

# VILLEPIN

## ***Whispers of the Soul:***

**Lawrence Carroll, Giorgio de Chirico, Giorgio Morandi, Cy Twombly, and François Halard**  
**Curated by Arthur de Villepin and Olivier Kaepelin**

**Opening November 26, 2023**

**53 Hollywood Road, Central, Hong Kong**

**11:00 – 19:00 | Sunday – Thursday (Appointment only) | Friday – Saturday (Open to Public)**



Villepin is pleased to present *Whispers of the Soul*, an exhibition highlighting Australian-born American painter, Lawrence Carroll, in dialogue with works by Giorgio de Chirico, Giorgio Morandi, Cy Twombly, and photographer François Halard. The first presentation of Lawrence Carroll in Hong Kong, *Whispers of the Soul* is co-curated by Arthur de Villepin and Olivier Kaepelin, an art critic and curator who served as Artistic Director of the Busan Biennale 2014 and was formerly Director of the Maeght Foundation. With the support of the artist's wife Lucy Jones Carroll this exhibition serves as a tribute that transcends temporal, spatial, and aesthetic boundaries, and tells the story of the indelible mark the artist left on the world of contemporary art. *Whispers of the Soul* opens November 26, 2023.

The exhibition embarks on a journey that retraces Lawrence Carroll's artistic evolution and draws focus into the artists and intellectual theories that significantly inspired Carroll's creative process, examining the legacies of Giorgio de Chirico, Giorgio Morandi, Cy Twombly, and François Halard to explore the multiple complexities and possibilities of Carroll's unique output.



Lawrence Carroll, *Untitled*, 2013, oil, wax, plastic flowers, and canvas on wood, 88.2 x 58.3 x 14 cm

Lawrence Carroll's quiet visual language speaks of the search for belonging in the metropolitan crowd; subtle coloring often employed with inconspicuous materials to produce works lavished by geography and time. As the artist once said, "things come when they come. In this ever-changing world this is a luxury I crave. To slow down, to wait, to look. By choice I have chosen to live away from things, and by doing this I have given myself the freedom to wander and take my time." Playing with soft colors, almost white, sometimes blue and yellow, Carroll's paintings exist in an atmosphere of silence that conveys hidden messages to our senses and souls. While looking at Morandi, Carroll was drawn to the portrayal of beauty in essential things; for both artists, the repeated capturing of subject matter was a meditative and introspective practice.

As we explore the many strata's of Carroll's practice, an intriguing mystery unfolds, akin to Giorgio de Chirico's metaphysical compositions. While visually very different, both artists express a representation of human reality that is universal yet enigmatic. In Halard's photographs of Casa Malaparte, an iconic Mediterranean villa that casts shadows into the shores of Capri, the photographer captures empty space with familiarity, evoking a presence and belonging.

Slowing down our perception of time, Carroll's works invite introspection while Cy Twombly engages a profound level of contemplation through a gestural vocabulary that is charged with frenetic energy. Both Carroll and Twombly's works create a common ground for reflection, depicting the invisible soul, and suspending the viewer in a moment of spirited sublimity amid surrounding noise.



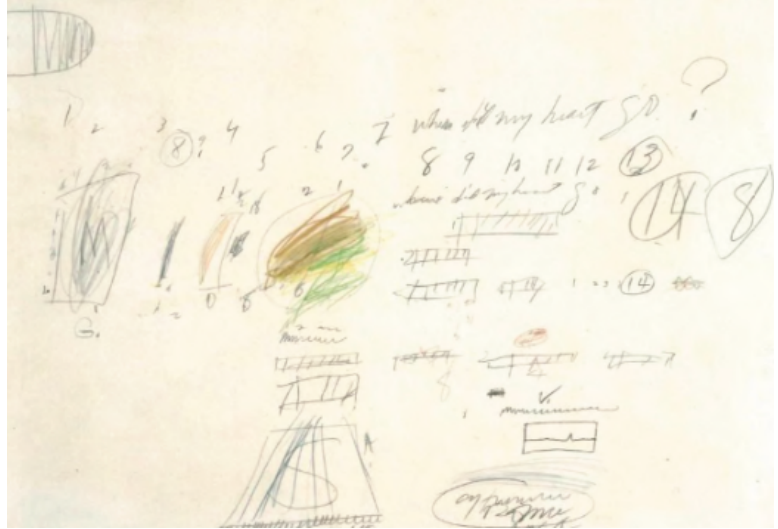
Giorgio Morandi, *Paesaggio*, 1943, oil on canvas, 49 x 50.5 cm



