



Damien Hirst, *The Void*
 Courtesy Phillips, London/philips.com
 Main picture: Damien Hirst
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A WING AND A PRAYER

Damien Hirst is back with a new collection with Lalique. He reveals his influences to Lorna Davies



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Damien Hirst has created 12 new works in collaboration with Lalique.

The limited-edition sculptures and crystal panels – featuring a dove, cross, butterfly, skulls and snakes designed by Hirst and crafted by Lalique’s master glassmakers – were revealed at the Lalique store in Paris in September, and are on show until October 22.

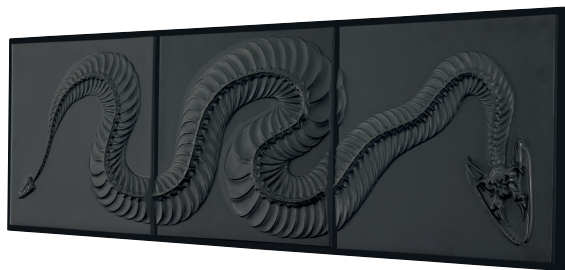
The Eternal collection was initially conceived in 2015, as part of Lalique’s art collaborations, which began in 2011 with Yves Klein. A collaboration with Britain’s most famous living artist was high on Lalique director Silvio Denz’s wish list. “An artist of immeasurable talent and worldwide renown, he perfectly embodies his generation of artists, unafraid to embark on experiments, calling into question the strict definitions of art and what constitutes a work of art,” he says.

Much of the original collection is focused on the butterfly, a motif synonymous with Hirst’s work. He first began using butterflies in 1989, after being inspired by seeing flies get stuck on canvases in his South London studio. Taking this idea he started fixing the bodies of dead butterflies to monochrome gloss-painted canvases.

“I see butterflies as souls and part of a wider visual language. I’ve always described them as universal triggers; everyone loves them because of their incredible abstract fragility and beauty. But there’s another element that interests me, which is the tension between the kitsch birthday-card kind of image, the



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In 1984 he moved to London, where he worked in construction before studying for a BA in Fine Art at Goldsmiths College from 1986 to 1989. While in his second year, he conceived and curated the now renowned group exhibition, Freeze, at an empty Port Authority warehouse in London Docklands.

The show is known as a launching point not only for Hirst, but for a generation of British artists including Mat Collishaw, Gary Hume, Michael Landy, Sarah Lucas and Fiona Rae. Since the late 1980s, Hirst has used a varied practice of installation, sculpture, painting and drawing to explore the complex relationships between art, life and death. He says: "Art is about life and it can't really be about anything else ... there isn't anything else."

In 1995, Hirst was awarded the Turner Prize, and has had more than 90 solo exhibitions all over the world. Now 51, he lives and works between London, Devon and Gloucestershire.

Last year, Hirst opened his own gallery in Lambeth. Newport Street Gallery exhibits works from Hirst's collection by Jeff Koons, Dan Colen, Gavin Turk and more. Hirst's own works go for astronomical prices at auction, the latest being *The Void* (2000), selling at Phillips in May for £4.42 million. His latest comeback

on to the European art scene was in Venice with a somewhat divisive exhibition Treasures From The Wreck Of The Unbelievable.

Hirst once said: "I've always looked at art as being the map of a person's life". But what does he see when he looks at his own map?

"I see how amazingly lucky I've been. It feels like I've been on a rollercoaster and I still can't quite believe it. But of course my work is always an expression of life because that's what all art is, and it can't really be about anything else as that's all we truly know."

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: *Eternal Sinner*; *Eternal Prayer*; *Eternal Immaculate*; *Eternal Sleep*; Damien Hirst

"I've always loved that [butterflies] look identical in life and in death, but when the light shines through these panels, it feels like they're brought back to life in some way"

power of love and the reality of the actual insect itself," Hirst says.

"It's an interesting example of how we use nature to try and express the inexpressible: love, desire, belief and the eternal. They're really old ideas, butterflies are used in Christian iconography to symbolise the resurrection, and by the ancient Greeks, for the soul. I've always loved that they look identical in life and in death, but when the light shines through these panels, it feels like they're brought back to life in some way."

Known as the enfant terrible of British art, Hirst was born in 1965 in Bristol and brought up in Leeds.

