

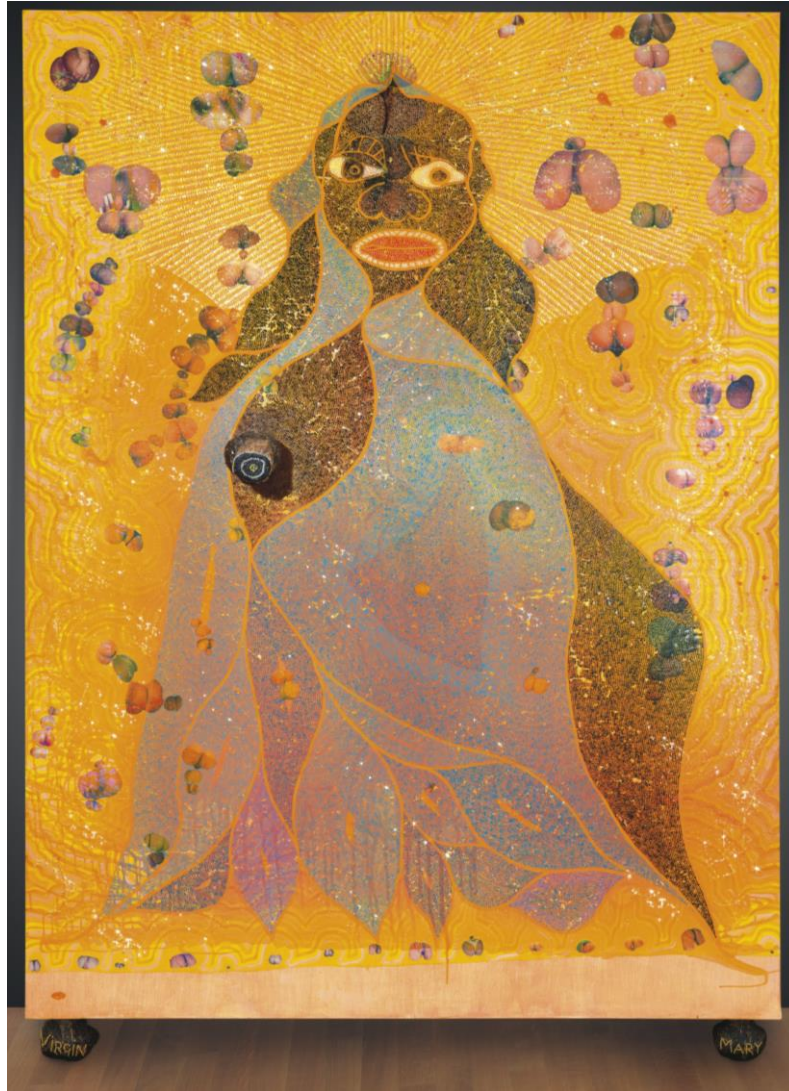
CHRISTIE'S

THE ART PEOPLE

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ICONIC YOUNG BRITISH ARTIST WORKS FROM THE MUSEUM OF OLD AND NEW ART, TASMANIA

CHRIS OFILI, JAKE AND DINOS CHAPMAN, JENNY SAVILLE AND DAMIEN HIRST



London – For its forthcoming June auctions of Post-War and Contemporary Art, Christie's is delighted to present some of the most iconic Young British Artist (YBA) works from The Museum of Old and New Art (MONA) in Hobart, Tasmania. Bringing together some of the YBA movement's most celebrated proponents, Jake and Dinos Chapman, Damien Hirst, Chris Ofili and Jenny Saville, these works will be amongst the highlights of Christie's Post-War and Contemporary Art Evening Auction on 30 June, 2015 and will be on view from 26 June, 2015 at Christie's, London.

Leading the selection is Chris Ofili's *The Holy Virgin Mary* (1996), originally acquired by Charles Saatchi directly from the artist and first exhibited at the generation-defining exhibition 'Sensation' in London and New York (*illustrated above*). A focal point for the widespread attention the exhibition received throughout the international

media landscape, *The Holy Virgin Mary* dates from a moment that saw Ofili propelled to international fame and at the centre of a lawsuit between the Brooklyn Museum and New York's Mayor Rudolf Giuliani, who argued that the painting desecrated the Catholic Church. Considered one of the most significant works in an *oeuvre* that often plays with stereotypes of blackness, exoticism and sexuality, *The Holy Virgin Mary* puts centre stage a black Madonna shrouded in fluttering robes of cerulean blue, parted to reveal a single breast of dried and varnished elephant dung. Set against a golden background awash with iridescent pointillist dots and tendrils of glittering resin the Madonna is surrounded by collaged close-ups of female genitalia cut into shapes reminiscent of the cherubim and seraphim of Old Master paintings. Since the painting's dramatic debut it has been a highlight in Ofili's retrospective exhibitions at Tate Britain (2010) and the New Museum, New York (2014).

