

Tom Sachs "Painting" (Volume II)

7 September—10 October 2024

Paris Marais



Thaddaeus Ropac

London Paris Salzburg Seoul

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If you want to learn how to paint, start by painting your own Picasso.

— Tom Sachs

For this recent series of works, Tom Sachs immersed himself in paintings by Pablo Picasso, particularly those produced during his so-called ‘War Years’, between 1937 and 1945, which he reimagines using his own distinctive painterly language. This exhibition is conceived as a continuation of the show held at Thaddaeus Ropac Paris Marais at the beginning of this year. For this second volume, however, Sachs has focused particularly on Picasso’s portraits: his reinterpretations of which form an interrogation of consumption and desire in portraiture, and a wry reflection on the purpose of painting itself.

Painting is a medium Sachs has returned to several times over the years, and the works on view were conceptualised in a period of focus on drawing and colour for the artist. In his New York studio, he surrounded himself with Picasso’s work, exploring the lines and forms used by the Spanish painter in which 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.

In the works on view, Sachs meticulously reproduces these thick lines and planes of bold colour true to scale, annotating them with their original title, date and dimensions, and signing them with both Picasso’s name and his own unmistakable cursive. While the self-referential finished pieces strike as academic, they also have an immediate, surface-level power: as *The*

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New Yorker writer Naomi Fry comments in a piece on Sachs’s new series, reproduced in the zine published to accompany the exhibition: ‘When I visited Sachs’s studio recently to look at his recently completed Picassos, they struck me with a startling force. With great immediacy, the originals were brought back to life, with an added Sachsian kick: Such gorgeous colors! Such gorgeous contours! Such gorgeous patterns! The portraits impressed me not as a mere intellectual exercise, but as something truly sensual.’

Sachs’s affinity for aspects of Picasso’s work is intriguingly disrupted by the critical eye Sachs has long cast at his approach to artmaking. Women were frequently included in Picasso’s paintings, often through the lens of their relationships with him and as symbols bearing the world’s pain, and there is something inescapably objectifying about his collecting of woman after woman on canvas. As Fry wrote: ‘These women—both models for and lovers of the so-called great man—served not just as figures for Picasso himself to observe and document, but, also, as lasting icons of midcentury femininity held up for the consumption of a yearning public. Then, of course, there is Sachs’s own revisiting of Picasso’s portraits, which I’d argue is, too, all about desire.’

Sachs’s longstanding interest in mass production, industrialisation, commercialism and the mechanisms of desire, and his exploration of and playful engagement with these themes in his own practice, provides a compelling counterpoint to Picasso’s approach. As Fry continued: ‘For Picasso, these painted femmes were muses, forever defined and confined by the artist and his work. In Sachs’s reimagined Picassos, however, it’s not the women whom he attempts to pin down—it’s Picasso himself.’

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Tom Sachs

Woman in Hat and Fur Collar
(Marie-Thérèse Walter), 2024

Synthetic polymer and ink on canvas

81.3 × 63.5 cm (32 × 25 in)

(TSA 1512)



Tom Sachs
Woman with Watch, 2024
Synthetic polymer and ink on canvas
152.4 x 121.9 cm (60 x 48 in)
(TSA 1514)



Tom Sachs
Woman with Watch, 2024
Synthetic polymer and ink on canvas
152.4 × 121.9 cm (60 × 48 in)
(TSA 1514)



