

Jean-Pierre Cassigneul

MOMENTS OF SPLENDOUR

At **Stern Pissarro Gallery**, 66 St James's Street, London SW1A 1NE

2 July–17 August 2024



Jean-Pierre Cassigneul: left, *La Tarte aux Fraises* (2017).

Stern Pissarro Gallery is delighted to present the first solo exhibition of Jean-Pierre Cassigneul in London. Renowned for his portrayals of enigmatic women, this quintessentially French artist with a distinguished international exhibition history stands as a modern classic. David Stern, Director of Stern Pissarro, says, “As Cassigneul has had so many shows around the world, across Europe, Japan and the USA, it is surprising that this will be the first dedicated to his work in London. His paintings evoke a sense of Parisian elegance and nostalgia, and it’s that spirit we are bringing to St James’s this summer.”

Indeed, Cassigneul’s fashionable, long-limbed subjects occupy their own space with effortless poise, whether sitting in the studio (*Le Chevalet*), outdoors with an arm draped over the back of chair (*Aude dans le jardin*), or at a tiny table for one in a garden (*Soir d’été*).

Born in Paris in 1935, Cassigneul's formative years were spent immersed in French fashion, developing an appreciation for extravagant millinery and glamour. His family background, with his grandfather co-founding the renowned haute couture house Jean Dessès, gave Cassigneul a rich heritage of style and craftsmanship. His artistry references these themes and nuanced narratives of femininity, encapsulated by his reflection about his subjects: "The woman's gaze firmly settles within herself."

Cassigneul held his first solo exhibition at Galerie Lucy Krogh in 1952 at the age of 17. In 1954, he entered the Académie Charpentier in Montparnasse, before studying at the École des Beaux Arts. It was during this period that the young artist met the painter, Jean Souverbie, who was to have a great influence on Cassigneul, introducing him to the work of members of Les Nabis group of artists, such as Pierre Bonnard and Edouard Vuillard, as well as the vibrant portraiture of Fauve painter, Kees van Dongen.

Throughout the 1960s, Cassigneul explored themes of women and gardens, expanding his oeuvre to encompass volumes of drawings and lithographs. His participation in the Salon de la Jeune Peinture in 1963 alongside luminaries like Bernard Buffet and André Minaux, solidified his position in the art world. International acclaim followed with exhibitions in Japan and the USA, along with notable collaborations with the Bolshoi Ballet and ventures into stained glass and tapestry.

Reflecting on his career, Cassigneul emphasises his independence from artistic movements, noting, "This uncategorisable figuration kept me away from movements, groups, and schools." And: "The mood in my paintings is profoundly French, there is an almost ethnic dimension from which one cannot escape when one paints."

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Jean-Pierre Cassigneul: left, *La Robe Blanche* (2023); right, *Les Bords de la Marne* (1990).



Jean-Pierre Cassigneul in his studio

Jean-Pierre Cassigneul: *Moments of Splendour*, 2 July–17 August 2024

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Notes to editors

- The Stern Pissarro Gallery is co-owned by David Stern and Lélia Pissarro, great-granddaughter of Camille Pissarro, and is a dedicated space for Impressionist, Modern and Contemporary art. The gallery represents five generations of works by the Pissarro family.
- The architect of the Stern Pissarro Gallery was Rodney Gordon and the building stands out as a landmark of Modernist architecture situated as it is on St James's Street, near to St James's Palace, and home to the most exclusive gentlemen's clubs in London.