

Unrepeated: Unique Prints from Two Palms

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537 West 20th Street, New York



Chris Ofili, *Archer's sunset*, 2021. © Chris Ofili. Courtesy the artist and Two Palms, NY

David Zwirner is pleased to present *Unrepeated: Unique Prints from Two Palms*, an exhibition of recent unique prints made at the visionary print studio Two Palms, at the gallery's 537 West 20th Street location in New York. This selection will include works by Marina Adams, Mel Bochner, Cecily Brown, Peter Doig, Carroll Dunham, Chris Ofili, Elizabeth Peyton, Dana Schutz, Stanley Whitney, and Terry Winters.

Two Palms has been at the vanguard of experimental printmaking processes since it was established in 1994 by David Lasry in downtown New York. With an array of specialized tools and equipment, such as its rare hydraulic press, the studio has championed the creation of monoprints and monotypes—which Lasry sees as “perhaps the most diverse and dynamic of all the print mediums.”¹ The exhibition is a fitting collaboration with Lasry, a longtime friend of the gallery, who has worked with numerous David Zwirner artists and others to conceive of new and surprising ways to realize their goals. The prints on view will illuminate a range of these processes, which have resulted in some of the most inventive applications of the medium today.

Monotypes and monoprints use similar processes resulting in unique prints. A monotype typically involves the simple transfer of an image from one smooth surface to another. Since the initial surface on which the artist creates the image is not etched or otherwise absorbent to ink, the image can only be transferred once. A monoprint is similar, except that the original surface begins with a repeatable image made through traditional printmaking techniques that enable multiples, such as etching, lithography, or silkscreen; an element within or on top of the repeatable image is then uniquely colored, drawn, painted, or otherwise altered, so each print in the series becomes a “variation on a theme.”

This exhibition is a celebration of Two Palms' nearly thirty years of printmaking and the works on view are the output of long-standing, generative relationships fostered with their collaborators. Since 2006, Chris Ofili has worked with the studio on various series, embracing the unknown outcomes of the medium to

devise unexpected methods for creating his monotypes and monoprints. His Suminagashi monoprints use the Japanese paper marbling technique to create unique chine collé backgrounds for etchings based on Stéphane Mallarmé's 1876 poem *Afternoon of a Faun*, and for his woodcut monotypes the artist uses a microplane to grate pastel pigment onto wood blocks. Like Ofili, Cecily Brown also uses pastel pigment; however, Brown draws with it directly onto the plate, and then returns to the image after printing, drawing layer upon layer atop the print to add subtle new contextual elements by hand in each work.

Elizabeth Peyton deploys more traditional monotype processes using oil paint in the manner of Edgar Degas to create her work with *Two Palms*. After the first printing, Peyton frequently returns to the plate and reworks the image that remains, so that a faint ghost image of the first print resides with newly added marks in the second. Peter Doig works similarly with the ghost image, but uses a watercolor monotype process originally devised by Carroll Dunham and David Lasry in 2004. Along with Doig and Dunham, Marina Adams, Dana Schutz, and Stanley Whitney also employ this process, painting watercolor or gouache onto smooth wood plates that are run through the press with the sheet, introducing the wood grain into the surface without ever cutting into the block to make a woodcut.

Mel Bochner, a former instructor of Lasry, has been working with *Two Palms* since its inception. Bold, bright, and monumental in scale, Bochner's monoprints explore the possibilities of language and are made with deeply engraved acrylic plates that he packs with oil paint. Terry Winters works with a different but similarly textural process, rubbing oil pigment directly into the grooves of a laser engraved acrylic plate with gloved hands and prints on a thick handmade paper, which creates a deeply embossed image that he then works by hand with crayon or pencil.

In the words of Lasry, "Even as monoprints and monotypes have become more widely understood and circulated, we [at *Two Palms*] still find ourselves with the ability to be stunned by the results of our trial and error, interrupting the rote, systematized understanding of printmaking. The limitless material prospects offered by the creation of these singular prints allows us to tap into our shared curiosities and veer from tradition."²

To coincide with the *Two Palms* exhibition, David Zwirner will present an online viewing room on davidzwirner.com.

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¹ David Lasry, in conversation with the gallery, October 2021.

² Lasry, statement for the exhibition *Unrepeated: Unique Prints from Two Palms*, January 2022.