I feel as though I have breathed enough life into a piece, I leave it to live on its own'. This aura of life, is the artwork itself.

Andrea Aviña



We've had days that drew guns to our heads, 2014
Mixed media on canvas, 155 x 175 cm



I've lived a thousand years in the backroom of a spanish poet, 2015 - 2016
Mixed media on canvas, 180 x 165 cm



Honey, you skipped me over the water, 2015
Mixed media on canvas, 180 x 127 cm



Indio Blanco, 2015
Mixed media on canvas with paper flowers, 95 x 120 cm



Barcelona, 2014 -2015
Mixed media on canvas, 95 x 120 cm



El Santo, 2015
Mixed media on canvas, 80 x 100 cm



El Gran Marinero, 2015
Mixed media on canvas, 115 x 120 cm



The dirt was still warm, 2014
Mixed media on canvas, 110 x 120 cm



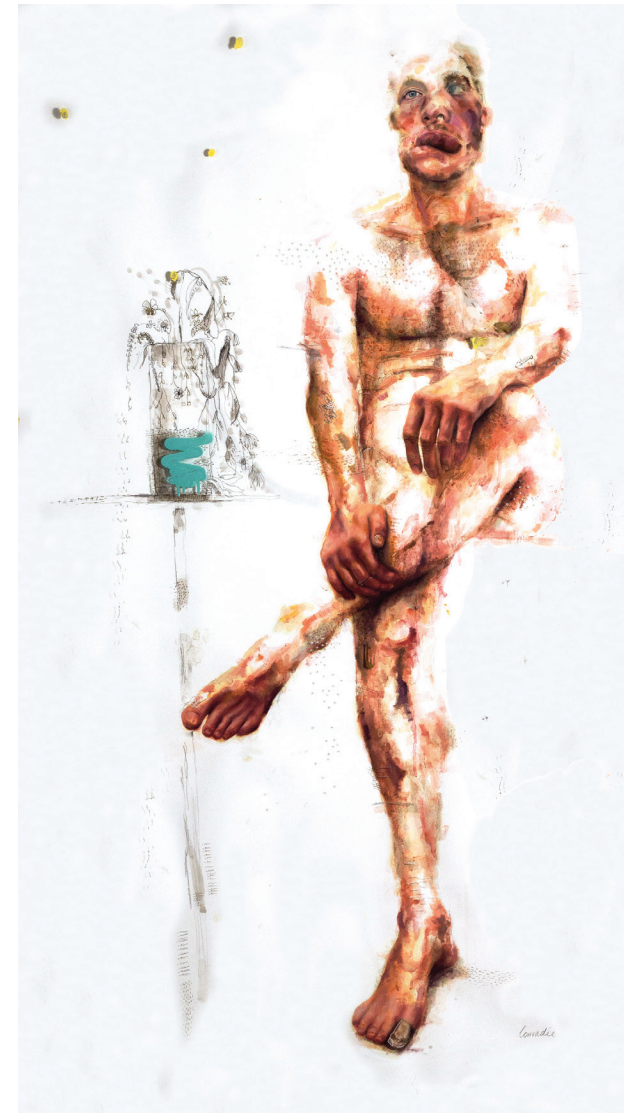
En tu nombre
Mixed media on canvas, 120cm x 115cm



