

PRESS RELEASE

THE DANGER OF BEAUTY

Colnaghi Madrid — October 1, 2026 – October 29, 2026

Colnaghi Madrid is pleased to announce its forthcoming exhibition *The Danger of Beauty*, in collaboration with and curated by Luis Berenguer which explores the shifting meanings and enduring influence of beauty across historic and contemporary art.

The Danger of Beauty brings together works by Hamish Pearch, Cece Philips and Liu Bin with Old Master paintings from Colnaghi's collection. Through this combination, the exhibition examines how beauty has historically been used to assign value to bodies, objects and images, and how it has consequently become connected with desire, ownership and display.

Beauty has never constituted a neutral or universal category. Its definition has varied according to religious belief, social convention and political authority. In European art, sacred images used physical beauty to express divine perfection, while portraiture associated appearance with character, status and virtue. Still-life painting placed flowers, food and valuable objects before the viewer as demonstrations of abundance, artistic skill and material wealth. These traditions also acknowledged the temporary nature of what they represented: flowers wilt, food decays, bodies age and possessions change hands.

Paintings by El Greco, Francisco de Zurbarán, Juan van der Hamen and Juan de Arellano establish this historical context within the exhibition. Their works demonstrate the different purposes beauty served in European painting, from religious contemplation to the close observation and display of the material world. In placing these paintings alongside contemporary works, *The Danger of Beauty* considers how their underlying concerns persist beyond the historical circumstances in which they were produced.

Hamish Pearch's sculptures address the distinction between the natural and the manufactured. He combines organic, fabricated and modelled elements in arrangements that often appear physically unstable or subject to change. His sculptures examine how materials and objects move between processes of construction, growth and deterioration.

Cece Philips is a London-based painter whose work draws upon the histories of portraiture and domestic painting to examine the act of looking. Working from archival material, film stills, found imagery and memory, she constructs interiors in which the relationship between viewer and subject remains deliberately uncertain. Her paintings consider how bodies are presented and observed, and how domestic space can shape relations of intimacy, privacy and power. Since her first solo exhibition, *I See in Colour*, at HOME by Ronan McKenzie in London in 2021, her work has been exhibited internationally, including in Zurich, Accra, Berlin and Seoul.

Liu Bin's paintings explore related questions through images of mushrooms and snails. Mushrooms have long carried contradictory cultural associations: they may provide nourishment but can also be poisonous or hallucinogenic. Their dependence upon darkness and decomposition, together with their brief appearance above ground, allows Liu to address the connection between growth and decay. Through these motifs, Liu examines states of uncertainty in which distinctions between attraction and danger, or life and decomposition, cannot be maintained.