Giorgio de Chirico, *Il dialogo misterioso (Archeologi)*, 1970, oil on canvas, 90 x 69.8 cm



François Halard, *Casa Malaparte, Capri, Italie*, 1998



Cy Twombly, *Untitled*, 1964, ballpoint pen, pencil, pastel and colored crayon on paper, 70 x 98.5 cm

In a search for our place within this increasingly fast-paced world, Villepin invites visitors onto a new art discovery. While examining the legacies of the featured artists, and shedding light on their perception of architecture, space, and objects, the exhibition reflects on the beauty and nuances of everyday life. The gallery space has been transformed to summon the sensibility of Mediterranean culture that so absorbed Carroll, deliberately exploring our own identities, our place in the world, and the intrinsic significance of the environment around us.

*"It is a tribute to the profound legacy of Lawrence Carroll, an artist who traversed the boundaries of time and place, inviting us to explore the beauty in the ordinary, just as he did through his remarkable career spanning almost four decades."* - Arthur de Villepin

*"The work of Lawrence Carroll is unique. If it initially creates dialogue with the works of Rauschenberg, Morandi, and Twombly, the work also translates into a connection between East and West. His poetry, made of silence and meditation, expresses that of places in Italy where he chose to live. It has a universal dimension where the architecture, the humble material, simple gestures, photographs, evoke the density of the earth and the transparency found in the search of a contemplative beauty. The beauty is, today, shared in remarkable international collections and I am happy that new audiences in Asia have the chance to discover it."* - Olivier Kaepelin

*"It brings me great joy to introduce Lawrence Carroll's poetic works to the audience in Hong Kong, alongside the curators Arthur de Villepin and Olivier Kaepelin."* - Lucy Carroll

### About Lawrence Carroll (1954 - 2019)



Lawrence Carroll, studio Marquette, Michigan, 2016, photo by Lucy Jones Carroll (detail)

Born in 1954 in Melbourne, Lawrence Carroll traversed the world and left his marks from Melbourne to Los Angeles, New York and Italy. Carroll participated in Documenta IX in 1992 and the 55th Venice Biennale in 2013. His works can be found in permanent collections globally including the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum (New York), the Museum of Contemporary Art (Los Angeles), the Vatican Museums (Rome), and National Museum of Art (Tokyo).

## About Olivier Kaepelin

Olivier Kaepelin was director of the Visual Arts of the French Ministry of Culture and Communication from 2004 to 2010, Director of the Palais de Tokyo Projects from 2009 to 2011, then Director of the Maeght Foundation from 2011 to the end of 2017.

Kaepelin has been curator or co-curator of exhibitions, notably for the Universal Exhibition in Seville, the Villa Medici, the Venice Biennale, the Ateliers du Musée d'Art Moderne de la Ville de Paris (ARC), Blickachsen at Bad Hombourg in Frankfurt, Busan Biennale as well as exhibitions in Korea, Germany, China, Japan and Spain etc. In recent years, he has been in charge of projects at the Palais de Tokyo as well as exhibitions at the Maeght Foundation.

Kaepelin was deputy director in charge of programs at France Culture then adviser to the president of Radio France for cultural programs and the development of the group's cultural policy from 1999 to 2004.

## About Villepin

Shaped by Dominique and Arthur de Villepin's passion for art, Villepin is a new gallery model created by collectors for collectors. Founded in 2019 in Hong Kong, Villepin is specialized in selected important artists, estates and foundations, advocating their work through carefully curated exhibitions while bridging them with the leading collectors and institutions in the Asia-Pacific region and around the world. Beyond its gallery walls, Villepin also acts as curator for exhibitions in museums and institutions.

Each exhibition at Villepin is based on in-depth scholarship and offers a unique experience to immerse visitors in the life and art of each artist. Previous exhibitions have also produced special bilingual publications that include original essays and curatorial research. Artists presented by Villepin include Zao Wou-Ki, Myonghi Kang, Anselm Kiefer, Francis Bacon, George Condo, Pierre Soulages, Georges Mathieu and Hans Hartung among others.

As curator and advisor to a close community of collectors, Villepin is focused on education and promoting scholarship of its artists through intimate salons and collaborations with leading institutions, foundations, universities, and museums. Through their extensive experience in building close friendships with artists, the father-son partnership aims to share their expertise, encourage dialogue, and support collectors in building long-lasting relationships with artists, who are at the heart of Villepin's initiatives.



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