



GEMINI G.E.L. <sup>AT</sup> JONI MOISANT WEYL



*Hands & Feet: Hands & Purse, 2017*  
7-color screenprint  
36 x 26 1/4" (91.4 x 66.7 cm) Edition of 50

**For Immediate Release**

**John Baldessari: *Hands & Feet***  
**October 5 – November 30, 2017**  
**Reception Friday, October 6th, 6-8pm**

Gemini G.E.L. at Joni Moisant Weyl is pleased to present eight new screenprints by **John Baldessari** titled *Hands & Feet*. The exhibition, on view from October 5<sup>th</sup> through November 30<sup>th</sup>, celebrates the artist's continued collaboration with the Los Angeles-based Gemini G.E.L. workshop, dating back to 1990. Throughout his career, Baldessari has appropriated images, altering them with oftentimes humorous and provocative effect. For this new series, Baldessari has made selections from film images and newspaper sources, tightly cropping them to focus our attention on the hands that hold, grip and gesture, conveying human intention and mood without any facial expression needed. In the same way that his well-known motif of colored dots can obscure a subject's identity and "level the playing field", as Baldessari once described it, so too can the removal of the outer parts of an image.

Although Baldessari does not consider himself a Los Angeles artist, the influence of Hollywood and film on his artistic output is noticeable here. In Calvin Tompkins' essay for *The New Yorker* in 2010, Baldessari explained that he started using film stills in his work when "Somebody told me about this store that sold movie paraphernalia out



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in Burbank, where I could buy old ones for ten cents apiece. Whenever I had some free time, I'd go there and buy more." The close cropping of film stills and other sources uses a cinematic approach to image-making, similar to the way a camera zooms in on a particular detail to accentuate or obscure certain elements. But in this case, the approach generates an image that is deliberately vague and economically cropped, erasing "excess" information from the viewer. Oftentimes the hands are located at the very edge of the picture plane, which is a classic compositional tool to focus the eye to the action.

Baldessari reveals just enough of an image to establish the setting, cropping his material deliberately and hiding recognizable features. By choosing moments where the viewer can almost piece together the before-and-after scenes, each image is a singular moment of tension or action. Will the drink fall on her striking silk dress, or is she the one who has tossed the drink? Will he catch the ball and strike out the home team, or miss it and lose it all? Individually the eight scenes are seemingly obscure and virtually unrelated, however when examined together, moments of repetition are apparent – in subject, shape, and overall composition, and especially in Baldessari's emphatic inclusion of hands in each of the eight prints.

John Baldessari was born in National City, California in 1931. He attended San Diego State University and did post-graduate work at Otis Art Institute, Chouinard Art Institute and the University of California at Berkeley. He taught at the California Institute of the Arts in Valencia, CA from 1970-1988 and the University of California at Los Angeles from 1996-2007. Baldessari's artwork has been featured in more than 200 solo exhibitions and in over 1000 group exhibitions in the U.S. and Europe. His projects include artist books, videos, films, billboards and public works. His awards and honors include the 2014 National Medal of Arts Award, an award from the International Print Center New York in 2016, memberships in the American Academy of Arts and Letters and in the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, the Americans for the Arts Lifetime Achievement Award, the Rolex Mentor and Protégé Arts Initiative, the BACA International 2008, the Golden Lion for Lifetime Achievement, awarded by La Biennale di Venezia and the City of Goslar Kaiserring in 2012. He has received honorary degrees from the National University of Ireland, San Diego State University, Otis Art Institute of Parsons School of Design, and California College of the Arts. He currently works in Venice, California.

Recent projects include exhibitions at Sprüth Magers Gallery Los Angeles in 2016, the Städel Museum in Frankfurt, Germany in 2015, Marian Goodman Gallery London in 2015, an exhibition at the Garage Center of Contemporary Culture (Moscow, Russia) in 2013 and the 2009-2010 traveling retrospective "John Baldessari: Pure Beauty." *John Baldessari Catalogue Raisonné, Volume One: 1956-1974* was published by Yale University Press in 2012, *Volume Two: 1975-1986* was released in 2014, and *Volume Three: 1987-1993* was released in 2016. A collection of his writings titled, *More Than You Wanted to Know About John Baldessari Volume 1 and Volume 2* was published by JRP|Ringier in 2013.

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For further information please contact the gallery at: 212-249-3324 or visit [www.joniweyl.com](http://www.joniweyl.com)