



DAMIEN HIRST

(Bristol 1965—lives and works in Devon)

Shark Spin Painting. 2009.

Acrylic on firm wove paper.

With the signature stamp on the reverse: Damien Hirst, also with the stamp: This painting was made by ... to celebrate the opening of Damien Hirst Requiem at the PinchuckArtCentre on April 25-26th 2009 ©Damien Hirst. Furthermore with the blindstamp upper right : HIRST.

49 x 66 cm.

Provenance: - Workshop PinchuckArtCentre, Kiew, 2009. - Private collection Switzerland. Damien Hirst was born in Bristol on 7 June 1965 and grew up in Leeds. At the age of 16 he began doing anatomy drawings at the Leeds School of Medicine anatomy department. From

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1986 to 1989 he studied at the renowned Goldsmith College in London, which completely changed his understanding of the classic techniques of painting, drawing and sculpture. Already in his student days he began working on some of his most important series. The first "Medicine Cabinets" date from his second year in college. He collected and presented a series of medications in cupboards of various sizes which he arranged as in a display cabinet. In 1988 with other students from Goldsmith College, he curated the exhibition "Freeze" in a vacant warehouse, which marked the birth of the Young British Artists. The series of "Spot Paintings" originated here, in which Hirst applied round coloured spots to the walls of the warehouse. These too would turn up again and again in his work. In 1991 he began to work on his most spectacular series: "Natural History". He placed animals – sharks, sheep, cows – in simple glass tanks of formaldehyde, and later he also cut some of the animals in two. With these works he was represented in the exhibition "Sensation" in 1997, through which the "Young British Artists" gained worldwide renown and at the same time prompted outrage. The collector, art dealer and patron Charles Saatchi, whose collection includes this exhibition, was one of the first and most important supporters of the Young British Artists. A further work to cause a stir was Hirst's 2007 piece "For the Love of God" – a platinum cast of a skull set with 8601 diamonds. Love, death, religion and consumer culture are the relevant themes in Hirst's work, through which he forges entirely new ground and is almost always controversial.. In 2009 the PinchukArtCentre in Kiev hosted the retrospective "Requiem" with 100 of Hirst's works from 1990 to 2008. At the exhibition opening a "Spin Painting Workshop" took place, which every visitor could take part in. Spin Paintings are created by applying paint to the turning pictorial support and distributing it with a rapid movement. Surprising, dynamic and abstract forms result from this. On the one hand, they offer the artist the usual control over choice of colour and pictorial support and form, but, on the other hand, the "composition" is entirely arbitrary and beyond the influence of the painter. The two works presented here come from that workshop. Through the turning movement a circle is formed in the first instance, as this is the most regular way for the paint to

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be distributed. However, circles would be too boring for the British artist. Since Hirst's sculpture "The physical impossibility of death in the mind of someone living" appeared in 1991, there is no denying his fascination with sharks, and so it is not surprising that he used the shark as a form for his spin paintings. This series also runs through his entire oeuvre, and the "event" aspect that plays a part in its creation is an important component. A large number of these works were produced in Hirst's studio, but he also repeated the workshops, for example at the opening at the PinchukArtCentre and at Tate Modern, and thus actively involved the visitors in the creative process. This approach is strongly reminiscent of that used by Andy Warhol, who as early as the 1950s had the guests at his parties do small drawings for cookbooks or Christmas cards, and later of course on a large scale at The Factory. "I really like making them. And I really like the machine, and I really like the movement. The movement sort of implies life. It's the way the atoms move inside our bodies, it's the way the planet moves that we stand on. And the way all the other planets in space move around ours. Every time a painting's finished, I'm desperate to do another one." Damien Hirst

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