

Phillips Announces Niki de Saint Phalle x Vincent Darré: *Last night I had a dream*

A Major Installation Comprising 18 Sculptures by Niki de Saint Phalle Set Within Scenography Designed by Vincent Darré

On View in Phillips' Paris Galleries at 46 Rue du Bac from 3 to 29 October



Niki de Saint Phalle
Last night I had a dream, 1968

PARIS – 20 JULY 2022 – Phillips is pleased to announce Niki de Saint Phalle x Vincent Darré: *Last night I had a dream*. The installation of 18 sculptures by Niki de Saint Phalle collectively titled *Last night I had a dream* will be showcased in a setting designed by Vincent Darré, a Paris-based artistic director and interior designer known for his maximalist and surrealist interiors. The selling exhibition will go on view at 46 Rue du Bac from 3 to 29 October.

Nathalie Zaquin Boulakia, Phillips' Regional Director of France & Senior International Specialist, said, "Through her feminist principles Niki de Saint Phalle was very much ahead of her time as an artist. Her work resonates today just as much as it did in her lifetime, the concepts and themes she worked with and through are still relevant when considered in the context of today's social issues. One can find her sparkling mind and her happiness in the tiniest of her sculptures as well as in the most monumental. It is a true honour to exhibit such an emblematic composition from her work."

Vincent Darré, Interior Architect – Designer, said, "I feel very close to the work of Niki de Saint Phalle. My first memory of Niki's work dates back to my adolescence when I met Olivia Putman at a party. Little did I imagine that Olivia's parents were none other than Jacques and Andrée Putman. Therefore, I was delighted upon visiting her apartment in the 6th arrondissement when the doors opened to reveal none other than Niki's *Nanas*. Years later at the home of Pierre and Geneviève Hebey, I was introduced to more of Niki's work and corresponding drawings. Finally, I visited the artist's retrospective at the Museum of Modern Art where I plunged into Niki's whimsical world, that of a woman, artist, revolutionary, and feminist. Her universe, such as the tarot garden, were part of my childhood dreams and offer a deep dive into imagination, something I try to realize with each new project. I am delighted that this project allows me to rub shoulders with none other than the artist herself!"

Catherine Marie-Agnès Fal (Niki) de Saint Phalle was born in 1930 to a French Aristocrat father and American mother. In her late teens and early twenties, Niki de Saint Phalle was a very successful model however in 1953 she suffered from depression and was hospitalised following a nervous breakdown. During her stay in hospital Saint Phalle discovered her passion for art and the calming effect painting had on her. She was further inspired to pursue a career as an artist following a visit to Park Güell in 1955 where she was deeply affected by Antonio Gaudi's exploration of colour, shape, nature, scale and imagination. Saint Phalle went on to receive great critical acclaim for her revolutionary approach to creating her art.

In 1961, Saint Phalle produced the first of many 'shooting paintings' for which she received a lot of attention from the media. These paintings were created by concealing bags of paint under a thick coat of plaster and shooting at them, causing the paint to run down the plaster. Soon after 1961, the critic Pierre Restany invited her to join an artist group of new realists which included Yves Klein, Daniel Spoerri, Arman, and the sculptor Jean Tinguely (who Saint Phalle would later marry). In 1963, Saint Phalle began to focus on sculpture and in particular on studying the roles of women, identity, racial equality, and the position of women within society. She became a fervent defender of the female cause, both through her art and politically. This led to the creation of sculptures of women giving birth, devouring mothers, witches and whores, victims of their lot and potential heroines.

At the end of the 1960s, Saint Phalle returned to the motifs that marked the beginning of her career as a painter. She created a number of series, bringing together the various figures that were as much a result of her dreams as her vivid imagination. We can recognise her *nanas*, her favourite animals as well as symbols from her trips and romantic relationships within these groups.

Last night I had a dream is the collective title for a group of 18 sculptures made in 1968. In the upcoming Paris exhibition these pieces will be set within a space designed for the group by Vincent Darré. Each of these pieces can be given an exact intent and meaning, because these are motifs that are repeated several times in drawings accompanied by texts dating from the same year. As indicated by its title, *Last night I had a dream*, this installation expresses the memories of a dream. We recognise the flower, the symbol of womankind, and the snake, the symbol of mankind. They evoke the idea of a physical relationship through red lips, various *nanas* who are the incarnation of a free and fulfilled female body, one of which is pregnant. It is up to the viewer to interpret the artist's dream in their own way by piecing it together, bit by bit. Saint Phalle mixes texts and images to reveal her innermost thoughts and fears in works filled with humour and irony, resulting from the confrontation between her imaginary creatures and illustrated sentences.

Vincent Darré
© Oleg Covian



Saint Phalle passed away in California in 2002 from respiratory failure, caused by her work using polystyrene. Her legacy was a complex and unique universe, enriched as much with autobiographical and cultural references as political ones. The artist's work is celebrated through exhibitions such as the major retrospective at MOMA in 2021, an exhibition at the Museum of Contemporary Art San Diego in 2022, and a show coming up at Kunsthaus Zürich which will travel to Schirn Kunsthalle Frankfurt in 2022 and 2023.

Public Exhibition: 3 - 29 October 2022, Monday-Friday 10am-6pm, Open on Saturday 22 October
Location: 46 Rue du Bac, 75007 Paris, France

ABOUT PHILLIPS

Phillips is a leading global platform for buying and selling 20th and 21st century art and design. With dedicated expertise in the areas of 20th Century and Contemporary Art, Design, Photographs, Editions, Watches, and Jewelry, Phillips offers professional services and advice on all aspects of collecting. Auctions and exhibitions are held at salerooms in New York, London, Geneva, and Hong Kong, while clients are further served through representative offices based throughout Europe, the United States and Asia. Phillips also offers an online auction platform accessible anywhere in the world. In addition to providing selling and buying opportunities through auction, Phillips brokers private sales and offers assistance with appraisals, valuations, and other financial services. Visit www.phillips.com for further information.

**Estimates do not include buyer's premium; prices achieved include the hammer price plus buyer's premium.*

PRESS CONTACTS:

LONDON – Katie Carder, Head of Press, Europe

kcarder@phillips.com

LONDON – Anna Chapman, Press and Strategic Partnerships Officer achapman@phillips.com

PHILLIPS NEW YORK – 432 Park Avenue, New York, NY 10022

PHILLIPS LONDON – 30 Berkeley Square, London, W1J 6EX

PHILLIPS HONG KONG – 14/F St. George's Building, 2 Ice House Street, Central Hong Kong

FOLLOW US ON:

