



DAMIEN HIRST (b. 1965)

Overwhelming Love

Signed in pencil, verso, "Overwhelming Love, Damien Hirst, 2008"

household gloss, butterflies

36 x 60 in (37 x 61 x 3 1/2 in)

2008

32308

PROVENANCE:

Sotheby's, London, Damien Hirst - Beautiful Inside My Head Forever, September 16, 2008 lot 140

Private Collection, acquired from above sale

Private Collection, California

A leading figure in the Young British Artists movement in the late 1980s and 1990s, Damien Hirst garnered international attention with his striking displays with death as a central theme. The most recognizable examples include "The Physical Impossibility of Death in the Mind of Someone Living" (1991), a 14-foot-long glass tank with a shark preserved in formaldehyde, "Mother and Child Divided" (1993), an installation that featured a bisected cow and her calf displayed in four vitrines at that year's Venice Biennale, and "For the Love of God" (2007), a diamond-encrusted human skull made of platinum.

Some of Hirst's most iconic images include Spot paintings, consisting of organized rows of colored circles, and Butterfly paintings, such as "Overwhelming Love" (2008). Hirst's Butterfly paintings speak to his characteristic themes, offering the contradiction of death with the bright vitality of a butterfly's wings. Hirst explains: "I think rather than be personal you have to find universal triggers: everyone's frightened of glass, everyone's frightened of sharks, everyone loves butterflies."

Damien Hirst Butterfly works feature prominently in his oeuvre, he started to incorporate them after flies, and other insects were accidentally affixed to some of his paintings. Hirst's record for paintings at auction is held by the butterfly painting "Eternity" which sold for \$9.6 million in 2007.

A leading figure in the Young British Artists movement in the late 1980s and 1990s, Damien Hirst (born 1965 in Bristol, England) became controversial for his dead animal displays and spin paintings. Raised Catholic in Leeds, he had a well-pronounced dark side as a child, when he showed an interest in the gruesome aspects of life.

In 1988, while studying art at Goldsmith's College at the University of London, he assembled a ground-breaking exhibition featuring works by Fiona Rae, Sarah Lucas, and others, as well as his own. They became known as the YBAs, distinguished by their use of unusual materials and for their challenging art concepts.

Advertising mogul and art collector Charles Saatchi started investing in Hirst's work. Following his first solo show at London's Woodstock Street Gallery in 1991, Hirst participated in the Young British Artists show at the Saatchi Gallery, famously

exhibiting *The Physical Impossibility of Death in the Mind of Someone Living*, a 14-foot-long glass tank with a shark preserved in formaldehyde. At the 1993 Venice Biennale, he showed *Mother and Child Divided*, an installation that featured a bisected cow and her calf displayed in four vitrines, or glass cases, filled with formaldehyde.

He won the prestigious Turner Prize in 1995. In 2007, he unveiled *For the Love of God*, a diamond-encrusted skull made of platinum. Many critics were less than impressed with this “celebration against death,” as Hirst described. Others marveled at the anticipated selling price of \$100 million. Hirst continues to make new work and exhibit around the world.

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"Overwhelming Love"

David

2008

Donald Hill

