Stephen Ongpin Fine Art



Lavinia HARRINGTON (1986 -)

Alone with you (I)

Soft pastel and DAS air dry clay on handmade 400 GSM Khadi White Banyan Rag Paper.

Signed Lavinia and titled Alone with you in pencil on the verso.

1642 x 1118 mm. (64 5/8 x 44 in.)

This monumental pastel work was completed in 2024 and is the first of three works of that year that share the same title, which is inspired by a line in Rainer Maria Rilke's early poetry collection The Book of Hours, written between 1899 and 1903 and published in 1905.

In a recent statement, Harrington has written that she is 'moved by how soft, vulnerable materials can hold and emanate deeply charged emotions. Through making, [I am] searching for ways to materialise sensation. The works that grow from this are not representations but embodiments. Questions of care and empathy, reciprocity and sustainability are at the heart of [my] practice…[My] works emerge from an accumulation of action and erasure, contemplation and somatic movement, and are guided by visceral reactions to colour…Above all, [my] practice is sustained by a desire to engage with and share our astonishing capacity to empathise and connect with the living world.'

Artist description:

An Italian-British artist, Lavinia Harrington received her MFA in Painting at the Slade School of Fine Art in London with a Distinction in 2024. She graduated from Oxford University with a degree in the History

of Art in 2008, and two years later gained her MA degree at the Courtauld Institute of Art. She has fifteen years of experience working in arts education; delivering public talks for the National Gallery in London and teaching in museums, galleries and schools across the United Kingdom and Italy. In 2013 and 2014 Harrington worked at Stephen Ongpin Fine Art, where she helped to mount an exhibition of 18th, 19th and 20th century pastels. (As she noted in an interview several years later, 'I was drawn to pastels as a medium after handing one [of] Joan Mitchell's breathtaking drawings in the gallery I worked for back in 2014.') In 2022 she took part in the group show I Felt That - a collaborative, care-centered project addressing the gender pain gap - at The Tub, an artist-run project space in Hackney in London. More recently, Harrington's work was included in the group shows Somewhere In Between at the Hew Hood Gallery and Lost for Words at the Patrick Heide Gallery, both in London. In 2024 she was shortlisted for the Chadwell Award and the same year was awarded the Audrey Wykeham Prize for Painting at the Slade, while in 2025 she was shortlisted for the CASS Art Main Prize. Harrington lives and works in London.

Harrington's grounding in the history of art, as a student, scholar and teacher, has had a profound impact on her work. As the artist has said, 'having specialized in the Italian Renaissance, I've spent most of my academic and professional career looking predominantly at artworks by white western male artists. Over time, I've filled boxes and boxes with postcards, magazine cuttings and all sorts of images I collected whilst teaching abroad…I feel very fortunate to have had the opportunity to engage with artworks first hand on such a regular basis – it's certainly helped me to also build up an imaginary library of images to draw upon, whether consciously or unconsciously whilst I work…But, it's been my focus on women artists that has felt most empowering in terms of developing my own practice. I was drawn to pastels as a medium after handling one [of] Joan Mitchell's breathtaking drawings in the gallery I worked for back in 2014. My recent pilgrimage to see her sensational exhibition in Baltimore was nothing short of lifechanging…I find the immediacy and intimacy of works on paper and embroidery really appealing, particularly works by Sophie Taeuber-Arp, Helen Frankenthaler, Louise Bourgeois, Jenny Saville, Rachel Jones and Joana Choumali.'