

VALLOIS

GALERIE
Georges-Philippe
& Nathalie
Vallois

33 & 36, rue de Seine
75006 Paris-FR
T. +33(0)1 46 34 61 07
F. +33(0)1 43 25 18 80
www.galerie-vallois.com
info@galerie-vallois.com

1018 Madison Ave
NYC, NY 10075
+1(646) 476 5885
fleiss-vallois.com
info@fleiss-vallois.com

Pilar Albarracín^{ES}
Julien Berthier^{FR}
Julien Bismuth^{FR}
Alain Bublex^{FR}
Robert Cottingham^{US}
John DeAndrea^{US}
Massimo Furlan^{FR}
Eulália Grau^{ES}
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NEW YORK

Robert Cottingham's
Americana

(Works from 1965 to 2018)

10.05 – 27.07.2024

TEFAF NEW YORK BOOTH 358

May 10th - May 14th, 2024

Galerie Georges-Philippe & Nathalie Vallois is glad to announce its participation in TEF AF NY 2024. In keeping with its will to promote French and International Postwar Avant-gardes, the gallery will exhibit five masterpieces ranging from the 1960s to the mid-1970s.

Peter Stämpfli made less than forty Pop paintings between 1962 and 1964. Many were burnt in the fire that destroyed his studio some 30 years ago but most of the surviving works from this period are kept in noteworthy public collections throughout the world. Thanks to this body of work, the celebrated Swiss artist was immediately included in remarkable projects such as the third Paris Biennale in 1963, Salon Comparaisons 1964, or the Swiss Pavilion of the 1970 Venice Biennale. *Le Demi* is part of a very rare series in which the artist re-uses advertisements found in magazines, focusing on the object as a shared experience of widespread commercial techniques, a common denominator made possible by the industrialization and mass-consumerism of the 1960s.



Peter Stämpfli, *Le Demi*, 1964

Raymond Hains, founder of 'Affichisme' with Jacques Villeglé and cofounder of the French Avant-garde movement of 'Nouveau Réalisme', had been collecting ripped-up advertising posters from the streets of Paris for several years before he presented the results of this practice at the turn of the 1960s. By displaying the posters, either on their original support or transferring them to canvas to preserve them, Hains operated a displacement from the street to the gallery wall, drawing our attention to the ambivalent emblem of the modern city: the street poster. The technique is also an anti-conformist message to the art world and its conventions, eliciting associations of ideas from simple, common elements, while subtly referencing the politics that pervade the urban landscape and its discourse. Here, a small word appears, the only legible one in the work: "fascism", while two eyes (from a famous French cigarette brand poster designed by Marie Lefor in 1961) hypnotizingly draw the viewer in.



Raymond Hains, *Untitled no. 19*, 1962 (detail)

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TEFAF NEW YORK



Robert Cottingham, *Bus II*, 1965



Eulàlia Grau, *Etnografia. Pànic*, 1973

Another Nouveau Réalisme masterpiece on the gallery's booth is **Niki de Saint Phalle's** *Le Château de Gilles de Rais* (1962). Saint Phalle deals with violence, exacting it in a cathartic, iconoclastic furor tinted with humor. This work belongs to the 'Tirs' (shooting paintings) series, where she aims a rifle at her monochrome assemblages in order for them to bleed color. Gilles de Rais, companion-in-arms to Joan of Arc, was Niki de Saint Phalle's ancestor. In a defiant and provocative statement, the artist claimed him as the only forefather she was proud of, embracing the monster in each one of us. The 'shooting paintings' are Niki de Saint Phalle's symbolic upheaval of institutions, the status quo, and conservatism. Be they aimed at cathedrals, castles or famous figures, these 'revolver drip paintings' are an attack on all that is considered immovable: "In 1961 I shot at Daddy, all men, small men, tall men, big men, fat men, men, my brother, society, the Church, the convent, the school, my family, my mother, all men, Daddy, myself, men." As a subject, Gilles de Rais, her progenitor, knight and lord, convicted serial killer of children, and the source of inspiration for the wife-murdering Bluebeard represents the epitome of Niki de Saint Phalle's fierce message. Shown as early as 1962 in Alexander Iolas' gallery, this monumental example of the shooting paintings is an extremely rare masterpiece.

Just as subversive, **Eulàlia Grau's** *Etnografias* series was created in the 1970s; the artist was twenty-three years old and Franco was in power. Using collages which she photographed, enlarged and printed in black and white before hand-coloring them, the series addresses the issues of her time with a prescient and provocative visual vocabulary. *Etnografia. Pànic*, presented on our booth, displays a remarkable contrast typical of the oppositions present in 1970s Spain. A bright pink convertible evokes the tropes of the American Dream in the 1960s: the nuclear family going away in a brand-new car to picnic on a suburban riverside. The Ben-Day dots, made obvious by the enlargement process, seem a parody of Roy Lichtenstein's uber-American pop art. However, this perfect image of modern life is belied by the shrieking face of a baby, phagocytizing the inside of the car.

The picture-perfect scene becomes a reflection of the societal expectations for a woman to give birth to and raise children. Under Franco's rule, Spain saw the convergence of traditional society and a Catholic state which made natalism the spearhead of its demographic ideology and policy. A pro-natalist, family-supporting policy was a constant feature throughout the dictatorship, further entrenching the hardships faced by women in search of independence and freedom. This work displays Eulàlia Grau's will to address any and all kinds of inequalities, and her practice's deeply political reach.

In 1964, **Robert Cottingham** moved from New York to Los Angeles as the art director for an advertising company. The radical change of atmosphere from the West Coast's huge, incessant neon lights in central Los Angeles and Hollywood made a deep impression on Cottingham. He began painting every day after work. Although the airbrush, a late 19th-century invention that was originally used to retouch photographs, was coming into its own in Pop Art and gaining in popularity among Photorealists, Cottingham was one of the artists who continued to paint in the traditional way, with a brush, as did Robert Bechtle, Charles Bell, Ralph Goings, Richard McLean and Richard Estes. His first piece shows the front of a bus, already displaying his characteristic first-person point of view and a close attention to details in the shadows, reflections, and colors represented. This painting will be offered on our TEFAF NY 2024 booth for its very first appearance on the market, just ahead of the major show dedicated to Cottingham's work in our NYC gallery.

PARIS

36

Pilar Albarracín,
Alta tensión

29.04 – 01.06.2024

33

Lucie Picandet,
Charnières

29.04 – 01.06.2024