

**WHITFORD  
FINE ART**

**BRAFA 2024 - PRESS RELEASE**

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**BRAFA 2024 | STAND 79**

For BRAFA 2024, the Paul Delvaux Foundation has seized the opportunity to take part in the 'Year of Surrealism' and shine a spotlight on the great master's work. For its 14th uninterrupted participation in BRAFA, Whitford Fine Art will be bringing sculpture which pays tribute to Surrealism and which forms part of the wider celebration of 100 years of Surrealism in 2024.

## CLIVE BARKER (UK, b. 1940): HOMAGES to RENÉ MAGRITTE (Belgium, 1898 – 1967)

Shown by Whitford Fine Art:

*Magritte's Pipe*, 1968, mixed media, unique

*Madame Magritte's Pipe*, 1968, mixed media, unique

*Portrait of an Unknown Beauty*, 1973, chrome-plated bronze and bronze with black patina

**Provenance:** All acquired directly from the artist

In 1964, the 24-year-old Pop Artist Clive Barker met the 66 year old René Magritte at the Hanover Galley in London. Barker expressed his admiration for the Belgian Surrealist following his death in 1967 with the works *Magritte's Pipe* and *Madame Magritte's Pipe*, which feature as iconic themes of the Belgian Surrealist painter's subject matter.



Above: **Clive Barker**, *Magritte's Pipe* and *Madame Magritte's Pipe*, 1968, Mixed media.

During the early 1970s, Clive Barker worked on the theme of classical Greek sculpture. **Having met Man Ray in 1969 at the Hannover Gallery, Barker started thinking about the surrealist's handling of the Venus de Milo, wrapped in rope.** Barker's *Portrait of an Unknown Beauty* (1973), with the head of Venus de Milo still recognisable by its characteristic tilt, is being mysteriously shrouded like the drowned or suffocated figures pictured in paintings by Magritte, whom Barker knew personally.

Barker's sculpture is a superb example of the concept of 'disguised reality' that the Surrealists routinely played on. By wrapping a head in cloth, the very sense of 'portrait' and identity is taken away. The juxtaposition of the imagined softness of human skin and the hard chrome plating questions the inherited notions of beauty. *Portrait of an Unknown Beauty* also invokes one of Magritte's more eerily romantic surrealist paintings: *The Lovers* (1928)



Above: **Clive Barker**, *Portrait of an Unknown Beauty*, 1973, Chrome-plated bronze and bronze with black patina.



Above: **René Magritte**, *The Lovers*, 1928, Oil on canvas.

Left: **Man Ray**, *Vénus*, 1937, Plaster cast of Head of Venus and netting.

Barker's relationship to painting is most clearly expressed in this 'homage' series of works. By transforming flat images into insistently physical, three-dimensional objects, he created sculptures that can best be understood as monuments to painting and as celebrations of their timelessness and quality of invention.

Whitford Fine Art has represented the artist Clive Barker since 1997.

Clive Barker's work can be found in museum collections worldwide, including: Tate, London; British Museum, London; National Portrait Gallery, London; Städtische Kunsthalle Mannheim; Museum für Modern Kunst, Frankfurt; National Gallery of South Australia, Adelaide; Museu Coleção Berardo, Modern and Contemporary Art Museum, Lisbon; The Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden, Washington, D.C.; Philadelphia Museum of Art, Philadelphia; Collection of Sir Paul McCartney and Collection of Jude Law.

# KIM HAMISKY (Vietnam 1943 - France 2002)

**Shown by Whitford Fine Art:**

*Le Complex de Janus*, 1981, sculpted wood

**Provenance:** Galerie Alain Blondel, Paris; Private collection, London.

**Exhibitions:** 1984, National Furniture: 20 Years of Creation, Centre Georges Pompidou, Paris; 1986, Hamisky, Musée d'Art Contemporain de Dunkerque.

**Born in 1943 in Son Tây, Vietnam, Kim Hamisky arrived in Paris in the 1960s.** He held a number of major solo exhibitions at the Arnaud, Blondel, and Chimène galleries. In 1966, he was awarded the Arnys Prize. **Initially trained as a painter, Hamisky turned to sculpture after becoming the son-in-law of Claude and François-Xavier Lalanne in 1969.** Over the years, key to his iconography was the alteration of the practicality of objects as is brilliantly displayed in his famous bronze *The Knot* (1987) and the present sculpture *Le Complex de Janus* (1981). The latter addresses the duality of the positive and negative, of the inside and outside of an everyday piece of furniture, pushing the technical limits of any sculptor, and touching on the surreal.

During the 1980s, Hamisky made a series of human heads, often using Japanese theatre or the Art Deco style as a point of departure. Throughout his artistic career, Hamisky has taken part in collective exhibitions: at the Maeght Foundation in Saint-Paul de Vence in 1967, the Maison de la Culture d'Arcueil in 1970, the Musée d'Art Contemporain de Montréal (MACM) in 1972, and the Musée National d'Art Moderne in Paris in 1984. In 1986, a solo exhibition devoted to his work was held at the museum of Dunkirk. **Commercial galleries which hosted one-man shows include Arnaud, Blondel, and Chimène, all located in Paris.**

Hamisky's work can be found in the following museums: Centre d'Art National d'Art Contemporain, Paris; Musée d'Art Contemporain, Montréal; Musée des Arts Décoratifs, Paris; Centre Georges Pompidou, Paris; Musée Hakone, Japan; Musée de Dunkerque, Dunkerque; Musée Verviers, Belgium.

*“Et si en fait c’était d’abord une réflexion sur le temps,  
sur les liens matière-antimatière  
et le vide suggéré,  
sur le lent processus de la réalisation de l’oeuvre,  
de l’artiste à travers elle.  
Il serait en effet simplificateur  
de situer le travail de Kim Hamisky aux frontières de l’objet détourné de sa vocation,  
du trompe l’oeil, de la confusion des apparences.  
L’oeuvre a une double lecture. L’une immédiate, palpable.  
L’autre et c’est sans doute la particularité d’Hamisky,  
mentalised.  
Plus précisément une logique différente  
faite de ‘paradoxes visuels’.  
Hamisky propose des possibles invraisemblables.”*

- Michel Faucher, 1986, catalogue Hamisky, Musée contemporain d’art moderne de Dunkerque.





Above: **Kim Hamisky**, *Le Complex de Janus*, 1981, Wood.