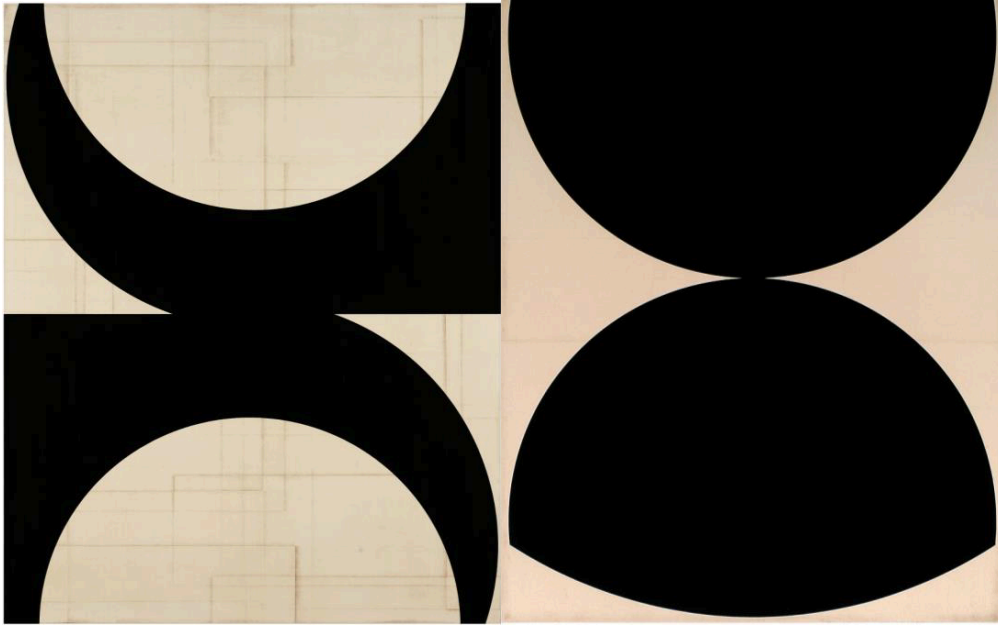


Sophia Contemporary

**Robert Kelly: Selected works from Black on Bone**

28 September - 28 October 2016



Left: Robert Kelly, Mimesis CIII, 2008, oil and mixed media on canvas, 203 x 163 cm

Right: Mimesis CIX, 2009, oil and mixed media on canvas, 102 x 81 cm

All images courtesy of the artist and Sophia Contemporary Gallery

Sophia Contemporary is pleased to announce Selected works from Black on Bone, a new solo exhibition by the American abstract artist Robert Kelly (b. 1956) featuring fifteen largescale paintings at their Mayfair gallery. Four additional works from the artist's Nocturne series (1999) will also feature at Sophia Contemporary's booth at Frieze Masters Collections, a section of the fair featuring galleries selected by Sir Norman Rosenthal, from 6 – 9 October. Alongside Kelly's works the gallery's stand will feature 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.

Commanding and rich in texture, Kelly's works combine techniques such as assemblage, drawing, painting and glazing, which are meticulously layered to create complex compositions. Much of Kelly's practice is process driven and he has honed his technique throughout his career to create a clear and developed artistic language. His palette is consistent, drawing from organic shades of brown, black, ochre and red, often using contrasting colours to increase the power and drama of the works.

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## Sophia Contemporary

Pure abstraction leads Kelly's process, which is guided by the painting itself as the artist explains: "*I don't want to paint something; I want to let a painting become itself.*" Preparing the canvas is a key initial process and an art form in itself for Kelly; he works with found paper and ephemera including postcards, letters, posters and prints, which he patiently arranges 'wet on wet' on the canvas result is an intensely layered pictorial surface reminiscent of a patchwork, revealing traces of history and culture through the collaged fragments.

Onto this base he lays down impasto oil pigments with a trowel style brush, fragmenting the assemblage further. The geometric lines of the paint dominate the works, creating an autonomous line against the complicated narrative beneath. Kelly's rational and formal style of painting has been influenced and defined by the Russian Constructivist tradition, in particular Kazimir Malevich, as well as Piet Mondrian of the De Stijl movement, plus artists from abstract movements including Jean Arp, Richard Diebenkorn and Ellsworth Kelly; all are known for working skillfully with simple shapes and lines. Similarly to his techniques of collage and assemblage, he also layers artistic influences, which contribute to the accessibility and clarity of his style.

Sophia Contemporary will host a talk with Robert Kelly on 6 October at 4.00 pm entitled *Bridging a century: a dialogue with Malevich, far afield*. Kazimir Malevich's *Black square and circle* (1920/21) will be on display especially for the event.

### **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, Turin, Santa Fe, Monterey, Houston, Vancouver 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 Vladimir Tsarenkov**

Vladimir Tsarenkov, related to Sophia Contemporary Gallery co-founder and co-director Vassili Tsarenkov, is a Franco-Russian collector based in London who has been building his

## Sophia Contemporary

varied collection of more than 3,000 artworks for 35 years. Within this, he holds the largest collection of Russian revolutionary and avant-garde porcelains; 730 objects, which date from 1918 to the late 1930s, including pieces designed by Kazimir Malevich, Wassily Kandinsky and Vladimir Tatlin, 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.

### Exhibition Details

<b>Title:</b>	Robert Kelly
<b>Address:</b>	Sophia Contemporary Gallery, 11 Grosvenor Street, London, W1K 4QB, UK
<b>Website:</b>	<a href="http://www.sophiacontemporary.com">www.sophiacontemporary.com</a>
<b>Dates:</b>	28 September – 28 October 2016
<b>Private View:</b>	6 – 9 pm, 27 September 2016
<b>Talk:</b>	'Bridging a century; a dialogue with Malevich, far afield' on 6 October at 4.00 pm
<b>Opening Hours:</b>	Monday to Friday, 10am to 6pm, Saturday 11am to 5pm
<b>Admission:</b>	Free
<b>Travel:</b>	Green Park, Bond Street or Oxford Circus Tube Station
<b>Twitter:</b>	@SophiaCGallery
<b>Facebook:</b>	SophiaContemporaryGallery
<b>Instagram:</b>	sophiacontemporary