

WITH LOVE FOR/FROM VENICE: SWATCH PRESENTS JOE TILSON AT LA BIENNALE ARTE 2019

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Passionately committed in supporting contemporary art, Swatch remains the proud main partner of La Biennale di Venezia for the fifth consecutive time. For this 58th International Art Exhibition, the Swiss watchmaker has invited Joe Tilson to the Giardini, where the British artist has created **THE FLAGS**, a site-specific installation. In the year of celebration for his 90th birthday and his 70 years of making art, Swatch also presents **THE JOE TILSON VENETIAN WATCH**, a limited edition of 2019 pieces.

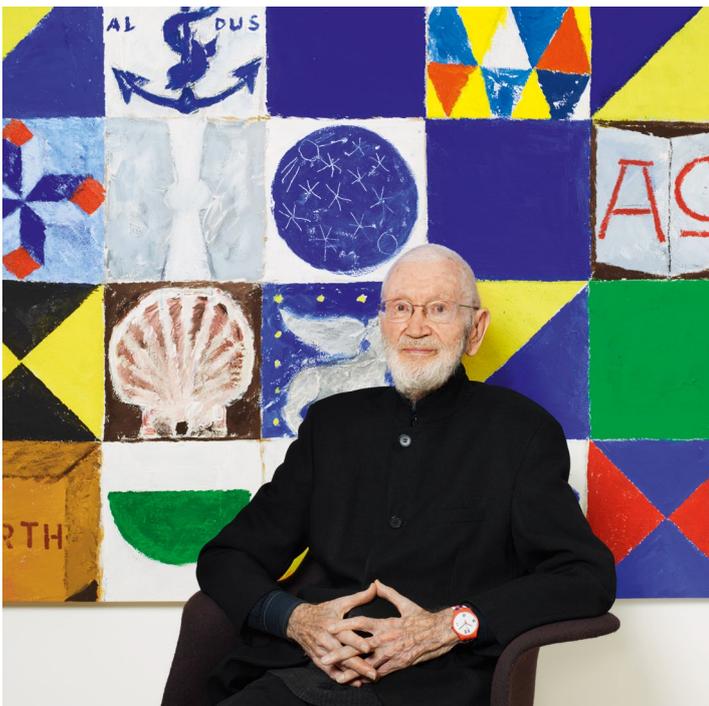
THE FLAGS are three enlarged paintings from Tilson's collection *The Stones of Venice* that continue drawing upon Tilson's love and knowledge of the city he has visited for over 60 years. A familiar face as well to La Biennale Arte – Tilson represented Great Britain at the 32nd International Art Exhibition back in 1964 – the British artist combines images from his favorite Venetian church facades, geometric patterns on stone flooring, and written inscriptions in this work. The 24 double-sided flags are aligned in three rows and measure impressive 150 x 285 cm each. Tilson emanates from a desire to ground himself in timeless, ancient systems of thought, and ways of making sense of the world.

As it is now a tradition, Swatch presents as well THE JOE TILSON VENETIAN WATCH at La Biennale di Venezia, inspired by Tilson's *The Stones of Venice Contarini*. Perfectly reflecting the artist's characteristic use of bright and vibrant colours, this limited and numbered edition will conquer the wrists of 2019 friends of Swatch, once more bringing art to the real life of people and spreading the "Swatch loves Art" message that continues to inspire and animate a unique creative dialogue.

Showing Tilson's art as it is produced, his pencil outlines remain visible on the dial and the silicone straps with their geometric patterns in joyful yellow, red and blue tones strikingly convey the origins of the acrylic-on-paper artwork. The loop features Tilson's signature in white on a powerful blue background.

ABOUT THE ARTIST

Born in London in 1928, Tilson originally worked as a carpenter and a joiner before going to art school in the 1950s where he studied alongside Frank Auerbach, Leon Kossoff, Peter Blake and Richard Smith. Originally associated with the first generation of British Pop Art in the early 1960s, Tilson soon became disillusioned with consumer technology, instigating a departure in his artistic direction. Ever since, his work has consistently taken several forms, from painted canvases and panels to a variety of materials used such as wood, ceramic and stone in the form of ladders, boxes, standing totems and other objects. Tilson has exhibited widely internationally in 70 impressive years of making art. His work is represented in public and private collections throughout the world.



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