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Peter Blake: The Artist's Studio



Once Upon a Time, 1963, acrylic on canvas, 72 x 114 5/8 inches

Garth Greenan Gallery is pleased to announce *Peter Blake: The Artist's Studio*, an exhibition of paintings, drawings, and sculptures at **545 West 20th Street**. Opening on April 11, 2019, the exhibition is the artist's first with the gallery. The centerpiece is a life-size recreation of the artist's London studio, including nearly 50 works of art, alongside thousands of objects and ephemera.

Born in Dartford, Kent in 1932, Peter Blake was a leading figure of the British Pop scene in the 1960s. Blake pushed the boundaries of what—and whom—this predominantly New York-based movement could include. Upon enrolling at the Royal College of Art in London in 1953, he studied alongside other prominent artists such as R.B. Kitaj, Richard Smith, and Joe Tilson. After graduating, Blake began mining mass media and advertising imagery to create homages to the specific genre of popular culture present in Britain. Comprising both early and mature works, the exhibition captures the spirit of a vanguard artist whose art remains amongst the most celebrated of our time.

The architectural structure stands almost haphazardly in the gallery, as if being surgically removed from London and transplanted to New York. Appearing fractured, the walls, exposed brick, and steel beams mimic the industrial setting of the artist's studio in West London. Hanging alongside and strewn about the physical structure, books, photographs, wrestling memorabilia, and iconic works by the artist fill every open space. A long-time boxing and

wrestling aficionado, Blake not only painted portraits of his favorite athletes, but also collected posters, dolls, photographs, and various dioramas of fighters engaged in combat.

Also on display are the amassed knickknacks, catalogue pages, and paintbrushes that Blake employs in the creation of his trademark works. The viewer is thus awarded a privileged view into the artist's mind, regarding not only his process (pencils, scissors) but also his inspiration (wrestlers, movie posters, toy cars). This immersive display was first shown in Waddington Custot's booth at Frieze Masters in London in 2018.

Key to this project was a team of collaborators starting with designer Robin Brown, producer Anna Pank, and production designer Edward Helbig. Jacob Twyford, the director of Waddington Custot, and his entire staff were especially critical at each step in the project, as well. Our most important thanks goes to Peter and Chrissy Blake who have trusted us with their collected memorabilia, unique pieces of furniture, and beautiful works of art.

Since 1962, Blake's work has been the subject of 56 solo exhibitions, including ten at Waddington Custot Gallery (1969, 1972, 1977, 1978, 1990, 2005, 2010, 2012, 2015, 2016, 2018, London), four at Galerie Claude Bernard (1984, 1995, 2009, 2016, Paris) and three at Wetterling Gallery (1990, 2006, 2012, 2016, Gothenburg and Stockholm). In 1983, Tate Gallery mounted Blake's first career retrospective, which travelled on to the Kestner Gesellschaft in Hanover. In 2007, the Tate Liverpool presented a second retrospective of Blake's work, which travelled to the Museo de Bellas Artes de Bilbao.

Peter Blake's work has been featured in many landmark museum exhibitions, such as: *British Art Today* (1962-1963, San Francisco Museum of Art; 1963, Dallas Museum of Contemporary Art, Santa Barbara Museum of Art), *London: The New Scene* (1965, Walker Art Center, Minneapolis, Washington Gallery of Modern Art; Institute of Contemporary Art, Boston; Seattle Art Museum Pavillion; Vancouver Art Gallery; Art Gallery of Toronto; National Gallery of Canada, Ottawa), *British Drawings: The New Generation* (1967, Museum of Modern Art, New York), *European Painting in the 70s* (1975-1976, Los Angeles County Museum of Art; 1976, St. Louis Art Museum; Elvehjem Art Center, Madison, Wisconsin), *Forty Years of Modern Art* (1986, Tate Gallery, London), *Revolution: Art of the Sixties from Warhol to Beuys* (1995, Museum of Contemporary Art, Tokyo).

Most recently, Blake's work appeared in *The Ear of Giacometti: (POST-)Surreal Art from Meret Oppenheim to Mariella Mosler* (2010, Galerie Levy, Hamburg), *Pop to Popism* (2014, Australia's Art Gallery of New South Wales), *International Pop* (2015-2016, Walker Art Center, Dallas Museum of Art, Philadelphia Museum of Art) and *POP! Art in a Changing Britain* (2018, Pallant House Gallery, Chichester)

Blake's work is in the permanent collections of major museums internationally, including: the Baltimore Museum of Art; the British Council, London; the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation, Lisbon; the Carnegie Museum of Art, Pittsburgh; the Cecil Higgins Art Gallery, Bedford; the Museo de Bellas Artes de Bilbao; the Museum Boymans-Van Beuningen, Rotterdam; the Museum Ludwig, Cologne; the Museum Moderner Kunst, Vienna; the Museum of Modern Art, New York; the National Museum Wales; the Royal College of Art, London; the Sintra Museum of Modern Art, Portugal; the Tate, London; the Thyssen-Bornemisza Collection, Madrid; the Tullie House Museum and Art Gallery, Carlisle; the Victoria and Albert Museum, London; the Whitworth Art Gallery, Manchester; and the Wolverhampton Art Gallery.

Garth Greenan Gallery is pleased to represent **Peter Blake**.

Peter Blake: The Artist's Studio will be on view at **Garth Greenan Gallery, 545 West 20th Street** (between Tenth and Eleventh Avenues), through **Saturday, May 18, 2019**. The gallery is open Tuesday through Saturday, 11:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. For more information, **please contact the gallery at (212) 929-1351, or email info@garthgreenan.com**.

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