Tom Sachs

Man with a Lollipop, 2024

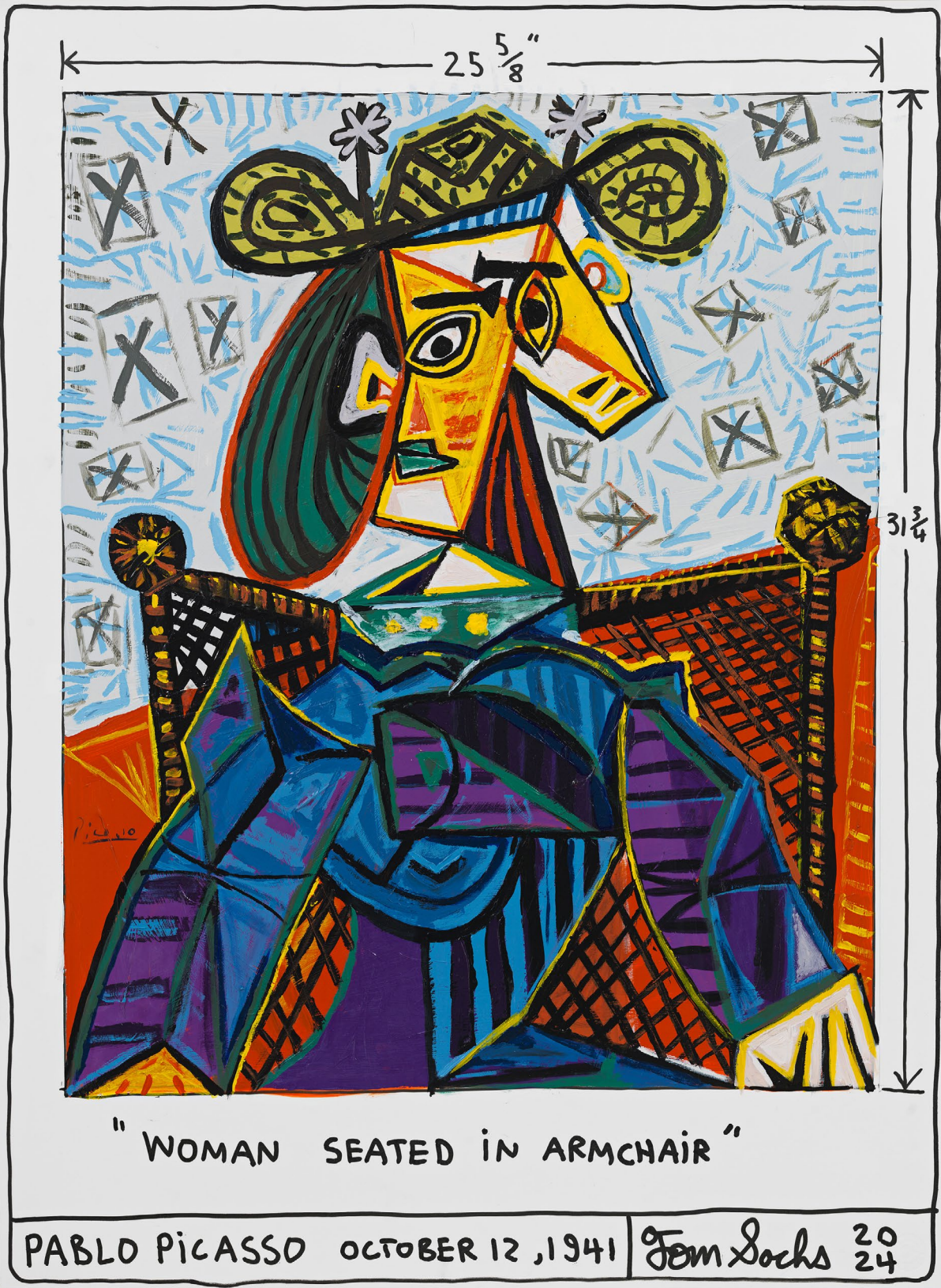
Synthetic polymer and ink on canvas

88.9 × 61 cm (35 × 24 in)

(TSA 1510)



Tom Sachs, "Painting" (Volume II), installation view
Thaddaeus Ropac Paris Marais, 2024. Photo: Charles Duprat



Tom Sachs
Woman Seated in an Armchair, 2024
Synthetic polymer and ink on canvas
106.7 × 83.8 cm (42 × 33 in)
(TSA 1513)



Tom Sachs
Portrait de Femme aux Cheveux Verts, 2024
Synthetic polymer and ink on canvas
50.8 × 40.6 cm (20 × 16 in)
(TSA 1509)



Tom Sachs
*Weeping Woman with Head
in Handkerchief (III)*, 2024
Synthetic polymer and ink on canvas
116.8 × 91.4 cm (46 × 36 in)
(TSA 1508)



Tom Sachs
*Weeping Woman with Head
in Handkerchief (III)*, 2024
Synthetic polymer and ink on canvas
116.8 × 91.4 cm (46 × 36 in)
(TSA 1508)



Tom Sachs

Three Musicians, 2024

Synthetic polymer and Krink on canvas

226.1 × 243.8 cm (89 × 96 in)

(TSA 1495)



TOM SACHS: "PAINTING" (VOLUME II)
 Fanzine, published on occasion of Tom Sachs: "Painting" (Volume II)

Tom Sachs

About the artist



Portrait of Tom Sachs. Photo: Mario Sorrenti

A relentlessly innovative and subversive sculptor, Tom Sachs is best known for his elaborate *bricolage* recreations of masterpieces of engineering and design. Humble foam core and plywood replace the gleaming aluminium and polycarbonate of mass-produced items, fabricated with the combination of industrial vigour and handmade artistry that have become his trademark. The themes central to his universe focus on American culture and society, which he treats with a heavy dose of humour and irony. He playfully engages with the corporate ecosystem and the idea of 'brand image' by riffing on luxury consumer items and global brands, which are transformed through their inclusion in an art context.