The Auctioneer
Mixed media on canvas, 85cm x 105cm



El Juguetero
Mixed media on paper, 115cm x 195cm



Chesmin
Mixed media on paper with intervention on glass, 106cm x 148cm



El viaje
Mixed media on canvas with balloons, 100cm x 106cm





It was white before you felt the snow
Mixed media on canvas, 100cm x 106cm



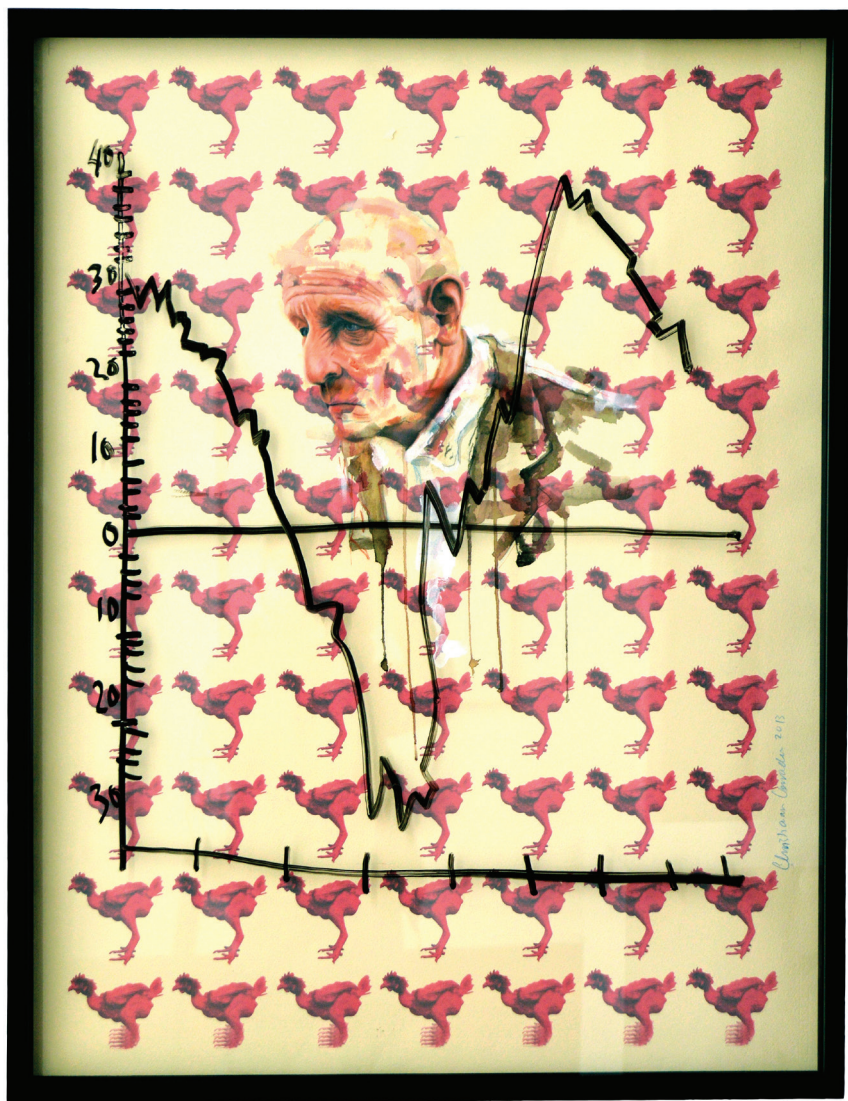
Quimera o bestia
Mixed media on canvas with intervention on glass, 100cm x 110cm



The iron bells ring
Mixed media on paper, 50cm x 78cm



Gerardo
Mixed media on paper, 75cm x 90cm



Consumacion
Mixed media on paper with intervention on glass, 50cm x 78cm



Pajaro en manos
Mixed media on canvas with intervention on glass, 110cm x 150cm



Red Vic, 2014 - 2015
Mixed media on canvas, 60 x 105 cm



Of The Narrow Seas, 2014 - 2015
Mixed media on canvas, 66 x 100 cm



If there is one thing I'll say before I go, 2015 - 2016
Mixed media on canvas, 110 x 100 cm



White Bread, 2015
Mixed media on canvas with neon light, 85 x 105 cm



It matter; the moment, 2014
Mixed media on canvas, 66 x 100 cm



Rastro, 2016
Mixed media on canvas with paper flowers, 27 x 40 cm



I never wanted it to be, but i think it is so, 2015
Mixed media on canvas with paper flowers, 80 x 100 cm



I've travelled all along this golden highway, 2015 - 2016
Oil on canvas, 100 x 106 cm



Should my ship come sailing in, I won't wait, 2015 - 2016
Mixed media on canvas with gesso saints, 106 x 112 cm



La Sufre, 2013
Giclee print, 44 x 35 cm



Grinnin' in your face, 2013
Oil on giclee print, 105 x 73 cm



How many go, 2013
Oil on giclee print (original drawing by Diego Narvaez), 105 x 73 cm



An indication there of, 2013
Oil on giclee print (original drawing by Sofia Ortiz), 105 x 73 cm

Christiaan CONRADIE

Born in 1984 in Johannesburg (South Africa), he lives and works in Mexico.



