

## **REVOLUTION AND RENEWAL**

### **A special online themed exhibition for LAW Summer 2021**

This Summer London Art Week is introducing a special themed online exhibition: ***Revolution and Renewal***. As part of LAW's collaboration with leading museums around the world, the London Art Week team is delighted to welcome its first guest curator; the art historian Dr. Arturo Galansino, curator, scholar and Director General of the Fondazione Palazzo Strozzi in Florence.

Well-known among the London Art Week community, Arturo Galansino has been invited to curate this special exhibition by the LAW Board who have long admired his exceptional track record in curating incredible and thought-provoking exhibitions spanning Old Masters to contemporary art: from Moroni, Giorgione and Rubens at the Royal Academy to Ai Weiwei, Bill Viola and Marina Abramović at the Palazzo Strozzi.

The online exhibition will have its own section on the LAW website and all participants will be invited to submit a work on the theme for consideration by Dr. Galansino. As a collegial, curator-led exhibition, Arturo will select his highlights and write his own introduction on the theme and provide further notes on individual works that particularly resonate. A VIP Preview talk will be given by Dr. Galansino the evening of Thursday 1<sup>st</sup> July to officially open LAW Digital 2021.

All participating dealers will have a work displayed and each of them will be asked to explain why they submitted their chosen work, expressing their own interpretations of the term 'Revolution and Renewal' - whether they focus on political, social or art-historical revolutions, or the type of renewal found in nature, friendships, well-being or spirituality. There will be talks and special events accompanying the exhibition.

Andreas Pampoulides, one of the directors at Lullo · Pampoulides and a member of the LAW board sums up the inspiration for the exhibition: "My idea behind the theme of Revolution was to use it as a metaphor for the powerful - and necessary - changes we are seeing in modern culture. Recently, #MeToo, BLM, LGBTQ+ and other movements have shone a light on inequality, and stressed that established tropes cannot - and will not - be acceptable as the only norms.



As art galleries that, on the whole, exhibit pre-modern art, we have limited scope to show artworks that directly speak about these diverse matters, however, we can show images that tell universal stories from the past and which echo the need for change at a particular moment in time.

We must not forget that, although many of the images on show may not speak directly about these matters to today's audiences, these artworks were at one time 'contemporary' and would have been powerful allegorical vehicles documenting - or even inspiring - the need for change in the society in which they were created. We will put forward a study of *The Siege of Tortona* by Andrea Gastaldi (1826-1889) from the time when the nation of Italy was engaged in the Second and Third Wars of Independence; it was undoubtedly intended as a metaphor for the contemporary struggles of the Italian Unification movement."

Fellow LAW Board Member Anthony Crichton-Stuart of Agnews adds: "The paintings, drawings, prints and sculptures included in the exhibition will bring to life the multifarious ways in which the visual arts have documented, illustrated and contributed to many of the great revolutions – political, philosophical and aesthetic – that made the modern world. Several recent UK museum exhibitions have shown the work of black and queer artists, and in doing so, these exhibitions have begun to dismantle racialized hierarchical structures, and instead of degrading the black and queer experience, celebrate it. These exhibitions include, but are far from limited to, Toyin Ojih Odutola's "*A Countervailing Theory*" at the Barbican; "*Queer British Art*" at Tate Britain; Lynette Yiadom Boakye's "*Fly in League with the Night*" at Tate Modern; and Zanele Muholi's photographic portraits, also at Tate Modern."



Agnews has chosen a portrait of a black man known as *Billy*, by Glyn Philpot (1884-1937). The artist began his career as a highly sought-after society portraitist, but by the 1930s his style had radically changed to the extent that it was said he had "gone Picasso". In this new style, Philpot's sensitive depictions of black models connect to a wider dialogue about race and sexuality in modern art, and the tensions that existed between his own strong religious beliefs and sexuality."

Among other highlights of *Revolution and Renewal* so far are:

### **Georg Laue, Kunstammer Ltd.**

Several unusual artworks from the late 16<sup>th</sup> and early 17<sup>th</sup> centuries are broaching the subject of the Reformation – a religious renewal that revolutionized Europe in the Early Modern period and called the Protestant Church into existence.



The first artwork is a particularly fine silver relief depicting the biblical episode of *Ecce homo*, made by the Augsburg goldsmith Christoph Lencker around 1600. The exquisite relief stands out through the quality of the silversmithing work and while the iconography seems normal at first glance – Christ is depicted as usual standing between Pontius Pilate and his helper – a closer look reveals that the man with a Renaissance beret at Jesus's right side is none other than Martin Luther himself.

Another noteworthy artistic testimony to the Reformation is the bronze medallion depicting the Swiss Reformer Ulrich Zwingli. This medallion belongs to a series of medals the Nuremberg

sculptor Georg Schweigger created in 1638 to commemorate the most influential personalities of the 16<sup>th</sup> century and it was always expected that one had been made of Zwingli, but this outstanding bronze artwork's discovery is the final proof.

### **Sam Fogg**

Sam Fogg is submitting one of the works from their summer exhibition, *Medieval Treasury Objects*.



