

Lavinia HARRINGTON (1986 -)

Neither from nor towards

Soft pastel, DAS air dry clay and Golden Soft Gel on Japanese paper.

Signed Lavinia and titled Neither from nor towards in pencil on the verso.

980 x 654 mm. (38 5/8 x 25 3/4 in.)

Lavinia Harrington works primarily on paper, using in particular handmade papers to which she applies pastels, raw pigments and water-based materials, responding to the tactual sensation, fragility and intensity of the medium. Much of her visceral process involves the folding and layering of paper, often applying the pastel or pigment directly onto the sheet laid flat on the floor, while collage and assemblage are also an important part of her method. As the artist has stated, '*My pieces emerge over many unseen, unresolved layers and erasures, and are folded and unfolded in the process...I believe in, and am sensitive to, the inherent agency of colour and material…Working with paper has become integral to my practice for the intimacy and immediacy it elicits.*'

In a recent interview, Harrington has added that *'Since I can remember, colours and music have provoked visceral and at times overlapping sensory experiences; with colours evoking vivid textures and sounds, and music feeling tactile as fabric. It's hard for me to explain my process in words, as I work instinctively and often drawfrom entangled emotions and physical sensations in flux by fully immersing myself in the process. Each drawing, if I manage not to rip it up or overwork it, eventually finds its own rhythm. But getting to that stage can take a long time, the final marks emerge over many unresolved and unseen layers. I knowa work is finished when it feels strangely familiar.'* The artist has

also noted that her compositions are *'guided by a steady process of personal cartography. I understand my works in part as maps of felt experiences.*'

This large pastel work was executed in December 2022, after Harrington's first term at the Slade School of Fine Art. As the artist has recently recalled of *Neither from nor towards*, '*[It was the] first time I worked with Japanese paper and the first time I also worked with paper and clay together…I was curious and drawn to howpaper and clay interact [and] the paper's ability to hold clay, a heavier material, howthe paper responds and moves with the clay drying…*'

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.'