In the 1990s, Sachs spent days studying Piet Mondrian's paintings at The Museum of Modern Art, New York, using duct tape on plywood to recreate several of them. It was through these early explorations that he began to develop the ethos of his studio, reconstructing objects he desired with the materials that were available to him and intentionally revealing his process, with all its challenges and imperfections. 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. From his meticulously crafted sculptures and vibrant paintings to his pioneering work in Web3 and NFTs, as well as his boundary-pushing designs and collaborations, Sachs continues to inspire and challenge conventional artistic practices.

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; Centre Pompidou, Paris; The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York; San Francisco Museum of Modern Art; and Prada Foundation, Milan, among others. An important survey of his work was shown at the Astrup Fearnley Museet, Oslo, in 2006. He has also 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 Biennale of Architecture (2010); Prada Foundation, Milan (2006); and Guggenheim Museum, Berlin (2003).

Current & upcoming exhibitions



Ely House, London

Embodied Forms
Painting Now
Until 28 September 2024



Ely House, London

Robert Longo
Searchers
8 October—20 November 2024



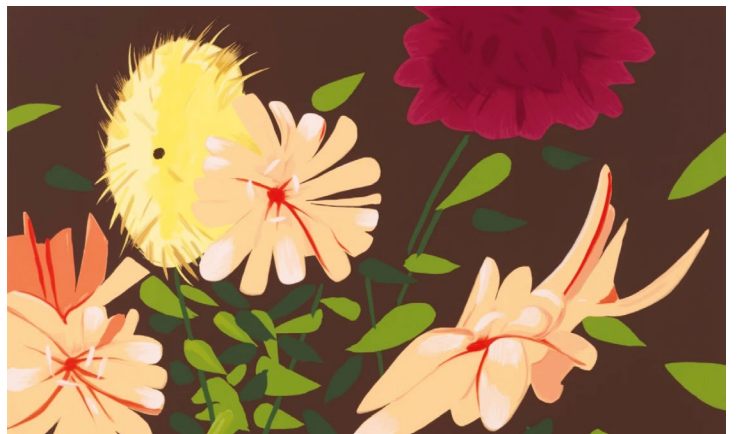
Ely House, London

Heemin Chung
UMBRA
8 October—20 November 2024



Paris Marais

Tony Cragg
New Sculptures
Until 10 October 2024



Paris Marais

Alex Katz
60 Years of Printmaking: Part II
Until 10 October 2024

Current & upcoming exhibitions



Paris Pantin

**Expanded Horizons:
American Art in the 70s**
21 September 2024—25 January 2025



Salzburg Villa Kast

Joseph Beuys—John Cage
Eyes that Listen, Ears that See
Until 28 September 2024



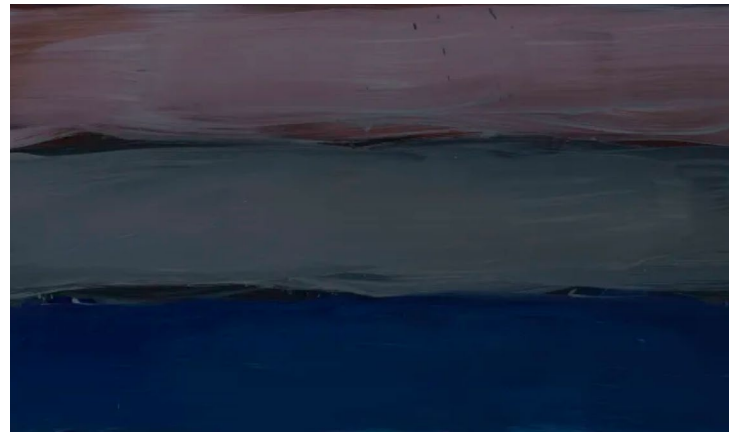
Salzburg Villa Kast

Anselm Kiefer
Mein Rhein
Until 28 September 2024



Seoul Fort Hill

Georg Baselitz
adler barfuß
Until 9 November 2024



Seoul Fort Hill

Sean Scully
Soul
Until 9 November 2024