Expositions solo

- 2016 Exposition-retrospective, Galerie 55Bellechasse, Paris, France
- 2015 RVCA Gallery, San Francisco, USA
- 2014 Celaya Brothers Gallery, 'This is the wind and this is the breeze', México City, Mexico
Rust en Vrede Gallery, 'Love before breakfast', Cape Town, South Africa
- 2012 Casa Verdi, 'Los otros y Anne', Barcelona, Spaine

Expositions collectives

- 2016 Contemporary Istanbul - Turquie
Art Fair Cologne - Allemagne
Art Copenhagen - Danemark
Opening of 55Bellechasse's outpost in Miami - USA
Solo Project - Bâle - Suisse Scope New-York, NY, USA
Art Wynwood, Miami, USA
Art PalmBeach, Miami, USA
- 2015 Context, Miami, USA,
YIA, Paris, France
Art Silicon Valley, San Francisco, USA
Art Miami NY, New-York, USA
SurfCity Festival, Barcelona, Spain
- 2014 Group Show, Casa Lamm, México City, Mexico
Pig Me Auction, Mexico City, Mexico
- 2013 Auction, Traeger y Pinto, México City, Mexico
Galeria JLS, Valle Bravo, Mexico
Myl Arte Contemporáneo, 'Codigos Animalistas', México City, Mexico
White Spider, 'Sing Sweet Songs of Conviction', México City, Mexico



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- Salon 91, 'Home is wherever I'm with you', Cape Town, South Africa
- 2012 Salon 91, 'I'd rather be swimming', Cape Town, South Africa
A Word of Art, 'The Space In Between', Cape Town, South Africa
Salon 91, 'Impression: Sunset', Cape Town, South Africa
Spencer Street Studios, 'A collection of works', Cape Town, South Africa
Tjing Tjing Exchange, 'A group show', Cape Town, South Africa
Searle Street Post, 'Last Minute', Cape Town, South Africa
- 2010 Group Show, Painting and Performance, Riebeeck Kasteel, South Africa
Group Show, Wessel Snyman Creative, Cape Town, South Africa
Principal Painter in Andrew Putter's 'Sketch Assembly I', Cape Town, South Africa

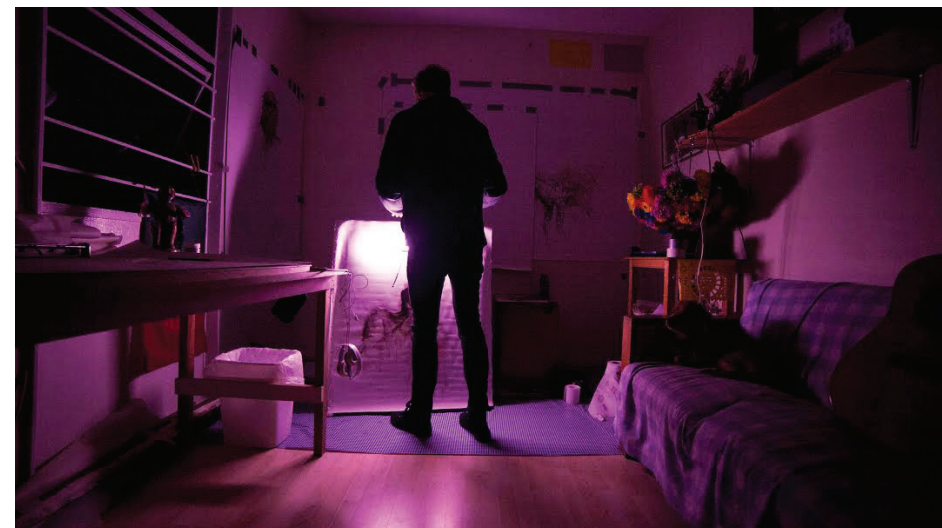
Remerciements | Thanks

Un grand merci à Jenny et Morne du Plessis, ainsi qu'à Stuart Sinclair qui ont permis cette rencontre. Merci également aux collectionneurs, qui par leurs achats ont démontré en foires, en galerie et sur internet que notre enthousiasme pour le travail de Christiaan est largement partagé, que ce soit pour ses huiles, ses dessins et photos.

Merci à "the View" sur ABC pour le coup de pouce lors de Frieze Art Week à NYC en 2016.

Un immense merci à mes proches pour toute leur énergie, encouragement et patience, dédiés à cette aventure si prenante.

Bertrand Scholler for 55Bellechasse



Questionnaire 55Bellechasse

5 questions about the artist

What was your favorite toy when you were a kid? And today, do you still have one?

My favourite toy was probably a rugby ball and it probably still is. A tennis ball would be a close second.

What is your drug?

Surfing and being in the ocean. The ocean I suppose.

