



In another painting, *Black Dahlia* (2020), Surrealism, pop-cultural scandal, and art history collide. The painting memorializes “LA’s greatest unsolved murder.” Boshier depicts Duchamp’s *Étants donnés* (1946–66), itself thought to be a possible reference to the brutal murder and dismemberment of Elizabeth Short that captivated the public. The suspected murderer was Dr. Hodel, a close friend of Man Ray and an obsessive collector of surrealist art. As in Man Ray’s *Minotaur* (1934), the victim’s arms stuck out from her truncated torso like the horns of a bull. Dr. Hodel’s own son publicly described the murder as his father’s “surrealistic masterpiece.” In Boshier’s macabre work, black block-like forms meander like a staircase through the composition. A half-dozen men, dressed in mid-century suits, inspect something at their feet. Down the staircase stands a woman in a black dress.

In the densely packed drawing *Alchemy Alchemy* (2020), dozens of medieval alchemists go about their work, dynamically filling every corner of the composition as in a Bruegel or Bosch painting. One alchemist pumps bellows into a raging fire while another pores over manuscripts surrounded by vials and potions. Boshier overlays super-sized wrist watches that populate the scene like flying saucers. The unlikely juxtaposition cries out for explanation. Luxury watches are themselves curious attempts at alchemy. These objects attempt to escape their utilitarian origins along every axis. Their pricing rejects the logic of utility: thousands for a device that tells time (not quite as well as your phone)? So does their needlessly complex engineering: why use complex mechanical gears when you can use a ubiquitous and cheap quartz battery system? The devices are transformed through the ritualistic cooperation of obsessive craftsmen, expert machinists, marketers, and watch enthusiasts.

Born 1937 in Portsmouth, UK, Boshier currently lives and works in Los Angeles. The artist first rose to prominence while still a student at the Royal College of Art, featuring in RBA Galleries’ landmark 1961 exhibition *Young Contemporaries* alongside classmates David Hockney, Allen Jones, R.B. Kitaj, Pauline Boty, and Peter Phillips. He has been both prolific and wide-ranging in his artistic production, working in such varied media as painting, drawing, prints, film, sculpture, and installation, among others. Mass audiences were first exposed to his work via The Clash’s *2nd Songbook*, as well as David Bowie’s *Lodger* album cover. His collaboration with Bowie sparked a lifelong friendship, many subsequent collaborations, and a handful of Bowie paintings.

He has been the subject of over 91 solo exhibitions at prestigious venues such as: Flowers Gallery (1974 and 1976, London); Texas Gallery (1987, 1989, and 1991, Houston); Galerie du Centre (2003, 2005, 2007, and 2013, Paris); the National Portrait Gallery (2013, London) and Gazelli Art House (2017 and 2019, London). His work has also been included in numerous group exhibitions including: *Art and The Sixties* (2004, Tate, London); *Pop Art: UK* (2004, Galleria Civica di Modena, Italy); *British Pop* (2006, Museo de Bellas Artes de Bilbao, Spain); *Pop Art Portraits* (2007, National Portrait Gallery, London); and *Made in Space* (2013, Night Gallery, Los Angeles, Gavin Brown Gallery, New York, and Venus over Manhattan, New York), among others.

His work features in numerous public collections internationally, including: the Tate, London; the British Museum, London; the Victoria and Albert Museum, London; the Collection of Her Majesty The Queen, Windsor Castle; the National Gallery of Scotland, Edinburgh; the National Gallery of Poland, Warsaw; the Dallas Museum of Art; the Menil Collection, Houston; the Museum of Art, Ein Harod, Israel; Centro Wifredo Lam, Havana; the Bernardo Museum, Lisbon; the National Gallery of Art, Australia; the Yale Centre of British Art, Connecticut; the High Museum, Atlanta; the Brooklyn Museum; and the Museum of Modern Art, New York.

*Derek Boshier: Recent Works* will be on view at Garth Greenan Gallery, 545 West 20th Street (between Tenth and Eleventh avenues), through Saturday, May 22, 2021. The gallery is open Tuesday through Saturday, 11:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. For more information, please contact the gallery at (212) 929-1351, or email [info@garthgreenan.com](mailto:info@garthgreenan.com).

#####