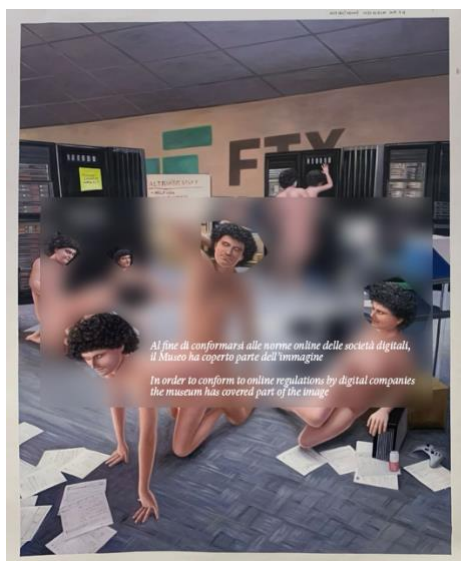


PRESS RELEASE



Please note: due to Youtube censorship on grounds of nudity, the images above are censored versions of a work by Mike Winkelmann (Beeple)

FTX BOARD MEETING, DAY #5676 11.13.2022,

Edition 1/1, 2023

Cinema 4D, Octane Render, Photoshop, NFT, oil on canvas, 147.3 x 182.9 cm

Censored version

To download the uncensored images click [HERE](#)

The Beeple Donation

Presentation of the artwork *FTX BOARD MEETING, DAY #5676 11.13.2022, 2023*

Thursday 6 July 2023, 6-8 pm

On the occasion of the donation, the Museum will hold a public conversation with the artist and the Director Carolyn Christov-Bakargiev, moderated by digital content curator Giulia Colletti and live-streamed on [Youtube](#).

Museum Theater, 6 pm

Castello di Rivoli Museo d'Arte Contemporanea is pleased to announce the entry into its permanent Collection of the work by Mike Winkelmann, alias Beeple, *FTX BOARD MEETING, DAY #5676 11.13.2022*, generously donated by the artist to the Museum.

The work, existing in both the physical and digital realms, is made up of an NFT (non-fungible token), i.e. a digital image registered with blockchain technology via a smart contract in a unique edition 1/1, and a physical component, a large oil painting on canvas.

When Castello di Rivoli attempted to show this work on the Museum's Youtube channel, it was censored by Youtube due to their rules against showing nudity. To see the uncensored image, click [here](#). While this image is provocative, Beeple uses the visual language of pornography and the cartoonish graphics of the digital world to critique what he views as the adolescent recklessness and immaturity of the tech entrepreneur Sam Bankman-Fried and the wider digital culture surrounding him.

Since May 1, 2007, Beeple has been producing and posting online a personally created image every day, in an exercise of rigor and measurement of the passage of time that recalls the conceptual practices of the 20th century, updated for the age of digital culture. Over time he has built a large community of fans, becoming one of the most important visual artists on social media, with 2.4 million followers on Instagram, more than 500,000 on Facebook and over 760,000 on Twitter. Beeple entered the wider public consciousness when his work *EVERYDAYS: THE FIRST 5000 DAYS*, 2021, sold for a record price at Christie's auction on March 11, 2021, during the Covid-19 pandemic lockdown. It is a compendium of the first 5,000 images, created daily by the artist from 2007 to the beginning of 2021. The work captured the attention of the international art world and the global digital community, serving as a catalyst for both digital art and the uniqueness that each NFT (non-fungible token) represents through blockchain technology. This daily exercise, practiced by Beeple for over 15 years, has inspired thousands of other digital artists to start their own *everyday* practice. Deploying different styles, from abstract expressionism, to illustration, to science fiction, Beeple's often figurative works act as political critique of the anti-ecological use of technologies and extractive energy industries for the pure purpose of profit, although often veiled by green hypocrisy and lies. The artist extrapolates a few *Everydays* from the great flow of his images to become single and unique NFTs in 1/1 edition constituting rare, unique works of art, while some *drops* (online publications of his *Everyday* NFT images) appear periodically in more accessible editions of 100, as multiples.

Director of Castello di Rivoli Museo d'Arte Contemporanea, Carolyn Christov-Bakargiev, comments: "Beeple's work *FTX BOARD MEETING, DAY #5676 11.13.2022, 2023* (Cinema 4D, Octane Render, Photoshop, NFT, oil on canvas 147.3 x 182.9 cm) constitutes an important donation that updates our permanent collection with a work in a 21st-century medium that combines the digital with the physical. I am grateful to Mike Winkelmann for his generosity and respect for museums and our museum in particular.

