

Julian Schnabel: *For Esmé – with Love and Squalor*

April 9 – May 21, 2022
1201 S La Brea Ave
Los Angeles



Julian Schnabel, *San Diego Serenade (for Tom Waits)*, 2022 © 2022 Julian Schnabel / Artists Rights Society (ARS). Photo: Tom Powel Imaging.

Los Angeles – Pace Gallery is pleased to present the inaugural exhibition of its new West Coast flagship in Los Angeles, *For Esmé – with Love and Squalor*, featuring 13 new velvet paintings and a large-scale bronze sculpture by the artist Julian Schnabel. The show runs from April 9 through May 21.

Since the late 1970s, Schnabel’s experimental practice and use of unconventional materials has invented a new kind of painting. In 1990, at the time of the acquisition of Schnabel’s four paintings *Los Patos del Buen Retiro* for the Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía in Madrid, then director María de Corral wrote, “...what really interests me is that nothing gives the impression of being fixed or closed off. Instead, all of the elements seem to be in a permanent state of flux and one’s perception of them is so arbitrary that all interpretations end up being equally valid.”

The title of the artist’s exhibition at Pace in Los Angeles is derived from J.D. Salinger’s short story “For Esmé – with Love and Squalor,” which Schnabel also named his four-month-old daughter. Set in Devon, England in 1944, the story recounts the chance meeting of an American soldier, who is going off to war, and a 13-year-old girl named Esmé. In the second part of the story, written in the third person, the soldier, Sergeant X, is experiencing Post Traumatic Stress Disorder in a military hospital. After receiving a package from Esmé containing her father’s watch—a Royal Air Force flyer who died in the war— Sergeant X reconsiders his decision to commit suicide. Esmé’s generosity of spirit, her gift as promised to Sergeant X in exchange for a story with lots of love and squalor, is the kind of hope needed in times of war and unrest. Schnabel’s exhibition manifests the need for optimism in the face of violence and despair.

Schnabel's cast silicon bronze sculpture *ESMÉ* (2020) is the result of reconstituting different sculptures, which is a process he began 40 years ago. Here, Schnabel reconfigures and recasts parts of previous forms of other sculptures, a large-scale work that accumulatively functions like a memory of a crucifixion. It speaks to Goya's etchings *The Disasters of War*, body parts hanging on trees, a contemplation of human suffering. It will be presented in the gallery's enclosed courtyard, facing the velvet paintings inside—somber yet colorful, gossamer yet cathartic, ultimately optimistic, too. The paintings and the sculpture reflect on a moment of turmoil and at the same time ascension.

Recent and Current Museum Exhibitions

An exhibition of 25 works from 1997 to the present, titled *Schnabel and Spain: Anything Can Be a Model for a Painting*, opens at the Centro de Arte Contemporáneo of Málaga this year. A selection of resin portraits Schnabel made while living in Spain, as well as works that were painted in the last few months, figure in the exhibition.

From last September through December 2021, the Brant Foundation in New York exhibited Schnabel's *Self-Portraits of Others*, 25 plate paintings that include self-portraits of Vincent van Gogh, Diego Velázquez, Caravaggio, and Frida Kahlo that were made after Schnabel's filming of *At Eternity's Gate*, his film starring Willem DaFoe as van Gogh. In the same year, Benedikt Taschen published a limited-edition, oversize monograph of Schnabel's work from the last 50 years that included paintings, sculptures, architecture, and films.

About Pace in Los Angeles

Pace is opening its West Coast flagship in a 15,000-square-foot gallery once the site of a 1940s Californian auto showroom and formerly occupied by Kayne Griffin. The gallery features key elements designed by artist James Turrell, including his Skyspace, which is unique to the city. At its new Los Angeles home, the gallery will present exhibitions, Pace Live programs, outdoor sculpture presentations, and other events. Pace Los Angeles is led by Kayne Griffin founders Bill Griffin and Maggie Kayne, who possess a combined 40 years of experience in the West Coast art world and will support Pace's efforts to provide opportunities for its artists in that region. The inauguration of the new gallery ushers in a new era of Pace's activity on the West Coast.

Julian Schnabel (b. 1951, Brooklyn) is known for his multidisciplinary body of work that extends beyond painting to include sculpture, film, architecture, and design. His use of preexisting materials not traditionally used in artmaking, varied painting surfaces, and unconventional modes of construction were pivotal in the reemergence of painting in the United States, positioning him as a vanguard among artists of his generation. Appropriating media and referents from the past and present, Schnabel has maintained an innovative practice, never restricting himself to an established style.

Pace is a leading international art gallery representing some of the most influential contemporary artists and estates from the past century, holding decades-long relationships with Alexander Calder, Jean Dubuffet, Barbara Hepworth, Agnes Martin, Louise Nevelson, and Mark Rothko. Pace enjoys a unique U.S. heritage spanning East and West coasts through its early support of artists central to the Abstract Expressionist and Light and Space movements.

Since its founding by Arne Glimcher in 1960, Pace has developed a distinguished legacy as an artist-first gallery that mounts seminal historical and contemporary exhibitions. Under the current leadership of President and CEO Marc Glimcher, Pace continues to support its artists and share their visionary work with audiences worldwide by remaining at the forefront of innovation. Now in its seventh decade, the gallery advances its mission through a robust global program—comprising exhibitions, artist projects, public installations, institutional collaborations, performances, and interdisciplinary projects. Pace has a legacy in art bookmaking and has published over five hundred titles in close collaboration with artists, with a focus on original scholarship and on introducing new voices to the art historical canon.

The gallery has also spearheaded explorations into the intersection of art and technology through its new business models, exhibition interpretation tools, and representation of artists cultivating advanced studio

practices. Pace's presence in Silicon Valley since 2016 has bolstered its longstanding support of experimental practices and digital artmaking. As part of its commitment to innovative, technologically engaged artists within and beyond its program, Pace launched a Web3 hub, Pace Verso, in November 2021.

Today, Pace has nine locations worldwide including London, Geneva, a strong foothold in Palo Alto, and two galleries in New York—its headquarters at 540 West 25th Street, which welcomed almost 120,000 visitors and programmed 20 shows in its first six months, and an adjacent 8,000 sq. ft. exhibition space at 510 West 25th Street. Pace was one of the first international galleries to establish outposts in Asia, where it operates permanent gallery spaces in Hong Kong and Seoul, as well as an office and viewing room in Beijing. In 2020, Pace opened temporary exhibition spaces in East Hampton and Palm Beach, with continued programming on a seasonal basis.




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