

Press Release

# Tom Sachs

## "Picasso"

29 April—31 May 2025

Thaddaeus Ropac  
Seoul Fort Hill  
2F, 122-1, Dokseodang-ro, Yongsan-gu, Seoul



Tom Sachs, *Woman with Orange*, 2025.  
Enamel and ferric nitrate patina on silicone bronze  
with stainless steel hardware.  
180.3 x 73.7 x 63.5 cm (71 x 29 x 25 in)

Thaddaeus Ropac Seoul presents Tom Sachs's investigation into the Modernist painter and sculptor Pablo Picasso. The exhibition centres around a group of new sculptures, which Sachs created in a *bricolage* of found objects after the Spanish artist's originals before casting them in bronze. The sculptures are accompanied by painted and drawn reimaginings of Picasso's works, in Sachs's own

distinctive pictorial language, that provoke visitors to reflect on what makes a painting.

A relentlessly innovative and subversive sculptor, Sachs is best known for his elaborate *bricolage* recreations of masterpieces of art, design and engineering. In the 1990s, he spent days studying Piet Mondrian's paintings at The Museum of

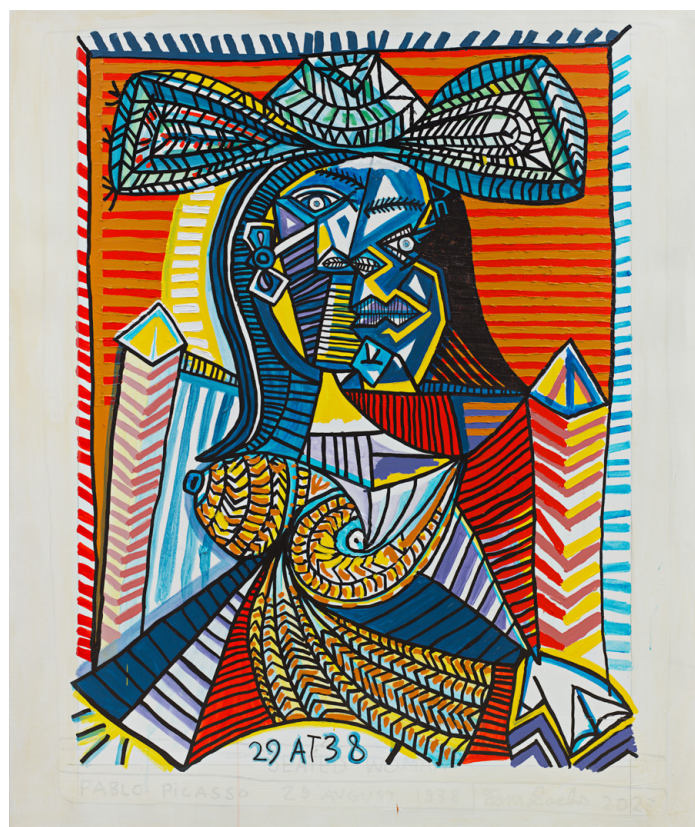
Modern Art, New York, using Gaffer tape on plywood to recreate several of them. It was through these early explorations that he began to develop his methodology, and in the years since, he has continued engaging with the masters of Modernism, notably exploring the architecture of Le Corbusier for the 2010 Venice Biennale of Architecture. His works are conspicuously handmade and heighten our awareness of production techniques, in a reversal of modernisation's trend towards cleaner, simpler and more perfect machine-made items.