The subject of this work is the thirty-one-year old entrepreneur Sam Bankman-Fried, one of the youngest billionaires in the tech industry in early 2022, and the founder and former CEO of the cryptocurrency exchange platform FTX. The work is a satirical reflection on recent events involving Bankman-Fried, arrested in December 2022 for wire fraud and money laundering. Allusions to Effective Altruism – a concept of philosopher William MacAskill preached by Bankman-Fried and often adopted by tech entrepreneurs – can be seen in the background of Beeple's image. These contrast with the alleged conduct of the FTX exchange platform, accused of having used billions of dollars from the exchange to finance risky operations of Bankman-Fried's currency company, Alameda Research, leading to the inevitable collapse of cryptocurrencies. Some news, leaked in the days following his arrest, alleged he also engaged in frequent orgies in the office. In this work, Beeple makes fun of Bankman-Fried in a cathartic way, through the representation of an orgy between

computers where the image of the entrepreneur is kaleidoscopically multiplied and blurs gender, to the point of representing onanism and the pure solipsism of some parts of the new digital world. The recurrence of the same figure in the picture can also be read as an allusion to the close circle of collaborators with whom Bankman-Fried worked and lived in a resort in the Bahamas.

Christov-Bakargiev explains why she chose this particular 1/1 edition by Beeple:

"I wanted a strong image that is relevant to Beeple's work. While this image may be seen as provocative, the main reason Beeple's digital work and that of NFT artists became known to the general public is the financial aspect of the digital world and the Christie's Beeple sale, which was paid for in cryptocurrency. For me, the collapse of the crypto world following the FTX scandal and the speculative bubble that exploded last year is one of the key moments of that world – it was like an atomic bomb going off in the crypto world. Beeple's work is particularly controversial in that community because he is an artist who critiques the digital world. He questions the technology and the society that develops in relation to that technology, even as he uses its system and structures. For me, Beeple is interesting as an artist in a similar way to Andy Warhol: both critique the societies in which they are embedded. Warhol was critiquing the consumer society around him – that's why he made the electric chair pictures, the tragic image of Marilyn Monroe and his endless repetitions and magnifications of consumer culture. Many great artists use the new medium and techniques of their time and also critique them and show the risks of their 'brave new world.' Here Beeple's seemingly pornographic image is also pointing to the childish, immature and narcissistic nature of the digital world. It's important that such art not be censored by social media companies and their algorithms."

The event will be followed by the presentation and book signing of the volume *Beeple: Everyday, the First 5000 Days* (Abrams, New York, 2023), the first monograph dedicated to the artist, at the Castello di Rivoli Bookshop.



Beeple, photo Andrea Guermani, 2022

Biography

Michael Joseph Winkelmann (Fond du Lac, USA, 1981), known professionally as Beeple, was born in Missouri. His mother was a senior center director and his father an engineer. He studied computer

science at Purdue University. American digital artist, graphic designer and animator, he is mostly known for producing short films, Creative Commons VJ loops, *Everydays* and NFTs. In his art, he uses various technologies to create satirical and phantasmagorical works, generally figurative, which critique contemporary politics and society using references from pop culture, digital culture or new media.

His free “VJ clips” have become ubiquitous in the global concert visual space and include works with Justin Bieber, Imagine Dragons, Eminem, Nicki Minaj, Katy Perry, One Direction, Zedd and many other artists, including artworks for the Super Bowl. Beeple’s work can also be found at the Tesla Gigafactory in Austin, Texas, commissioned by Elon Musk, and in major private digital art collections, such as those of Ryan Zurrer and Pablo Rodríguez Fraile. In April, 2022, he collaborated with Madonna on a series of performance video works, *Mother of Creation*.

Beeple’s art has always been rooted in a desire to straddle the physical and digital, often working with physical objects connected to his NFTs. *HUMAN ONE*, 2021, made its museum debut at Castello di Rivoli in April 2022 on the occasion of the exhibition *Espressioni*, to be subsequently exhibited at the M+ museum in Hong Kong. In *HUMAN ONE*, the artist experiments by creating a digital/physical hybrid work, composed of an NFT and a kinetic video-sculpture in the shape of a large self-standing revolving box, where its post-gender metamorphic protagonist between rider and astronaut walks relentlessly through ever-changing virtual landscapes, perhaps alluding to the loneliness of the life in the metaverse that heralds the 21st century. This new work, *FTX BOARD MEETING, DAY #5676 11.13.2022*, is a unique edition 1/1 of the *Everyday* posted on November 13, 2022, and the artwork comprises both a physical component – the painting – and an online token.

In 2017, Winkelmann moved to Charleston, South Carolina, with his wife and two children to live near his brother Scott, an aeronautical engineer at Boeing.

After the sale of *EVERYDAYS: THE FIRST 5000 DAYS* in March 2021 for US\$ 69 million, Scott left Boeing and began working with his brother Mike. They opened *Beeple Studios* in spring 2023, a private museum of digital and immersive art, a community center and a laboratory for experimenting with the new world.

To download the press release and images click [HERE](#)

Castello di Rivoli Museo d’Arte Contemporanea Press Office

Manuela Vasco | press@castellodirivoli.org | tel. +39.0119565209 | mob. +39.3930649067

International Communications Advisor for Castello di Rivoli Museo d’Arte Contemporanea and the Cerruti Collection

Sarah Greenberg | sgreenberg@evergreen-arts.com | tel. +44.7866543242

For press images, please contact: ppanagopoulos@evergreen-arts.com



Partner

INTESA SANBILOLO

