

Exhibition Guide

Audrey Flack
After Crivelli

23 February — 29 May 2022
Tower Room, Second Floor

He's my family, Crivelli. When I first saw his Pieta I wanted a picture of it and went to the Met book store that was only a small room then. There were no pictures, he was in no art history books, nothing. You couldn't see anything of Crivelli. Years later I wrote a paper on Crivelli that was published in Arts Magazine and Colin Eisler said one of his students read that paper and did her thesis on Crivelli. I was amazed that it had such an effect.

Audrey Flack, interview with John Wilmerding for *Audrey Flack: Master Drawings from Crivelli to Pollock* (2017)

To coincide with Ikon's exhibition of works by the 15th century master Carlo Crivelli, the gallery shows two works Audrey Flack, an artist rarely shown in the UK.

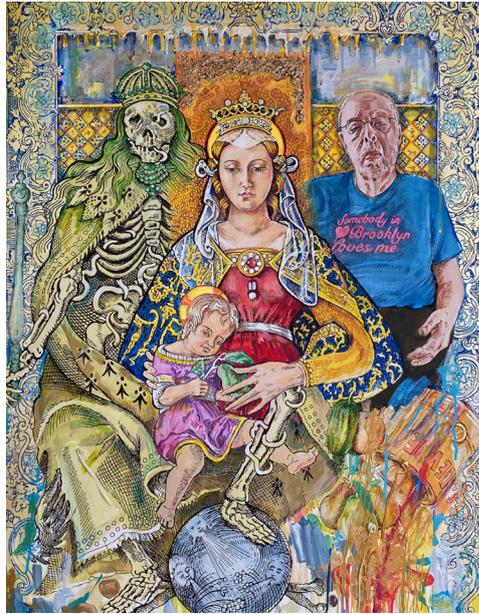
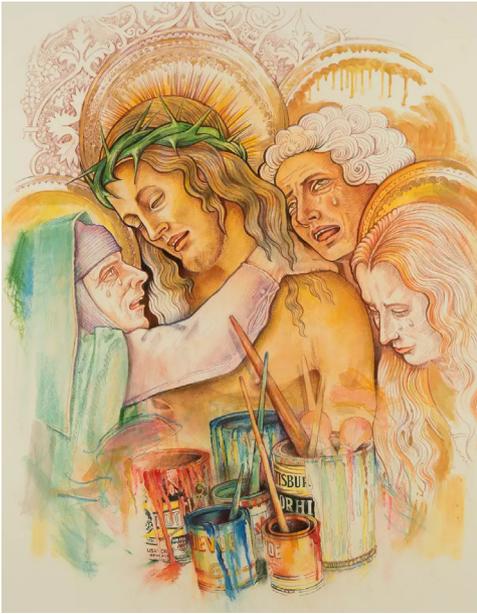
Born in 1931 in Brooklyn, New York, Flack studied art at Cooper Union and Yale University in the early 1950s, the latter under the tutelage of colourist Joseph Albers. Living and working in New York at the height of Abstract Expressionism, she adopted their approach to all-over compositions painted with intense energy. With an interest in the work of Old Masters – including Tintoretto, Rembrandt, Reubens – she turned away from abstraction towards figuration, initially through a group of family and self-portraits and later in a series of still lifes, revealing her commitment to the representation of objects. By the 1970s, she was painting images from news media in a hyper-realistic style, establishing her as a pioneer of Photorealism.

In the early 1980s, Flack wrote a defence of Carlo Crivelli's work at The National Gallery – an essay reproduced in Ikon's catalogue *Carlo Crivelli: Shadows on the Sky*. His influence can be seen in the work *Pollock's Cans* (2017) based on Crivelli's *Pietà* (1476) at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York. Flack has faithfully copied aspects of Crivelli's, including his ornamentation and figuration, whilst replacing the detail of Christ's open wound with a set of paint cans and brushes. In doing this, she pays homage to Crivelli who used pictorial devices to break the illusion of three-dimensional space. The tears of Crivelli's mourners extend into the drips of paint, transforming Crivelli's hyper-realism into Flack's surrealism.

I K O N

Please note the Tower Room is only accessible via a number of steps.

Painted during the Covid-19 lockdown, Flack's *Madonna Della Candeletta* (2021), incorporates a painting of a cadaver monument and portrait of Flack's husband into a version of Crivelli's *Madonna Della Candeletta* (1490) at Pinacoteca di Brera, Milan. Flack replicates Crivelli's sculptural techniques, of moulding the Madonna's jewellery and pressing gold into her throne, to give the work a three-dimensionality. The fruits, that accompany Crivelli's Madonna, are covered in colour dripping from a paint pot. It is seen as a reference to Flack's early Abstract Expressionism.



(Left) Audrey Flack, *Pollock's Cans* (2017)

Mixed media on paper

(Right) Audrey Flack, *Madonna Della Candeletta* (2021)

Acrylic and mixed media on canvas

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