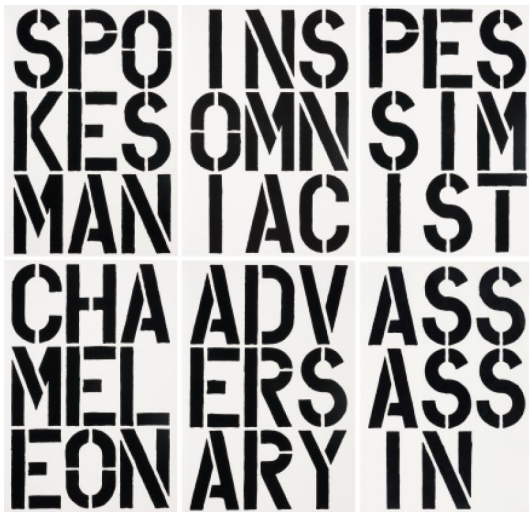


## Lot 60



**Auction** The Kasper König Collection - His Private Choice

**Date** 01.10.2024, ca. 18:45

**Preview** 27.09.2024 - 10:00:00 bis  
30.09.2024 - 18:00:00

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WOOL, CHRISTOPHER  
1955 Boston

Title: Untitled (Black Book Drawings).

Date: 1989.

Technique: 17 offset lithographs on smooth paper, bound in publication.

Depiction Size: 58,5 x 41cm.

Notation: . Signed and numbered in the imprint.

Publisher: Galerie Gisela Capitain, Cologne und Thea Westreich, New York (Ed.).

Number: 61/350.

Provenance:

- Galerie Giesela Capitain, Cologne
- Collection Kasper König, Berlin

Power of Words

The work of the American artist Christopher Wool first attracted international attention at the end of the 1980s with his block-like 'writing pictures'. His minimalist and conceptual approach lifts seemingly banal, unspecific structures out of their context and transfers them into painting in a repetitive, mostly print-based process. His works have a strong connection to the graffiti of 1970s and 1980s New York, which adopts the visual language and effects of advertising posters, mass media and political slogans. The use of stencils and spray paint also underlines his affinity with art in urban space.

Black Book

'Black Book Drawings' from 1989 can be seen as an example of the period in which he analysed the limitations of language, sound and writing in his work. The mostly black, block-like lines on a white background, which take up the entire picture surface and in some examples even exceed it, confront the viewer with unsettling implications and provocative statements. Wool emphasises the emotionality of his works with the repetition of parts of sentences, the use of unconventional spacing and the resulting irregular rhythm. At the same time, he opposes painting to the word as syntax and raises the question of the failure of language. 'Black Book Drawings' was first exhibited by the Pinault Collection at the 'Post-Pop' exhibition at the Palazzo Grassi in Venice from 2006 to 2007. In contrast to works such as

the aforementioned 'If You', the individual sheets in the example of 'Black Book Drawings' concentrate on one word each. Firstly, this supports the evidence of the word and emphasises its universal validity. Secondly, Wool falsifies the individual terms such as **AUTHORITY** and **ASSASSIN** by dividing them up over several lines and questioning their intended meaning. There is room for interpretation within a clear definition that is both spatially and linguistically narrow. These completely new representations of terms with negative connotations to create a provocative, ironic pun are to be understood as a clear reference to the language of the youth and pop culture of the time, as it appears in an urban context.

## Urban art as a basis

Due to its shape and title, the work clearly refers to the black books used in graffiti art, which artists used to preserve and pass on creative concepts before the age of digital photography. Similar to a time capsule, they visualise successes and failures, progress and setbacks and serve as inspiration for new works. This is therefore of great relevance in relation to Wool, as he also constantly refers to his previous works throughout his oeuvre, reinterpreting and modifying them. In contrast to the art of subcultural movements, which are often strikingly designed and actively intervene in the cityscape, Wool's works only unfold their full potential after prolonged contemplative engagement and contextualisation in the exhibition space, despite the parallels that cannot be ignored.<sup>118</sup> Abstract tendencies Since 2000, Wool has mainly worked with abstract forms, for which he was awarded the Wolfgang Hahn Prize in 2009 and which he presented at the same time at the 'Porto- Köln' exhibition, which took place at both the Museu Serralves in Porto and the Museum Ludwig in Cologne. The main objects of the exhibition are his 'Gray Paintings'. They are defined by black lines of spray paint, which Wool blurs into grey traces of colour. In some cases, he then digitally reworks the photographs of his paintings and transfers the resulting graphics to canvas using the serigraphy process in order to paint over and modify them again. This process of repetition, manipulation, sabotage, reinterpretation and falsification of his artworks testifies to a constant questioning of his own work. In addition to his solo exhibition in 2009, Wool also participated in Kasper König's last exhibition 'Ein Wunsch bleibt immer übrig' at Museum Ludwig in 2012.

Estimate: 12.000 € - 18.000 €, Hammer: 11.000 €

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