



Paolo Colombo, *Monkey II*, 2019. Watercolour on paper, 69 x 87 cm

Paolo Colombo

Paolo Colombo (b. 1949) is an Italian artist and curator, living and working in Athens, Greece since 2008. Colombo is an art advisor for the Istanbul Museum of Modern Art (2008 to present). As an artist, Colombo works exclusively with watercolours and pencil, "a strictly intimate practice which demands to be seen one on one, like one would read a book... it is fundamentally lyrical".

Colombo worked with some of the pioneers of the Arte Povera movement in Torino during his youth. In 1977, Colombo was the first European artist to exhibit at PS1, New York. He first exhibited his work at Mario Tazzoli's Galleria "Galatea" in Milan in 1974, but then began working as curator and director of various museums and art institutions in the United States, Switzerland, Italy and Turkey.

After a 25-year hiatus, Colombo took up his work as an artist again, coinciding with his move to Athens. "I just picked up a pencil and my old box of watercolours...and started as if one day had not gone by. I have only used watercolour and paper during my whole life because it is easily transportable and because it is a technique that does not allow for corrections." Colombo's works range in size, to be peered into or poured over, opening across saturated washes of colour, his signature checkered squares, fine lines or lettering with the consistency of embroidered cloth, creating the impression of different dimensions. Due to the medium's resistance to correction, painting in watercolours is a painstakingly precise process which requires Colombo to work 8 to 9 hours a day, "a strictly intimate practice which demands to be seen one on one, like one would read a book."

Colombo's paintings illustrate a lyrical series of moments, dream-like meditations, which include poetry and animals, each holding the intensity of a world. We see watercolours in their most soft or dense tones of magenta, deep red, azure, and the rich pale gold of a particular light.

In 2017, Colombo curated the Iraqi Pavilion at the Venice Biennale. Between 2001 – 2007, he was the curator of the Museo Nazionale delle Arti del XXI Secolo in Rome, and the director of the Centre d'Art Contemporain in Geneva between 1989 – 2000. In 1999, Colombo curated the 6th Istanbul Biennale. In 1977, Colombo was the first European artist to exhibit at PS1, New York. Additionally, his artworks have previously been exhibited at Tristan Hoare Gallery in the exhibitions *Frosorina* (May/ June 2017) and *Of Birds and Monkeys* (February/March 2020).

Solo Exhibitions

- 2024** *La deuxième foi*, Centre d'Art Contemporain, Geneva, Switzerland
- 2024** *Paolo Colombo*, Baert Gallery, California, USA
- 2023-24** *Paolo Colombo: Selected Works*, Oliver Varenne, Geneva
- 2022** *Paolo Colombo*, Baert Gallery, California, USA
- 2020** *Paolo Colombo*, Bernier Eliades, Athens, Greece
- 2018** *Paolo Colombo*, Baert Gallery, Los Angeles, USA
Paolo Colombo: Selected works from 1970 to 1986, Marc Jancou Offsite, Rossinière, Switzerland
- 2017** *Frosorina*, Tristan Hoare Gallery, London, UK 2016
- 2016** *Paolo Colombo*, Qbox, Athens, Greece
- 2014** *Paolo Colombo*, Qbox, Athens, Greece
- 1982** Massimo Minini, Milan, Italy
- 1981** Annina Nosei, New York, USA
- 1980** Loyse von Oppenheim, Nyon, Switzerland Giorgio Persano, Torino, Italy
- 1978** Centre d'Art Contemporain, Geneva, Switzerland
- 1977** P.S.1. (Broom Closet), New York, USA
- 1975** Studio Mara Chiaretti, Rome, Italy
- 1974** Mario Tazzoli, Milano, Italy

Group Exhibitions

- 2024** *Apocalypse Now*, Tristan Hoare Gallery, London, UK
- 2023** *Paper*, curated with Flora Hesketh & Omar Mazhar, Tristan Hoare Gallery, London, UK
- 2021** *Folds*, curated with Flora Hesketh & Omar Mazhar, Tristan Hoare Gallery, London, UK
- 2021** *Summer Group Exhibition*, Baert Gallery, California, USA
- 2021** *Allegra Hicks & Paolo Colombo*, Baert Gallery, Los Angeles, USA
- 2020** *Of Birds and Monkeys*, Kiki Smith & Paolo Colombo, Tristan Hoare Gallery, London, UK
- 2018** *Geometrica*, Tristan Hoare Gallery, London, UK
- 2017** *Paolo Vs. Paolo*, Galerie Espacio Valverde, Madrid, Spain
- 2015** *Tower*, Ibid Projects, London, UK
- 2011** *Known, Unknown, Anonymous and on Death Row*, QBox, Athens, Greece

Art Fairs

- 2023** Brafa Art Fair, Brussels, Bernier-Eliades Gallery, Stand 11
- 2022** Abu Dhabi Art, Abu Dhabi, Bernier-Eliades Gallery, Stand S1-S2
- 2022** Art Basel, Bernier-Eliades Gallery, Stand E1
- 2022** Art Brussels, Bernier-Eliades Gallery, Stand A37
- 2022** Art Paris, Bernier-Eliades Gallery, Stand E5
- 2021** Frieze London, Bernier-Eliades Gallery, Stand A14
- 2021** Art Basel, Bernier-Eliades Gallery, Stand E7
- 2020** Art Basel Online Viewing Room, Bernier-Eliades Gallery
- 2019** Art Basel, Bernier-Eliades Gallery, Stand R13
- 2018** Art Basel, Bernier-Eliades Gallery, Stand R13

Public Collections

- Benaki Museum, Athens, Greece
- Istanbul Museum of Modern Art, Istanbul, Turkey

**Selected Curatorial
Projects**

- 2017** Iraqi Pavillion, Venice Biennale 2017, Venice, Italy
- 2016** *Reflections – Rosemary Trockel*, Pinacoteca Giovanni e Marella Agnelli, Torino, Italy
- 2015** *Ed Ruscha: MixMaster*, Pinacoteca Giovanni e Marella Agnelli, Torino, Italy
- 2012** Mardin Biennale, Mardin, Turkey
- 2011** Thessaloniki Biennale, Thessaloniki, Greece
- 1999** 6th Istanbul Biennale, Istanbul, Turkey

**Other Professional
Experience**

- 2008 - Present** Art Advisor for the Istanbul Museum of Modern Art
- 2010** Appointed as the first curator of MAXXI (contemporary art museum by Zaha Hadid), Rome, by Giovanna Melandri (then Minister of Culture)
- 2001 - 2007** Curator of the Museo Nazionale delle Arti del XXI Secolo in Rome
- 1989 - 2000** Director of the Centre d'Art Contemporain in Geneva

Education

- 1976-77** Columbia University
- 1975-76** Yale University
- 1967-75** University of Rome, Languages and Literature