

## Artist Resources – Dana Schutz (American, b. 1976)



Schutz, 2018  
Photograph: Lucas Page

Schutz at the [Petzel Gallery, New York](#)

“I feel that in paintings I propose a reality initially and then it can go off from there,” Schutz told [BOMB Magazine](#) in a 2005 interview. “I never think about them as being surreal because they are paintings of invented things that operate under their own set of logical conditions. The subjects are very much involved in their own actuality or self-actualizing process.”

In 2011, Schutz won the Roy R. Neuberger Exhibition Prize and was honored with a retrospective organized by the [Neuberger Museum](#) at Purchase College in New York. *If the Face Had Wheels* traveled to the [Pérez Art Museum Miami](#) and the [Denver Art Museum](#).

Schutz spoke with [The Brooklyn Rail](#) in 2012 about her artistic influences and the legacy of late twentieth-century modernism. About the notion of “narrative” painting, Schutz comments: “I think it’s interesting how narrative works in a painting—it’s not dictated in real time, but it does have its own time. So you can read the painting and it can unfold, but in a slightly different way for everyone. Because paintings are typically still, it’s awkward to think of them as time-based, and it might be easier to think of a painting as fictional rather than narrative.”

[The Hepworth Wakefield](#) celebrated Schutz with her first solo exhibition in the UK in 2014. “I think about humor a lot, I embrace humor if it happens in the paintings,” she commented in a [video interview](#) at the museum. “In order for humor to work there needs to be an element of surprise, and I think painting can be a good vehicle for that.” In conjunction with the exhibition [Schutz conversed with fellow artist Dexter Dalwood](#) about the medium of painting in contemporary art.

“I like this idea of thinking of painting as fictional, that it’s a contained space that can parallel the world,” Schutz explained in a [2016 lecture](#) at the School of Visual Arts in New York. “And within that space, you can kind of rearrange the hierarchies of the world...you can re-order how the world will appear.”

Schutz debuted [a highly controversial painting](#) at the 2017 Venice Biennale, inciting waves of criticism and protest from which she continues to recover. She [spoke with artnet](#) about her reasons for selecting the subject matter, her reservations for displaying the work, and the necessity of rethinking her practice as a result of the public outcry.

“I think paintings always have a second subject,” Schutz remarked in a [2019 video interview](#) at her Brooklyn, New York, gallery. “There’s the painting, a subject you can write down, title; but the actual real subject is way more open or diffuse and nebulous or is something that is maybe not quite nameable. And I think that is maybe painting’s power.”

Schutz at the [Thomas Dane Gallery, London](#)



Schutz in her Brooklyn studio, 2013  
Photograph: Neville Elder

Dana Schutz (American, b. 1976)

**RCA**, 2008

Oil on canvas

Private Collection; L2019:142.1

Contemporary artist Dana Schutz is known for her creative art historical references, an expressive use of color, and intuitive sensitivity that communicates the internal states of her subjects. As she explained in 2019, “I’m interested how something feels, rather than how it looks.” In **RCA**, Schutz mirrors the composition of British artist Francis Barraud’s 1899 painting *His Master’s Voice*, which depicts a dog sitting on a coffin and listening to the voice of his recently deceased master (Barraud’s brother) on a cylinder phonograph machine. Barraud’s work became one of the most recognizable images in Britain in the early twentieth century after the Gramophone Company commissioned the artist to change the painting to show the dog listening on its patented Gramophone; the Radio Corporation of America (RCA) then adopted the image as its trademark in 1929. Schutz returns Barraud’s painting to its original context: a dog listening to his master’s voice. Schutz alters the emotional tenor of Barraud’s curious fox terrier, Nipper, representing her spotted pup with his head down and turned away in a posture of sorrow for his deceased companion.



Francis Barraud (British, 1856-1924)  
*His Master's Voice*, 1899



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