In recent years, in his New York studio, Sachs has surrounded himself with the work of Pablo Picasso, whose name is, for Sachs, 'synonymous with art'. As well as sculpting according to traditional methods, such as carving from wood or modelling in clay, Picasso spearheaded a new approach to making sculpture from diverse found materials. These assemblages resonated with Sachs's process of reconstructing objects he desired with the materials that were available to him and intentionally revealing his process, with all its challenges and imperfections. Reinterpreting Picasso's sculptures through a contemporary *bricolage* – replacing Picasso's chicken wire and nails with car parts



Tom Sachs, *The Kiss*, 2024.  
Gesso, synthetic polymer and graphite on paper.  
55.9 x 76.2 cm (22 x 30 in).

and a Nerf football – Sachs takes up the gauntlet of the challenge his predecessor mounted against conventional artistic practices by bringing it into a contemporary context. Though he constructs them like Picasso did, Sachs then casts his sculptures in bronze using the ancient lost-wax technique before giving them each a meticulous paint or patina finish, reversing the direction of the Modernist tradition to solidify the position of each of the works on view as an art object in the classical sense.



Tom Sachs, *Seated Woman*, 2025.  
Synthetic polymer and ink on canvas.  
182.9 x 152.4 cm (72 x 60 in).

The paintings and works on paper exhibited at Thaddaeus Ropac Seoul represent the continuation of a period of focus on painting, drawing and colour for the artist, and stem from his fascination with Picasso's 'War Years', between 1937 and 1945. Exploring the lines and forms used by the Spanish painter during this period in his output, Sachs found parallels with his own practice. The thick lines that recur in Sachs's work, originating from the influence of American graffiti and street art, mimic the solid black linework that delineates many of Picasso's figures from that period. Sachs leaves traces of the works' creation apparent through visible measurement lines and dimensions: where previous examples from the series recreated Picasso's works at their original scale, in these recent examples, Sachs dramatically scales up some of the paintings, drawing attention to the process of reproduction. As the artist says: "Painting" is a verb. It's an action, it's an activity. All these paintings are about the process of making them more than the finished product.' By encouraging visitors to engage with

this process, Sachs invites them to examine their own relationship to art-historical artefacts.

The exhibition at Thaddaeus Ropac Seoul brings Sachs's explorations of Picasso across mediums – sculpture, painting and drawing – into dialogue, but, for the artist, all the works on view are sculptures. As he explains: 'I always think about sculpture first. And these, sure, they're paintings, it's paint on canvas, but really they're built the way a sculpture is built. And I don't really make a distinction between a painting and a sculpture or a shoe or a video [...]. It's all sculpture to me, in that it's built. The evidence of the making is always in the finished product.'

On the occasion of the exhibition at Thaddaeus Ropac Seoul, a fanzine will be published featuring documentation from Tom Sachs's studio. The exhibition at Thaddaeus Ropac Seoul will run concurrently with the presentation of his *Space Program: Infinity*, on view at Dongdaemun Design Plaza (DDP), Seoul, from 25 April to 7 September 2025.



Tom Sachs, *Head of a Warrior*, 2024.  
Gesso and ferric nitrate patina on silicone bronze  
with stainless steel hardware.  
76.2 x 45.7 x 35.6 cm (30 x 18 x 14 in).



Portrait of Tom Sachs, 2021. Photo: Mario Sorrenti

### About the artist

Tom Sachs was born in 1966 in New York, where he lives and works. His work has been exhibited across the world and is held in the permanent collections of the Museum of Modern Art, New York; Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York; Whitney Museum of American Art, New York; Los Angeles County Museum of Art; Centre Pompidou, Paris; The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York; San Francisco Museum of Modern Art; and Prada Foundation, Milan, among others. He has had major

solo exhibitions at Art Sonje Center, Seoul (2022); Deichtorhallen, Hamburg (2021); Tokyo City Opera (2019); Nasher Sculpture Center, Houston (2017); Noguchi Museum, New York (2016); Yerba Buena Arts Center, San Francisco (2016); Brooklyn Museum, New York (2016); Mori Art Museum, Tokyo (2016); Lyon Biennale, France (2013); Park Avenue Armory, New York (2012); Venice Architecture Biennale (2010); Prada Foundation, Milan (2006); and Guggenheim Museum, Berlin (2003).

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