

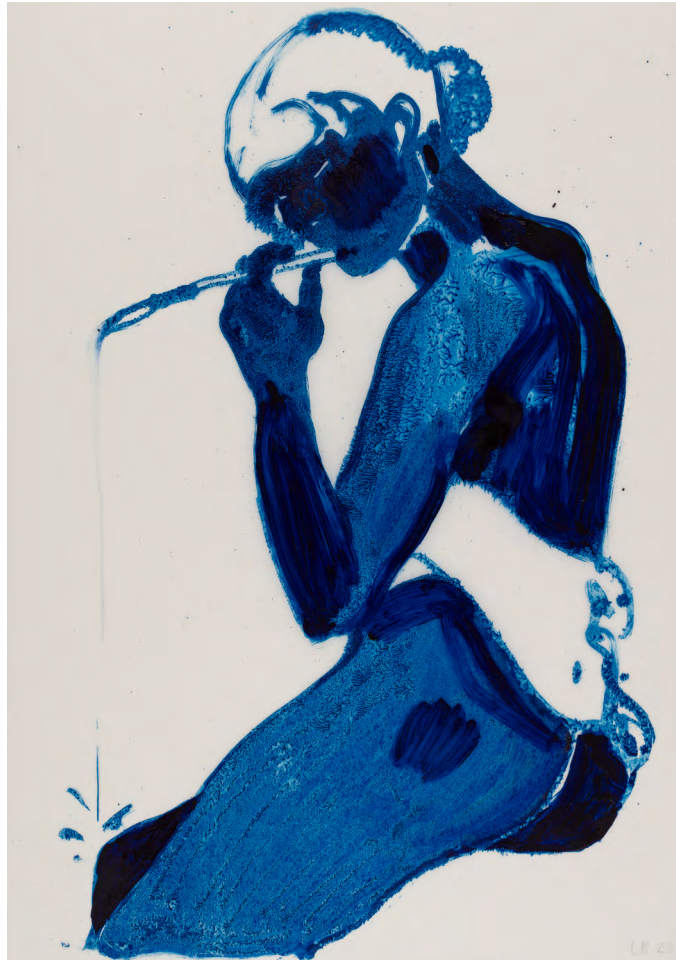
Press release

Lisa Brice

LIVES and WORKS

16 October—23 December 2023
Opening Monday 16 October, 6—8pm

Thaddaeus Ropac
Paris Marais
7, rue Debelleye, 75003 Paris



Lisa Brice, *Untitled*, 2023.
Oil on tracing paper. 41.9 x 29.6 cm (16.5 x 11.65 in)

I like to think that my paintings are the antithesis of misrepresentation – the reclamation of the canvas by all the models, painters, wives, mistresses and performers. The spaces I depict are dream-like in the sense that they are fictional, but very much based on reality and lived, sensorial experience.

— Lisa Brice

LIVES and WORKS at Thaddaeus Ropac Paris Marais is Lisa Brice's first exhibition with the gallery. It is also the first solo presentation of the South-African-born, London-based painter's work in France. In her latest body of work, Brice continues to challenge traditional representations of women in art history. Inheriting from and renewing the genre of the nude as painted by male artists, she transposes familiar scenes in an act of re-authorship that proposes an alternative to the power dynamics inherent in such images.

The characters and settings that appear in Brice's paintings are built from diverse images collected from personal photographs, various media and, above all, art history, which provides a rich seam of inspiration for the artist. 'All painting is a lineage – it's all a conversation with what has come before,' she says. Drawing specifically on paintings made in Paris from the mid to late 19th to early 20th centuries, in the works on view, Brice is responding to the work of painters historically active in the French capital, tying the exhibition at Thaddaeus Ropac Paris Marais to the artistic landscape of its surroundings.



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Brice echoes and reimagines the figures and scenes painted by artists of that period, while reclaiming them from a male gaze that effectively disempowers women as passive objects of desire and refracting them through ideas of self-representation and empowerment. *LIVES and WORKS* nods to the spirit of personalities like Aïcha Goblet (1894–1972), as well as Suzanne Valadon (1865–1938), whose journey – from working as a model to painting nudes herself – embodies the reshaping of the genre and its spectatorship that characterises Brice's own practice.

The title of the exhibition, *LIVES and WORKS*, is a play on words. Both interchangeable as verb and noun, the two terms recall the opening words of an artist's biography or an artist index while simultaneously signifying the duality of the existence of the female artists/models whose essence underpins the works on view. Depicted holding paint brushes or palettes, or reflected in canvases or mirrors, Brice's figures suggest a subtle yet powerful shift from subjecthood to authorship. By investing them with a decisive force in their own depiction, Brice 'gives them back their agency and creativity', as curator Laura Smith has written: 'they look purposefully at their own reflections in order to paint themselves, armed with [...] cigarettes and brushes.'



Lisa Brice

About the artist

Brice studied at Michaelis School of Fine Art in Cape Town and settled in London following a residency at Gasworks in 1998. She has spent extended periods working in Trinidad where she participated in a workshop in Grande Riviere in 1999 and a residency in Port of Spain in 2000 with fellow artists Chris Ofili, Peter Doig and Emheyo Bahabba (Embah). In 2020, she presented a major solo exhibition, *Smoke and Mirrors*, at KM21, The Hague, which was followed by her inclusion in the lauded group exhibition *Mixing It Up: Painting Today* at the Hayward Gallery, London in 2021. She has presented further solo exhibitions at UK museums and public institutions including the Charleston Trust, Lewes (2021) and Tate Britain, London (2018).

Brice's work has also been featured in important group exhibitions at the Whitechapel Gallery, London (2022); Modern Art Museum of Fort Worth, Texas (2022); Camden Art Centre, London (2016); and South African National Gallery, Cape Town (2016). Her paintings are found in major public collections including Tate, London; Whitworth Art Gallery, Manchester; Hammer Museum, Los Angeles; San Francisco Museum of Modern Art; Smithsonian National Museum of African Art, Washington, D.C.; Johannesburg Art Gallery; South African National Gallery, Cape Town; and X Museum, Beijing. Brice's work was included in *Between the Islands* at Tate Britain, London, in 2021–22, and is currently on view in *Capturing The Moment* at Tate Modern, London until 28 January 2024.

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