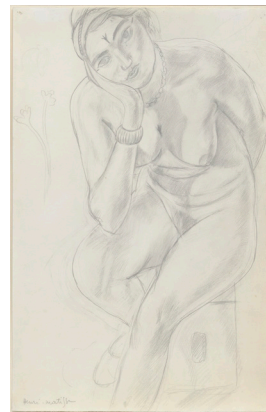


## PRESS RELEASE

25 Savile Row  
London W1S 2ER  
T. +44 (0)20 7287 5013

GALLERY HOURS:  
Tue-Fri: 10:00-18:00  
Sat: 11:00-15:00



---

# D R A W N

---

30 Portraits

6 June — 28 July 2023

---

***One has to focus uniquely and exclusively on drawing. If one could master drawing, everything else would be possible. Alberto Giacometti (1901–66)***

**London:** Ordovas presents *Drawn: 30 Portraits*, an exhibition which brings together drawings by modern and contemporary artists including Alberto Giacometti, Maggi Hambling, David Hockney, Henry Moore and Paula Rego, and which explores the direct and spontaneous nature of the technique, and its expression of an artist's method and personality. A celebration of both drawing and portraiture, the exhibition reflects the different roles drawn portraits can play in the practice of an artist.

The works in the exhibition are drawn using a range of materials including pastels, watercolour, pencil and ink, and portray a diverse range of subjects, from female muses to imagined figures. They span almost a century, from a study by Henri Matisse drawn *circa* 1924 to a head study executed by Glenn Brown in 2023. The exhibition coincides with the long-awaited reopening of the National Portrait Gallery in London in June 2023.

*Drawn: 30 Portraits* is the second in a series of exhibitions to be held at Ordovas exploring different techniques and mediums in twentieth-century and contemporary art; it follows *Stitched*, which took place in summer 2022. The exhibition is accompanied by an illustrated catalogue with an essay written by Dr. Catherine Daunt, the Hamish Parker Curator of Modern and Contemporary Graphic Art at the British Museum.

The earliest works in the show are two studies by **Henri Matisse**, an artist for whom drawing became virtually an obsession. Executed in the 1920s, they include *Femme nue couchée*, 1924, drawn in charcoal on paper, and *La Persane*, a study in pencil drawn in Nice in 1929 and depicting a Persian model who posed regularly for the artist at the time and was the subject of many of his most celebrated works of the period.

---

Images: Henri Matisse, *La Persane*, 1929

## ORDOVAS

---

The exhibition presents three etchings by **Pablo Picasso** which are widely considered his most important prints, and among the most powerful works produced by the artist in any medium. Rarely seen together, *La femme qui pleure I, III and IV* were executed in 1937 against the backdrop of the Spanish Civil War and portray weeping women, a theme most prominently recognised in the artist's masterpiece *Guernica* which was exhibited at the Paris Exposition that year. The concept of the weeping woman was in part inspired by Dora Maar who Picasso referred to as 'la pleureuse'.

Another highly important work inspired by war is **Henry Moore's** *Reclining Figures*, 1942, which is on public exhibition for the first time since it was shown at the artist's first New York exhibition in 1946. It is an outstanding example of the artist's wartime drawings which were often inspired by families seeking refuge on the platforms of underground stations in London during World War II, and which present a powerful expression of human existence in adversity. **Alberto Giacometti** was also heavily influenced and affected by war, as well as being devoted to the medium of drawing. Executed in 1952, *Rue de l'Échaudé (Quatre figurines sur piédestal)* exemplifies the intensely introspective and exploratory genius of his skill. Created with energetic, rapid pen strokes, this important study has been included in numerous museum exhibitions, including the artist's solo exhibition at The Arts Council in 1955 where it was illustrated on the back cover of the catalogue. Other works from the period include *Personnages et oiseau dans la nuit*, 1942, by **Joan Miró** which shows how the artist developed images by creating instinctive, unpremeditated marks on a page and *A Girl*, a portrait of Pauline Tennant drawn by **Lucian Freud** in 1946.

More recent works in the exhibition include *Celia*, a colourful portrait of long-time muse Celia Birtwell by **David Hockney** drawn in 1978, and *Manos*, 1984, one of a body of hand drawings made over many years by **Eduardo Chillida** which allowed the artist to explore space, volume, movement and three-dimensionality. From the same year is *Sarah's Back*, a large-scale portrait in pastel and charcoal by **R. B. Kitaj**.

*Henrietta 21.12.98 (2)*, 1998, by **Maggi Hambling** is a poignant portrait depicting the artist's lover and muse, Henrietta Moraes. This is one of an intense series of portraits created after they had met at the opening of a Francis Bacon retrospective in May 1998. It was drawn on 21 December 1998, shortly before Moraes died aged 67. Two works by **Paula Rego** include *Manuela*, 2010, a powerful drawing of an old woman sitting in an oversized chair. This is from a series inspired by a period when the artist looked after her elderly mother at home; the chair was a theatre prop, in which sitters would '... look small, like old children'.

**Frank Auerbach** begins the process of making a painted portrait by drawing his sitter from life and maintains a small circle of recurring sitters, some of whom he has drawn and painted repeatedly over several decades. The exhibition includes *Head of William Feaver*, which was executed 2013-14. Another artist who returns to the same small group of sitters is **Celia Paul** who is represented by *Kate in White*, 2013.

Elsewhere the exhibition also includes a series of twelve recent portraits in profile by the Colombian-born artist **José Antonio Suárez Londoño** who began to create daily drawings in 1997. Contemporary artists have often recognised the value in sketching and drawing from life and looking back to learn from the drawings of the past. Reflecting the timelessness of the medium, the most recent work in the show is *Drawing 2 (after Tiepolo)* by **Glenn Brown** which was finished just before this exhibition, and in which the artist pays homage to the great Italian painter and draughtsman, Giovanni Battista Tiepolo (1696-1770).

#### **PRESS ENQUIRIES**

**Matthew Paton / [communications@ordovasart.com](mailto:communications@ordovasart.com) / +44 (0)77 1111 2425**

---

# ORDOVAS