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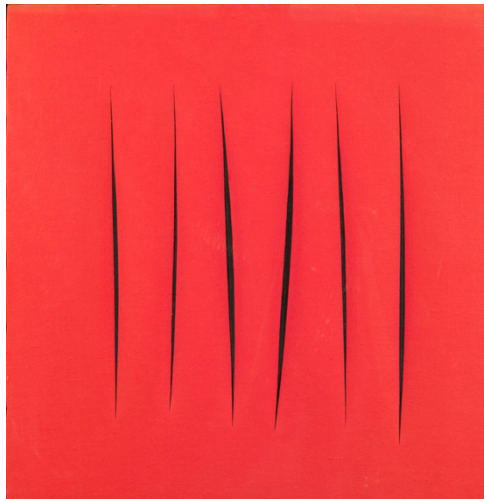
**BURNING, CUTTING, NAILING**

11 June – 31 July 2015

Skarstedt, 23 Old Bond Street, London



Yves Klein, "Peinture de feu sans titre" (F 5), c. 1961



Lucio Fontana, *Concetto Spaziale, Attese*, 1964



Günther Uecker, *Inseln (Island)*, 1964

Skarstedt is delighted to announce its forthcoming exhibition *Burning, Cutting, Nailing* at the London gallery this June. The exhibition explores the dual approach of destruction and creation in iconic works by modern masters including Yves Klein, Lucio Fontana and Günther Uecker.

Rejecting established modes of representation, the works featured in the exhibition exemplify the artists' shared quest for a new beginning in art, as in life; one that could respond to a social reality filled with potential and new technological advances in the aftermath of World War II. Through their use of destructive methods of production, be it burning, cutting or nailing, the artists challenge the notion of flatness as a condition of painting to give way to a new creative freedom by opening up the picture plane to space, light and movement.

Distinguishing the exhibition from previous surveys on this group of artists, *Burning, Cutting, Nailing* is focused on select monochromatic works that also address the theme in practice. The result is a thoughtfully curated exhibition of Lucio Fontana's red and white 'cut' or *tagli* paintings as well as his metal paintings in copper and aluminum; Günther Uecker's white nail paintings and Yves Klein's abstract 'fire paintings'. By focusing on these blocks of colour, the material qualities of the paintings are brought to the foreground and the dynamism of each artist's singular practice is reinforced by the repetition of colour and technique.

*Burning, Cutting, Nailing* also highlights the performative aspect inherent in each artist's practice. This is demonstrated by Fontana's gestural cuts with a razor blade slicing through the traditions of the artistic canon, Klein's full-scale theatre of flames burning the surface of his paintings at the testing centre of the Gaz de France and Uecker's turn as master of optical illusion, hypnotically hammering nails to dramatize the play of light and shadow.

Furthering this theme of performance is the inclusion of Günther Uecker's seminal sculpture *New York Dancer IV*, from the family of *Dancer* sculptures included in the landmark exhibition *Nul* at the Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam in 1965. A six-foot tall, motorised cylinder made of heavy sail cloth with protruding nails, *New York Dancer* is testament to the energy and creative force of this group of artists. The ritualistic act of nailing to create movement is given its most full expression in this whirling object, which at its highest velocity dissolves matter, space and time into one.

Positioning the works in dialogue with each other, the exhibition emphasizes the shared ambitions of the artists. Through their removal of superfluous detail and incisive engagement with the material structure of the picture, they seek both to achieve purity within their practice and to focus our attention onto the philosophical dimension of painting beyond the canvas.

## About Skarstedt:



20 East 79th Street  
New York NY 10075



550 West 21st Street  
New York NY 10011



23 Old Bond Street  
London W1S 4PZ

Skarstedt was founded in 1994 by Per Skarstedt to mount historical exhibitions by contemporary European and American artists that had become the core of his specialty in Sweden and New York in the late 1980s and early 1990s. Skarstedt's New York gallery is located on 79 Street and Madison Avenue in an historic building, formerly the renowned Rosenberg Gallery. In October 2012, Skarstedt opened its London space on Old Bond Street with the inaugural exhibition *Andy Warhol: The American Indian*. Skarstedt opened its 3<sup>rd</sup> space in May 2014 in Chelsea, New York with the exhibition *Yves Klein and Andy Warhol: Fire Paintings and Oxidation Paintings*.

Skarstedt's programme reflects the gallery's established area of expertise whilst also expanding its focus to include museum-quality, historically researched exhibitions from modern and contemporary masters. Skarstedt's unique relationship with artists allows it to present exhibitions both on the primary and secondary markets, creating a dialogue between the generations. Skarstedt is committed to sharing both its aesthetic perspective and philosophical approach whilst working with prominent international museums and private collections around the world.

The gallery works with the following artists and artists' estates: Justin Adian, Francis Bacon, John Baldessari, Georg Baselitz, George Condo, Carroll Dunham, Eric Fischl, Peter Fischli & David Weiss, Lucio Fontana, Günther Förg, Keith Haring, Jenny Holzer, Mike Kelley, Martin Kippenberger, Yves Klein, Barbara Kruger, Louise Lawler, Sherrie Levine, Robert Mapplethorpe, Juan Muñoz, Cady Noland, Albert Oehlen, Richard Prince, David Salle, Thomas Schütte, Cindy Sherman, Lucien Smith, Rosemarie Trockel, Andy Warhol, Franz West and Christopher Wool.

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## Full image credits:

Yves Klein, *"Peinture de feu sans titre" (F 5)*, ca. 1961

burnt cardboard on panel

52 × 39 inches (132.1 × 99.1 cm)

© Yves Klein / DACS London - ADAGP Paris, 2015. Courtesy of Skarstedt.

Lucio Fontana, *Concetto Spaziale, Attese*, 1964

water-based paint on canvas

19 7/8 x 20 1/4 in. (50.5 x 51.5cm.)

© Fondazione Lucio Fontana. Private collection, courtesy of Galleria Mucciaccia.

Günther Uecker, *Inseln (Island)*, 1964

oil, kaolin and nails on canvas mounted on board

39 x 29 3/8 in. (99x74.6cm.)

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