

[Brown at Saatchi Gallery, London](#)

[Brown at the Gagosian Gallery](#)

“I’ve always thought of myself as a figurative painter,” Brown [explains in a video interview](#) from her New York studio in 2014. “There’s always been a strong element of abstraction, but it’s something that happens very naturally...I’m far more interested in the moment where figuration breaks down...if I don’t have some figural idea, I get completely lost.”

Curator Danilo Eccher talks with the [Gagosian Quarterly](#) about Brown’s first major exhibition in Italy, at the Galleria d’Arte Moderna, Turin in 2014.

The National Gallery of Art in D.C. hosted Brown for [a conversation about her sources of inspiration](#) in 2016.

Drawing is a central part of Brown’s practice. [The Drawing Center](#) in New York hosted the first museum exhibition dedication to her works on paper in 2016. The Whitworth, at the University of Manchester, followed in 2018 with [drawings of shipwrecks](#) inspired by Gericault and Delacroix.



Brown, 2016

Photograph: Mark Hartman/W Magazine

Cecily Brown (British, b. 1969) – Artist Resources



Brown, 2019

Photograph: David Oates

An intimate portrait in photographs by [W Magazine](#) of Brown in her New York studio, 2016.

[Apollo Magazine](#) interviewed Brown as she prepared for her 2018 exhibition at the [Louisiana Museum of Modern Art](#) in Denmark. “Seeing a group of works together in a show is like the final part of the whole process of making paintings: seeing how they relate, what story they tell, and what they mean once they’re in the world...The excitement of doing a show like this is that I get to see what I’ve been doing for the past 20 years,”

In a [video profile with the Louisiana Museum](#), Brown discusses the triptych for which the exhibition is titled: *Where, When, How Often and with Whom*, which is partially inspired by [photographs of a woman arrested in Nice](#) for wearing a burkini. “I never think of painting as a cathartic thing,” explains but I definitely think it’s a way of processing things...the way I see the world is fragmented. Recently I’ve been thinking of it more like shattered, everything is splintered.”

Brown talks about her love of Rubens with the [Kunsthistorisches Museum](#) in Vienna in 2018.

[The New York Times](#) profiles Brown as she installs two monumental paintings in the main hall of [The Metropolitan Opera](#) in 2018 – the first time an artist received such an invitation since Chagall in 1966.

Cecily Brown (British, b. 1969)

The Reaper, 2019

Oil on linen

Private Collection; L2019:137.1

Cecily Brown rose to prominence in New York in the late 1990s after training in London among a generation of artists loosely affiliated under the moniker “YBA” (Young British Artists). Like many of her peers, Brown grapples with Postmodernism’s essential questions concerning the historical significance, contemporary value, and potential future of painting as an artistic medium. Brown believes painting has a superior capacity to hold and collect layers of meaning over time: in the long-term, through the decades, but also in the short-term, in the present moment of visual encounter. As Brown explains, “one of painting’s great strengths is that it can unfold slowly” and can therefore “force people to really look at things.” Her work rewards such prolonged viewing. Figures, setting, and emotional tenor suggest themselves haphazardly within the vibrant colors and energetic brushwork of **The Reaping**. The evocative title promises visual and conceptual coalescence for viewers with patience and imagination. Clarity remains just beyond reach, however, reflecting Brown’s expressed interest in “where the mind goes when it’s trying to make up for what isn’t there.”

On view February 8 – May 13, 2020