These objects were made for the celebration of Mass and the safeguarding of relics, and their employment of the most precious metals and gemstones available was an integral part of their meaning and age. This roundel depicts the fragmentary image of a man brandishing a whip; one of the torturers who beat Christ when he was tied to the column during the Passion. It was created in the French town of Limoges at the turn of the 13<sup>th</sup> century. Centuries later it was cut up and reused as a decorative door mount, with a nail driven

through the centre of the metal and the image completely hidden from view until its chance rediscovery. "Though we would not dream of doing such a thing to something 800 years old now," says Matthew Reeves of Sam Fogg, "we regularly destroy or reuse objects and cultural artefacts of the nearer past for a whole host of reasons. Objects such as this Limoges plaque help to show us that our capacity and desire for revolution and renewal are not new phenomena. Our understanding of the Middle Ages is fundamentally informed and mediated by the centuries of iconoclasm, revolution, destruction, and reuse that separate us from the period, and which have shaped not only how much has survived, but also what form those survivals take."

### **Katz Gallery**

An extremely rare and fine marble bust by the great sculptor of the French Republic, Joseph Chinard (1756-1813), the sculpture depicts a female artist holding a *porte-crayon*, sporting modish dress and hair *à la Greque*. Not only a magnificently carved work of art, it is also an extremely important document of the radical socio-political developments in France during this fascinating period of history; in which the role of women in society was re-evaluated in a new, egalitarian post-revolution France. As an artist Chinard himself was also caught up in the Revolution. Not only were many of his works lost during this turbulent period (making this work rare), but earlier, in 1791, he was even imprisoned in Rome for what the Vatican deemed to be the revolutionary zeal of his work. After public outcry in his native Lyon, and support amongst fellow artists such as Jacques-Louis David, he was freed and returned to Lyon. Subsequently, Chinard's elegant yet realistic style of portraiture, as typified here, found him great favour with Napoleon, and he became the preferred portraitist of the Emperor's family and retinue.



### **Stephen Ongpin Fine Art**

This charming and intimate portrait drawing of a young boy was drawn on 26 October 1796 by Philippe-Auguste Hennequin (1762-1833) while he was a prisoner in the Temple prison in Paris, held in the cell occupied by Queen Marie-Antoinette three years earlier. Hennequin was arrested by the Directoire in September 1796 and imprisoned until January 1797. The portrait depicts a young boy, perhaps the son of one of his jailers, wearing a *bonnet rouge*, the Phrygian or liberty cap



associated with the Parisian working-class *sans-culottes* of the Revolution. Previously a student of Jacques-Louis David, Philippe-Auguste Hennequin he was politically active during the early years of the Revolution. A Jacobin sympathizer, Hennequin was accused of having participated in the conspiracy to overthrow the Directoire led by the political agitator and Jacobin sympathizer François-Noël Babouf. While in prison, he made a portrait drawing of the British naval officer Admiral Sir William Sidney Smith (1764-1840), now in the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York, which is dated 28 Brumaire (ie. 18 November), some three weeks after the present sheet was drawn. Smith also

commissioned a large and highly-finished drawing from Hennequin, now in the British Museum, depicting the officer and two fellow prisoners in their cell at the Temple prison, and drawn on the 2nd of December 1796.

### **Tomasso**

This late 18<sup>th</sup> century French revolutionary period terracotta bust is dated 1794, the third year of the Republic, 3rd or 4th Brumaire, which corresponds to 24th or 25th October 1794, only a few months after the end of Maximilien Robespierre's Reign of Terror, arguably the Revolution's darkest hour. Whilst the artist is not known, the demeanour of the sitter speaks of the break away from more traditional modes of official portraiture. It was made at a time when the system of the French Academy, in place since 1648, was shaken at its foundations and changed in order to allow artists from a much wider range to exhibit publicly.



Lowell Libson of Lowell Libson & Jonny Yarker Ltd says: "As someone who helped create London Art Week which celebrates London, the traditional and long-standing axis of the international art-market, I'm proud that we have come through the last year of unprecedented revolutions to our ways of life and doing business in a much stronger form. The organisation has completely renewed what we offer and how we support the pre-contemporary art trade operating from and through London. This has been a tough but creative time and our management as well as our participants have all demonstrated their determination to adapt and succeed at the highest standards."

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**PRESS CONTACT:** For further information please email [press@londonartweek.co.uk](mailto:press@londonartweek.co.uk)

Pippa Roberts, [pr@pipparoberts.com](mailto:pr@pipparoberts.com), +44 (0)1707 262089 or

Silke Lohmann, [silke@exclamationpr.co.uk](mailto:silke@exclamationpr.co.uk), +44 (0)7932 618754

### Notes to Editors

London Art Week offers five thousand years of fine art for sale from a community of leading international dealers, every one of which is a specialist in their field. The event fosters a collegial approach to the sharing of knowledge between dealers, collectors and museum curators from around the world, to further the understanding and appreciation of art from antiquity to the present day, with a focus on early, Medieval, Old and Modern works of outstanding quality.