Venus Envy: Important Works by Women Artists

A special sale featuring works by Hilary Harkness, Liza Lou, Sue Williams, Kiki Smith, Lisa Yuskavage, Ingrid Calame, and more, live on artnet Auctions from March 4 through 13, 2014.

Hilary Harkness

Dutch Treat, 2005
Gouache aquarelle, colored pencil, watercolor wash, and oil on paper sheets glued together with PVA size 11.25 x 10.625 in.
28.6 x 27 cm.
Est. US$8,000–12,000

New York / Berlin, March 5, 2014—artnet Auctions is pleased to present Venus Envy: Important Works by Women Artists, a sale of influential Contemporary women artists, including Hilary Harkness, Liza Lou, Kiki Smith, Lisa Yuskavage, Delia Brown, and Sue Williams, with estimates ranging from US$1,000 to 120,000.

Women have been connected to the arts as the subject, muse, and provocateur for centuries. Female artists gained worldwide recognition with the rise of the Feminist Art movement in the 1960s and 1970s. As collectors and curators have acknowledged, women artists have produced some of the most compelling, challenging, and provocative works.
Included in the sale is a unique work on paper, *Dutch Treat* (2005), by Contemporary artist Hilary Harkness (American, b.1971). Harkness employs an extraordinary amount of detail to her works to create tumultuous and twisted fantasy worlds populated solely by women. These elaborate microcosms depict women fighting for control and power, and asserting dominance through a variety of violent and sexual acts. Estimated at US$8,000 to 12,000, *Dutch Treat* creates a split world; a black and gray city with larger-than-life, combative-yet-kinky women is presented above a gory, dramatic, and perverse scene of properly dressed women unleashed in a frenzy. Reminiscent of Hieronymus Bosch (Flemish, b. ca.1450–1516) and Pieter Breugel (Flemish, b. ca.1525–1569), the intense interplay in her turbulent environments makes for a striking visual display.

Another highlight is an exceptional sculpture, *Lou’s Lucky Brew* (1999), by Contemporary artist Liza Lou (American, b.1969). Lou has gained a reputation as a master of beadwork, beginning with her room-sized, head-to-toe, beaded *Kitchen*, which debuted at the New Museum in New York in 1996. The mesmerizing sculpture offered here of a green beer bottle is a continuation of the artist’s commentary on domestic drudgery and women’s social issues, and an opportunity for Lou to transform the ordinary into the extraordinary. Estimated at US$18,000 to 25,000, *Lou’s Lucky Brew* is entirely handmade and unique, created through a painstaking process of gluing each individual bead, and making Lou’s work highly sought after by collectors.

The sale will also include works by some of today’s leading Contemporary women artists, including Delia Brown, Anne Chu, Inka Essenhigh, and Emily Eveleth.


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