

# LUXE IMMO

LUXURY REAL ESTATE & CONTEMPORARY ART



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## LUXURY REAL ESTATE:

MONACO: EDEN STAR-FONTVIEILLE. 21 PRINCESSE GRACE  
 CAP D'ANTIBES: LUXURY RESIDENCE  
 NICE: MONT BORON PERIOD VILLA  
 PARIS: PLACE DE L'ÉTOILE SUPERB APARTMENT  
 NEW YORK AND MIAMI: SUMPTUOUS APARTMENTS

## ARTS & DESIGN SPECIAL NEW YORK:

ARMORY SHOW: KATELIJNE DE BACKER, PAUL MORRIS,...  
 LUCY MITCHELL-INNES: PRESIDENT OF ADA  
 TONY GUERRERO: 17 YEARS AT PS1  
 GREENWICH HOTEL: THE DE NIRO STYLE  
 ANTON S. KANDINSKY, JOHN M. RUSNAK, TITUS KAPHAR, ADAM FUSS...

## L.I. ART COLLECTION, THE ART OF COLLECTING:

SEVEN WORKS OF ART MADE IN NEW YORK  
 GREGORY R. MILLER OPENS THE DOORS OF HIS COLLECTION



# TITUS KAPHAR

## Could you introduce yourself in a few words?

I was born in Michigan, then I left for San José in California before going to Connecticut to finish my studies. I came to New York after obtaining my diploma, only to finally go back to California. At first, I wanted to study architecture but I soon realized that this path was a good excuse to do art. My family supported me in my choice to quit architecture to do something I enjoyed instead. Therefore, I started studying painting in California, then went to Yale to finish my course until I obtained my diploma in 2006.

## You curl, cut and crush paintings in your art. Since your studies, have you already begun to consider the canvas as an object and not a simple surface?

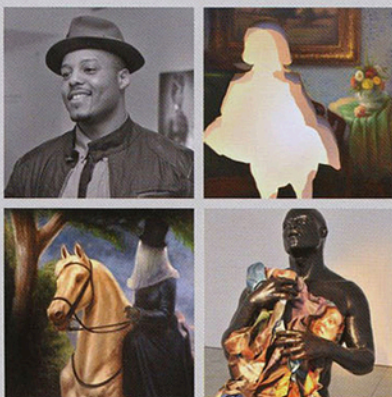
Exactly. I didn't conceive a painting that way during my studies, however just after graduation, I had a dream: the hand of God came down to earth, taking paint only to throw it on the ground. I woke up stupefied and wondered how such an effect would be achievable. I spent a lot of time pondering this question, it seemed so difficult. After two years working with various materials, I reached my goal. Having managed to correctly manipulate paintings, the question was how to transpose this into my own universe? You can see this in the work called "Doubt", a massive man sitting on his knees, hugging between his arms a painting inspired by Bronzino's 1529 "La Pietà avec Marie-Madeleine". The painting is crumpled, distorted to portray confusion, the doubt a man has when facing spirituality.

## Do you create your own pieces?

Yes. Here the character is made of wax, and the surface is painted with tar. I've recently started using wax, before I used to work with clay but I didn't like the fact that it dried so quickly. It reminds me of acrylic paint, it doesn't seem at all natural to me. Therefore I chose wax because I always managed to make it liquid again after it solidified. Every time I don't like a result, I can start over and work the wax again. I rapidly fell in love with wax, unlike paint and other caustics in which you add wax to the paint itself.

## Are you trying to remove the canvas from its pedestal?

The essence of my work consists, in a conceptual way, of dissecting the history of art, picking each aspect of it since the beginning of time and discovering what is hidden behind. I try to understand its evolution. After deciding to work in this way, I asked myself how far I wanted to go, to what limit could I push materials and paintings. Usually they are flat, and I had to change this. Many modern painters have done this, but I wanted to understand how, in a personal way, I could use these paintings, manipulate them to fit a certain storyline. Most of my work aims for this goal: to tell a story. For "Preservation of Family Fictions", I thought how the effects of a natural catastrophe could mirror the drama occurring in a family. Usually when drama arises, members of a family remember it in a very personal way. Sometimes, the story told doesn't match reality, but that's how it's etched in their memory. When I created this piece, the first step was to imagine what fell upon the paint to destroy it, breaking the frame and smashing it on the chair. Once the work was done, I realized that the emotions such destruction could convey were the most significant part of the artwork. When discovering this painting and the chair crushed by a branch one could simply say "let's just leave that there as it is, to remember what really happened." This other artwork, "Memory Fails", is I believe very similar content-wise. It talks about memory. Whilst I was working on this painting, I thought about beautiful landscapes, those trees and high grass. However if we try to go further, to see



Titus Kaphar's artwork interacts with the history of art by appropriating its styles and mediums. The artist cuts, bends, sculptures and mixes the works of classic and renaissance painters, thereby creating formal games and new tales between fiction and quotation. This interview was in the Friedmann Benda gallery, NYC.