Also central to the MONA group is Jake and Dinos Chapman's *Great Deeds Against the Dead* (1994), another headline-hitting work from 'Sensation', acquired from Charles Saatchi in 2005 (illustrated left). Exhibited in every major retrospective on the artists, and standing nearly three metres in height, *Great Deeds Against the Dead* is a life-size sculptural reworking of Goya's '*Grande hazaña! Con muertos!*' ('A heroic feat! With dead men!'), the most recognised and gruesome sheet from Goya's *The Disasters of War* series (1810-20). Also featured is Jenny Saville's *Matrix* (1999), a monumental portrait of transgender photographer Del LaGrace Volcano. An uninhibited meditation on the human body and the pressures of conformity, Saville's painting confronts the questions of human vulnerability, body image and gender that have continued to define her practice. Completing the selection is Damien Hirst's *Beautiful mis-shapen purity clashing excitedly outwards painting* (1995), one the first examples of the artist's radical spin paintings. Executed the same year that Hirst was awarded the Turner Prize, it has been included in his major solo shows 'The Agony and the Ecstasy' (Museo Archeologico Nazionale di Napoli, Naples, 2004), and 'Relics' (ALRIWAQ, Qatar Museums Authority, Doha, 2013).



Founder of MONA, David Walsh is known for his uncompromising philosophy and vision, which are showcased by the museum. Since its founding in 2011, MONA (illustrated below) has been acclaimed for its unconventional approach to both display and interpretative content. Australia's largest privately owned museum, MONA has built an international profile using Walsh's diverse collection, from ancient to contemporary works, and its high-profile exhibition programming featuring, most recently, Matthew Barney's 'River of Fundament' (Nov 2014 – April 2015). Walsh is now looking to fund an expansion of his museum with the sale works from his collection that proved controversial when they were made but are now synonymous with the height of the YBA era.

David Walsh said of the upcoming auction: “Selling isn’t easy. I love the things I own. But the proceeds of this auction will help fund an expansion of Mona for a wing to house a number of James Turrell works. They will be light and airy and engaging and, hopefully, provocative. I made my money gambling. And here, at this auction, I’m gambling again. My gamble isn’t that you will pay enough for these works to justify my selling. My wager is that the future, for me and my museum, is more rewarding than the past.”

Francis Outred said: “The arrival of the Museum of Old and New Art in Tasmania represented a shot in the arm for culture not just in the region but also globally.

The largest privately funded museum in Australia, David Walsh’s vision of juxtaposing ancient and modern objects and works of art captured a zeitgeist which continues to inspire its thousands of visitors annually. Similarly Chris Ofili’s *The Holy Virgin Mary* and the Chapman Brothers’ *Great Deeds against the Dead* were central to the era-defining Sensation exhibition of Charles Saatchi’s collection of Young British Art in 1997. Bringing together a profound visual and material creativity with a powerful sensuality and unflinching political acuity, they continue to thrill and challenge today. Last year we set the bar high with both Tracey Emin’s *My Bed* and Jenny Saville’s *Plan* and we’re looking forward to similar energy in the sale room on 30 June.”

Having never previously been offered at auction before, the sale brings together four works that exemplify the ground-breaking aesthetic of the Young British Artists of the 1990s. Viewing will take place at Christie’s, 8 King Street, London from 26 June, 2015.

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Christie’s has a global presence with 53 offices in 32 countries and 12 salerooms around the world including in London, New York, Paris, Geneva, Milan, Amsterdam, Dubai, Zürich, Hong Kong, Shanghai, and Mumbai. More recently, Christie’s has led the market with expanded initiatives in growth markets such as Russia, China, India and the United Arab Emirates, with successful sales and exhibitions in Beijing, New Delhi, Mumbai and Dubai.

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