

Hernan Bas: *TIME TO SHINE! (the salesmen)*

Exhibition: 17 September–14 November 2026

16 Wharf Road, London N1 7RW



Hernan Bas, *He sells sea shells by the sea shore*, 2026
Acrylic on linen
213.4 x 182.9 cm
84 x 72 in
© Hernan Bas
Courtesy the artist and Victoria Miro

Victoria Miro is delighted to present *TIME TO SHINE! (the salesmen)*, an exhibition of new paintings by Hernan Bas.

This new body of work is set in places of retail where, as comedy, tragedy and life in general tell us, minor characters assume leading dramatic roles. The title, *TIME TO SHINE! (the salesmen)*, suggests moments illuminated by theatrical spotlight. Here, then, are actors in the theatre of, usually, suburban commerce poised for an encounter that seems every bit as electric as the hush before a revered thespian enters the stage.

This mercantile world takes us to stores and stands of different kinds, as well as to the seaside. Several works were triggered, Proust-like, by childhood memories. Yet it also extends to the hallowed environs of the contemporary art gallery – and here we're reminded that Bas has often traded in the self-reflexive, conjuring words such as 'meta' long before they slipped into common parlance. The title *First choice (two artists, a dealer and a collector)* sets up a familiar artworld dynamic, only to wrongfoot us with the realisation that the artists depicted in the painting are not the humans.

Elsewhere, Bas deploys (mis)directional cues, skewering expectations while multiple readings and meanings occur – between seller and product, subject and object. Whether we identify *with* the salesman or *as* the potential customer, each encounter brings its own dynamic as we negotiate gestures and goods; noticing, say, the wilting flowers and miserly reduction offered by *The prodigal son* (3pm, farmers market), or weighing up the trade-off between candy and cavities in *The tooth fairy*.

These moments often point to greater losses – of natural resources in the oceanic plunder depicted in *He sells sea shells by the sea shore* or, more generally, the demise of mall culture and the specialist, one-on-one performance of the salesman. We might recognise the assistant's *froideur* in *Catching the scent on a sale* as being simply of a type while, for Bas, the often maligned 'perfume model' spritzing people as they run the gauntlet from entrance to escalator is 'a character who will be lost to time, a paperboy with a bottle of Chanel N°5.' So, there is empathy, sympathy and nostalgia, as well as bright humour, in these works, pointing to a world in which we may well come to lament the dearth of a salesman.

Hernan Bas: *TIME TO SHINE! (the salesmen)* is on view at Perrotin, Tokyo from 9 September–11 November and Victoria Miro, London from 17 September–14 November 2026.

About the artist

Hernan Bas, born in Miami, Florida in 1978, lives and works in Miami, Florida.

The artist's recent solo institutional exhibitions include *Hernan Bas: The Visitors*, Ca' Pesaro, Venice, Italy (2026); *Hernan Bas: The Conceptualists*, The Bass Museum of Art, Miami, USA (2023); *Hernan Bas: Choose Your Own Adventure*, Space K, Seoul, South Korea; Yuz Museum, West Bund, Shanghai, China (2021–22); *Hernan Bas*, Rubell Museum, Miami, USA (2020–22); *Hernan Bas: A Brief Intermission*, CAC Málaga, Spain (2018) and *Florida Living*, staged at the SCAD Museum of Art, Savannah in 2017.

Other significant exhibitions include *Hernan Bas: The Space Between Needful & Needless*, Lehmann Maupin Seoul, South Korea (2025); *Hernan Bas: Nightmares & Melancholy*, Galerie Peter Kilchmann, Zurich, Switzerland (2024); *Hernan Bas: The First and the Last*, Galerie Perrotin, Paris, France (2024); *Hernan Bas: The Conceptualists: Vol. II*, Lehmann Maupin, New York, USA (2023); *Hernan Bas: The Conceptualists*, Victoria Miro, London, UK (2022); among others.

Works by the artist are included in the collections of Brooklyn Museum of Art, New York; Detroit Institute of Arts; Hammer Museum, Los Angeles; Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden, Washington, DC; Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles; Museum of Contemporary Art, North Miami; Museum of Fine Arts, Boston; Museum of Modern Art, New York; San Francisco Museum of Modern Art; and Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, among others.

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