



Arthur Köpcke and Daniel Spoerri behind the counter - they are selling groceries from the Danish supermarket chain Irma stamped "Attention oeuvre d'art" in the Galerie Köpcke, September 1961.

Avantgarde

1960 + 1970

- Artwork from the Experimental Art Scene in Copenhagen

September's international auction will provide a unique and rich insight into the 1960s international, experimental art scene, which - as society in general did at the time - underwent great changes and introduced new, radical examples of what an art object and art experience could consist of.

Avantgarde Movements in Copenhagen

The alternative art scene in Copenhagen was particularly dominated by three avant-garde movements, all of which are represented at the auction: First, the circle around Galerie Köpcke, where the German-born artist Arthur Köpcke (1928-1977) introduced international art movements to a (initially small and dedicated) Danish audience. Second, the Experimental Art School (Ex-School) that was created in protest against the established Danish art institutions in general and The Royal Danish Academy of Fine Arts in particular. Third, the Co-RITUS group with Jørgen Nash and Jens Jørgen Thorsen as the leading figures who continued the concepts of CoBrA by focusing on a free and playful expression.

The Paradoxical Logic of Art History and the Market

As continuous threads through the highly varied collection of artwork runs concepts such as everyday life, conceptual art, challenging the very nature of art objects, a rebellion against highbrow culture, the idea of the artistic genius and a focus on the collective. Seen from the present, the history of art and the market's paradoxical logic once again ended up embracing all that, which contemporary times rejected. What was once on the margins has now become a focal point.

From Scheggi's Sense of Space to Spoerri's Kitsch

Among the auction's major works of art is a hitherto unknown work by Italian Paolo Scheggi (1940-1971), which is from a Danish private collection and entitled "Intersuperficie curva dal rosso" (1962-63). Like the works by the other colleagues around "Gruppo Zero," Scheggi's artwork explores the sense of space in painting and the painting as a spatial object. The Swiss neo-realist Daniel Spoerri (b. 1930) is represented by, among other works, the relief "La douche III" (1976), which in the juxtaposition of picturesque kitsch and an everyday situation toys with our notion of the sublime. The auction also includes a series of works that come from the artist, organizer and creator of the Art Library at Nikolaj Plads, Knud Petersen (1925-2014), who was a close friend of Arthur Köpcke and acquired several works directly from the gallery. This includes works from the Dutch artists Jan Henderikse (b. 1937) and Armando (b. 1929) as well as the Swiss artist Christian Megert (b. 1936).

Transformation Image from Venezuela

The distinctive 60s work "Physichromie No. 393" (1968) by Venezuelan Carlos Cruz-Diez has, via a Norwegian owner, ended up in Danish private ownership. Cruz-Diez is not a part of the above mentioned movements, but he represents - as one of the main international exponents of Op art - another major "innovation" founded in the 1960s, namely the emphasis on the viewer's active and co-creative role in the artwork. The work is a cleverly constructed transformation image that looks very different depending on the viewer's position and the light that falls on it.

About the Auction House

Bruun Rasmussen Auctioneers is one of Scandinavia's leading international auction houses, and one of Denmark's oldest. It all started on 6 October 1948, when Arne Bruun Rasmussen conducted the first traditional auction in the saleroom at Bredgade 33 in Copenhagen. Today we auction off 100,000 lots each year at the traditional auctions and the daily online auctions.

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