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# Life & Arts

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## Critics' choice

Life & Arts

**Reflections on the Self: From Dürer to Struth**  
Christie's Mayfair, London

How to resist a display in which Maurizio Cattelan's hyper-realistic resin self-portrait as a child, "Charlie", whizzes around the galleries on a motorised tricycle? This enormously enjoyable, playful yet serious show deconstructs the idea of the self-portrait with wit, insight and a fine array of works.

The grown-up Cattelan reappears as both hanged man and "We", a double self-portrait where two miniaturised greying Cattelans in black suits lie together in bed – satire on artistic self-love, aesthetic sterility, the shape-shifting masquerades with which contemporary practice addresses the genre. From Dürer and Rembrandt to Munch, Matisse and Bacon – all wonderfully represented – the self-portrait was expressive.

Christie's dramatises how that expression of self-awareness continues: a rarely seen self-portrait collage by 17-year-old David Hockney; figuration pushed to the limits of abstraction in a Frank Auerbach graphite

head and near-sculpted impast panel by Leon Kossoff. An outstanding range of works highlights Lucian Freud's evolv self-portraits: crystalline and finely painted as to resemble tempera in 1949; churning pair as flesh in the 1970s-80s.

But simultaneously in the 21st century, artists rejected romantic self-revelation for obscurity, fragmentation, identity games. Female artists are innovative here: Barbara Hepworth's self-portrait as a bronze hand; Francesca Woodman's as a sinuous cropped nude, slipper as an eel; Sarah Lucas's profile delineated in cigarette butts; Cindy Sherman's assumed pose.

And as digital photography undermines trust in any image, Thomas Struth in "Alte Pinakothek, Self-portrait, Munich 2000" queries form at frontality by placing himself, blurred, viewed from the back, against Dürer's definitive, outward-looking 1500 self-portrait: at once homage to, and an assault on, half a millennium of tradition.

*christies.com, 020 7495 5050, to September 5*

**Burning, Cutting, Nailing**  
Skarstedt Gallery, London

**Destruction as creation:**  
Yves Klein's fire abstractions, Lucio Fontana's metal paintings cut with razors, Günther Uecker's 6ft-tall motorised sculpture "New York Dancer IV" decked with sail cloth and protruding nails, whirling to dissolve matter, time and space into one.

*skarstedt.com, 020 7499 5200, to July 31*

cultures is defining. This display of work, made during a residency this year in Japan, centres on collaged scrolls composed of Orozco's characteristic interlocking circles and constructed in swaths of Japanese silks. Alongside appear photographs, paintings of gridded gold circles, and totemic wooden sculptures incorporating detritus from Tokyo's streets, to which Orozco gives both metaphoric and utilitarian dimension.

*mariangoodman.com, 020 7099 0088, from today; to August 7*



Lucian Freud's 'Reflection (Self-Portrait)', 1985 – Lucian Freud Archive / Bridgeman Images

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