

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

[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, 2019
Photograph: David Oates



Brown, 2016
Photograph: Mark Hartman/W Magazine

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

[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](#) profiled Brown as she installed 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)
Thrice Happy Green, 2019-20
Oil on linen

Private Collection; L2020:40.1

Cecily Brown studied at London's Slade School of Art among a generation of artists loosely affiliated under the moniker "YBA" (Young British Artists). She quickly rose to prominence after moving in 1994 to New York, where her large-scale canvases garnered critical and commercial success. Like many of her peers working in a time of postmodern attitudes toward art and its history, Brown grapples with essential questions concerning the historical significance, contemporary value, and potential future of painting as an artistic medium. Yet Brown also 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. Rendered in her emotive, frenetic brushwork, **Thrice Happy Green** suggests a world in continual flux, revealed haphazardly in restless and elusive activity. Clarity remains just beyond reach, reflecting Brown's expressed interest in "where the mind goes when it's trying to make up for what isn't there."

On view June 17 – September 20, 2020