Titus Kaphar was born in 1976 in Kalamazoo, Michigan (USA). He lives and Works in New Haven, Connecticut (USA)

## SOLO EXHIBITIONS

2011 Titus Kaphar: *Classical Disruption*, Friedman Benda, New York, USA.

2009 *Reconstruction*, Roberts & Tilton, Culver City, CA, USA.

*History in the Making*, Seattle Art Museum, Seattle, WA, USA.

2008 *Painting Undone*, Red Gallery, Savannah College of Art and Design.

## GROUP EXHIBITIONS

2010 *Stitches*, Armory Center for the Arts, Pasadena, CA, USA.

*Roundabout*, The City Gallery, Wellington, New Zealand.

*Other Than Beauty*, Friedman Benda Gallery, New York, USA.

2009 *Your Gold Teeth II* curated by Todd Levin, Marianne Boesky Gallery, New York, USA.

what's hidden underneath, we start questioning the work: "Where is that landscape? Who was there when it was painted?" our memory works that way. On some occasions you have clear and precise memories, but when you go back to exact locations, nothing of what you remember is there, and it's a whole new place. That's why, when "Memory Fails", you have to lift the veil to see what's beneath.

**Would disappearance be the main theme of your work?**

Absolutely, this idea of disappearance, invisibility or absence is not flagrant when you observe my artworks. A perfect example is the diptych composed of pieces of art named "This place never felt like home" and "As if I were her own": the figure of the little girl was cut up in order to incorporate it here and become part of the composition, creating a whole new story. At the same time, one supposes that the girl was originally there, despite the feet coming out of the painting. Stories emerge from the dialogue of these two works of art.

**Were you inspired by artists such as the French artists from the Support-Surface group in the 1970s who gave a lot of importance to the physical reality of the painting and the material feel of the paint?**

I'm very fond of Fontana, but I'm not aware of these French artists among artists who've "attacked" the canvas. I'm very interested in the History of Art, I enjoy spending time looking and reading about the subject. I don't have any special period or movement that I like more than any other; everything captivates me and interests me both surface and paintings-wise. The artists in the 19th and 20th century use the Renaissance, the 15th century, as their model for surface and paints. Everything during that period is actually very modern and contemporary: the techniques by which the message is shown, the laws, the composition, the *decoupage*, all these things that are an essential part in modern and contemporary history. I love Fontana's work, as I love Chamberlain but also Velasquez, Bernin and many others! I guess that's why I plunge into this history via my own work, yet tracing my own path.

**In the history of art the American artists dating from the 20th century are very famous, yet we only know very little about what came before, what is your insight on this?**

The US is a young nation – art came from Europe. The artists went to study abroad before coming back home. I make references in my work to different periods in American art, everything that has contributed to engraving the US in Art history. New York became important in abstract art. The world was wondering what this new art was, who these new figures like Jackson Pollock were. It's a modernist approach to art. My favorite art is what I'm showing you here: Classic and Renaissance Italian, French and Spanish art.

■ Marie-Émilie Fourneaux



*Doubt - 2011  
Wax, polystyrene, tar, metal and wooden soul  
170 x 116 x 96 cm*



*Marie-Émilie Fourneaux and Titus Kaphar in front of  
As If I Were Her Own, oil on canvas, 154.3 x 121.9 cm*



*Janine Cirincione, Director of the Friedman Benda Gallery,  
Titus Kaphar and Marie-Émilie Fourneaux*



From top to bottom and from left to right:

*Veiled Before Waking* - 2011  
Oil on canvas and panel,  
232.4 x 193.7 cm

*Preservation of Family Fictions* - 2011  
Oil on canvas, three branches, chair and laundry  
198 x 142 x 119.4 cm

*The Place Never Felt Like Home* - 2011  
Oil on canvas and panel,  
152.4 x 121.9 cm

*Memory Fails* - 2011  
Oil on canvas, tar and golden frame,  
118.8 x 162.6 cm