

Sophia Contemporary Gallery at Frieze Masters 6 – 9 October 2016

Stand G04



Left: Robert Kelly *Nocturne (Burnt Yellow) I*, 1999, oil and mixed media on board, 43 x 36 cm, courtesy of the artist and Sophia Contemporary Gallery.



Right: State Porcelain Factory, *Dynamic Composition*, 1923, painting designer: Kazimir Malevich, painting: A.N. Kudryavtsev, porcelain with polychromatic overglaze painting, 24 cm (diameter), courtesy of Sophia Contemporary Gallery.

Sophia Contemporary is pleased to announce their participation in this year's Frieze Masters Collections, a section of the fair featuring galleries selected by Sir Norman Rosenthal. The gallery's stand features fifty works of extremely rare Constructivist and Suprematist Russian porcelain and sculptures, drawn from the collection of Vladimir Tsarenkov, the father of Sophia Contemporary's co-founder Vassili Tsarenkov. Exhibited alongside are four large-scale works by the American abstract artist Robert Kelly whose rational and formal style of painting has been influenced and defined by the Russian Constructivist tradition.

Vladimir Tsarenkov is a Franco-Russian collector based in London who has been building his varied collection for 35 years and possesses one of the most unique and comprehensive private collections of Russian Avant-garde art in the world. Encompassing more than 3,000 artworks, his collection is divided into nine groups, including Ancient Greco-Roman art, contemporary Iranian art, Islamic metal works and Russian Avant-garde art.

His remarkable collection includes one hundred works of Suprematist porcelain - one of the most extensive in existence, designed by Kazimir Malevich and hand-painted by Nikolai Suetin and Ilya Chashnik. This combination of the conceptual ideas of Suprematism, the founding movement of abstract art, with the artistic design of porcelain is unique within the history of art.

Tsarenkov's collection features 730 pieces of Russian revolutionary and avant-garde porcelain dating from 1918 to the late 1930s and produced by the State Porcelain Factory (former Imperial Porcelain Manufactory). Many of these pieces can only be found in Tsarenkov's collection and were designed

by the most important Russian Avant-garde artists such as Vassili Kandinsky, Kazimir Malevich, Vladimir Tatlin, Nikolai Suetin, Ilya Chashnik, Ivan Rznich, Sergei Chekhonin and Alexandra Schekatikhina-Pototskaya among others. An example on view at the stand is *Dynamic Composition* (1923) with polychromatic overglaze painting designed by Kazimir Malevich and painted by A. N Kudryavtsev. The presentation also includes a model of the *Palace of the Soviets* (1931-2) by Vladimir Gelfreikh and Lev Ilyin (Workshop of Vladimir Shchuko) and *Polytechnical Metal Construction* (1920) by Vladimir Stenberg.

Accompanying the porcelains are paintings from Robert Kelly's *Nocturne* series (1999), which was particularly inspired by Malevich. The juxtaposition of masterpieces of the Russian Avant-Garde, with Robert Kelly's intricate paintings create an exciting dialogue between the Russian pioneers of abstract art and contemporary American geometric abstraction. Commanding and rich in texture, Kelly's process-based artworks combine techniques such as assemblage, drawing, painting and glazing, which are meticulously layered to create complex compositions.

The artist starts with found paper and ephemera including postcards, letters, posters and prints, which he patiently arranges 'wet on wet' on the canvas. The result is an intensely layered pictorial surface reminiscent of a palimpsest, revealing traces of history and culture through the collaged fragments. Onto this base Kelly then lays down impasto oil pigments with a trowel style brush, fragmenting the assemblage further. The geometric lines of the paint dominate the works, creating a striking contrast with the complex narrative beneath.

Black on Bone - Selected works, a solo exhibition of Robert Kelly's work is also at Sophia Contemporary Gallery during Frieze Masters, and runs from 28 September - 28 October 2016. An accompanying talk with the artist takes place on 6 October at the gallery, entitled *Bridging a century; a dialogue with Malevich, far afield*. Malevich's *Black square and circle* (1920/21), loaned from Tsarenkov's collection, will be on display especially for the event.

Notes to Editors

About Robert Kelly

Born in Santa Fe in 1956, Robert Kelly has been based in New York for the majority of his life. He graduated from Harvard University in 1978 and then worked as a commercial photographer for Polaroid until he began his career as an artist in 1982. He has presented solo exhibitions internationally in cities such as San Francisco, Copenhagen, Milan, Santa Fe, Monterey, Houston, Vancouver, Rio de Janeiro and New York. His paintings are featured in the museum collections of University of New Mexico Art Museum, Albuquerque, NM; Brooklyn Museum, Brooklyn, NY; New Mexico Museum of Art, Santa Fe, NM; The Fogg Museum, Cambridge, MA; and the Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, NY, amongst others.

About Sophia Contemporary Gallery

Sophia Contemporary Gallery is a contemporary art gallery located in a 3,000 square foot space in the heart of Mayfair, London. The gallery exhibits, represents and champions a diverse roster of emerging and established artists from around the world working in a variety of media, including painting, drawing, sculpture, video and photography. Sophia Contemporary is committed to conducting research and educating the public through events and talks, and is working with museums and institutions worldwide in order to place the gallery's artists in major public and private collections.

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