What is the place in which you recognize yourself the most in Paris?

Please explain your choice (this can be a street, a restaurant, a shop, a bar, a museum... Whatever you want).

Unfortunately, I've never been to Paris, but I hope for it to be the way that I imagine it.

What is it like to be an artist in South Africa today?

I've been living in Mexico for the last two years, so I feel somewhat disconnected to the idea of living as an artist in South Africa. But I think that South African artists, similarly to Mexican artists, are able to draw on a very rich culture, and are exposed to a lot of diversity within that culture. All these factors contribute to the way that the artist sees himself and the work that he creates.

In which artist do you recognize yourself?

I don't think that I recognise myself in one single artist. I feel that I recognise myself in the artists that I am most drawn to. Rubens, Rothko, Velazquez, Kanevsky.

5 questions about the art

What are your inspirations for your art? (artists, current events, etc.).

Please explain your answer.

My primary inspiration has always been the desire to connect with the spectator in a way that is impactful, honest and memorable. I'm inspired, not only by other painters, as I mentioned above, but also by photographers and musicians and artists in other fields that produce things with the same kind of values that I try and instill in my work.

How would you define your work in five words?

Honest, brave, considered, spontaneous and impactful.

What is the best tool to create a work of art? Why?

There is no best tool, it depends on what it is you're trying to achieve.

What message do you wish to convey through your art?

I don't try to convey any easily definable thing. I want people to engage with a piece of art that is honest, and that demands you to consider it. I guess my 'message' would be one of someone striving for excellence without contrivance.

How must a gallery be today in order to represent your work?

I think the personal relationship between the gallery and the artist is really important. I think the artist needs to understand the position of the gallery, as a business and the gallery needs to treat the artist in a way where he feels as though there is a common objective that both parties are striving towards, together.



These walls are where my house used to be, 2015 - 2016
Mixed media on canvas with balls, 100 x 83 cm

Galerie 55Bellechasse

Bertrand Scholler et Hans Mautner ont, entre eux, plus de 60 ans d'expériences professionnelles, en tant que banquier, cadre supérieur, et conseiller financier et stratégique, ainsi ils n'ont cessé de contribuer au développement d'entreprises internationales. En parallèle, l'un comme l'autre ont réuni des collections significatives d'artistes contemporains.

Depuis 2013, bertrand et Hans se sont associés à 55Bellechasse afin de participer à l'émergence d'une quinzaine d'artistes internationaux. Leur approche d'entrepreneurs cherche à combiner certains des aspects historiques et traditionnels de la profession de marchand d'art et une approche plus actuelle et internationale sur les questions qui ont été influençant cette activité depuis au moins une décennie; dont les nouveaux media et les foires d'Art Contemporain.

En 2016, 55Bellechasse a inauguré sa première galerie à l'international, à Miami Little River (7111st North Miami Avenue) et d'autres projets d'implantations sont programmés."

Bertrand Scholler and Hans Mautner have, between them, more than 60 years of career experiences, as banker, senior executive, and financial and strategic consultant, and have contributed to the development of international companies, as well as meeting and collecting contemporary artists.

Since 2013, they have partnered in 55Bellechasse to participate in the emergence of fifteen international artists, with an approach that endeavors to combine some of the historic and traditional aspects of the art dealer's profession and a more entrepreneurial and international approach to the issues which have been influencing this business for at least a decade.

Founding Partners: Jacques Attali, Niloufar Banisadr, Laure and Kader Belarbi, Sophie and Gilles Breem, Freddy and Frédéric Chesnais, Jerzy Ciszewski, Renée and Léonard Feinstein, Luc Karsenty, Anne and Olivier de Lagarde, Victoria and Hans Mautner, François Sarkozy, Marie-Aude Scholler



Limited edition of 300 copies.
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Publisher : Bertrand SCHOLLER for Gallery 55Bellechasse.
Printed in Slovakia. Design : Peter Papanek and Bertrand Scholler



Seated, 2011.
Oil on canvas, 115 x 135 cm.

« Ecrire une Histoire Exclusive et Ambitieuse autour d'Artistes de Talents
et dont nous serons fiers, à Paris et ailleurs, avec vous »

« To write an Exclusive and Ambitious Story, with you and around
Talented Artists of which we will be proud, in Paris and elsewhere. »



Galerie 55Bellechasse
55 rue de Bellechasse - 75007 PARIS

Ouvert du mardi au samedi de 10h à 20h

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