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Katherine Bernhardt, Painter of Vibrant Pop Cultural Images, Joins David Zwirner



Katherine Bernhardt. Photo: Dina Litovsky

Katherine Bernhardt, whose celebrated paintings focus on various facets of American pop culture, will now be represented by the mega-gallery David Zwirner. She will have her first exhibition at the gallery's London location next spring. Zwirner will represent Bernhardt in partnership with the artist's longtime New York gallery Canada.

Over the past two decades, Bernhardt, who is based in St. Louis, Missouri, has established herself as one of the most sought-after painters working right now. Her vibrant paintings offer

contemplative and multifaceted reflections of various facets of everyday life and pop culture, from toilet paper and coffee makers to E.T., Darth Vader, and the Pink Panther. She cites Henri Matisse, the Pattern and Decoration movement, Peter Doig, and Chris Ofili as artistic influences.

In an email to *ARTnews*, dealer David Zwirner recalled first coming across Bernhardt's work in 2014, when he was paging through the *New York Times* and came across a review of her work. "I made my way over to Canada later that day and was struck by the power of the work. [Canada cofounder] Phil Grauer was kind enough to sell me a painting, which I cherish," Zwirner said.

Zwirner described the experience of seeing new paintings by Bernhardt at Frieze New York in May as "a shock to the system." He added, "Katherine is one of the most unique voices in contemporary painting, straddling the history of the medium itself with pop and street-art sensibilities, via a true American vernacular. Visiting her studio in St. Louis together with Phil was an amazing experience."

In a statement, Grauer added, "Katherine is a force. Her courage as both artist and person is legendary. We are excited to see her take on this new opportunity."

On the secondary market, Bernhardt's star is also on the rise. Last week, Phillips set an auction record when it sold a 2016 untitled painting by Bernhardt during a contemporary art day sale. Estimated to sell between \$40,000 and \$60,000, the work went for \$233,100, beating her previous record of \$138,000, set earlier this year.

Bernhardt's work is held in the collections of the Carnegie Museum of Art in Pittsburgh, the High Museum of Art in Atlanta, the Portland Museum of Art, and the Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden in Washington, D.C., among other venues. She has had institutional solo shows at Modern Art Museum of Fort Worth in Texas in 2017 and the Museo Mario Testino (MATE) in Lima, Peru, in 2018.