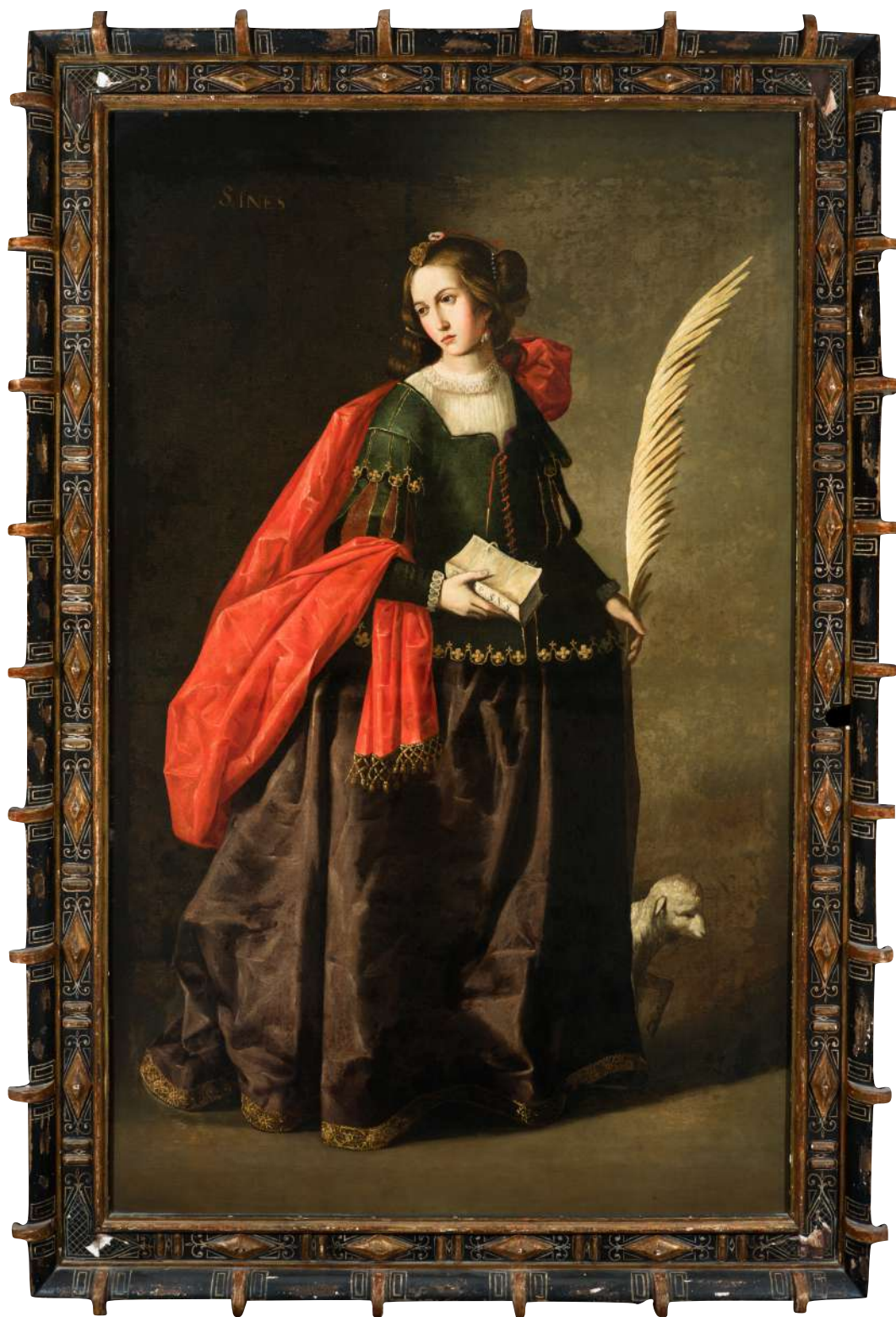
By placing historic and contemporary works in direct relation, *The Danger of Beauty* traces the continuing role of beauty in directing attention, generating desire and establishing value. The exhibition considers how aesthetic judgement informs the impulse to preserve, collect and possess, and how the transience of beautiful bodies and objects contributes to their appeal.

Exhibition Information

Title: The Danger of Beauty

Dates: October 1, 2026 – October 29, 2026

Location: Colnaghi Madrid, Calle General Castaños 9, Planta Baja, Dcha., 28004 Madrid



Circle of Francisco de Zurbarán, *Saint Agnes*, oil on canvas, 165 × 102 cm (65 × 40½ in), inscribed upper left: "S. INES".



Cece Philips, *Intimate Immensity II*, 2026, oil on wood panel, diptych, each panel 10 × 10 cm.



Juan van der Hamen, *Still Life with Fruit and Vase*, 1626, oil on canvas,
56 × 99 cm (22 × 39 in), signed and dated lower right.



Liu Bin, *Portal of the Soft Banquet*, 2026, oil on canvas, 40 × 50 cm.



Hamish Pearch, *All the Trees in the World Will Fall Sooner or Later*, 2022, bronze, 30 x 30 x 60 cm, unique.



Juan de Arellano, *Basket of Flowers*, c. 1670, oil on canvas applied to panel, 57 × 71 cm (22 1/2 × 28 in.), signed lower right 'Juan de Arellano'.