



Arch Hades, *RETURN*, 2025 (detail)

## ARCH HADES *RETURN | RITORNO*

LOCATION: SCOLETTA BATTIORO E TIRAORO DI VENEZIA  
SUPPORTED BY ERARTA FOUNDATION  
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*Return | Ritorno* is an exhibition of new large-scale works by artist and poet Arch Hades, unfolding across three floors of the Scoletta Battioro e Tiraoro di Venezia, a decommissioned church on the Grand Canal in Venice.

Hades' work has been described as "meticulously composed" (FAD, 2025), and this precision is central to *Return | Ritorno*: bringing together site-specific painting, immersive sculpture and an installation soundscape, the exhibition draws visitors into ethereal interior worlds that oscillate between vulnerability and restraint as part of a wider exploration of the human condition.

Drawing on Classical, Surrealist and Romantic traditions, the exhibition expands on Hades' acclaimed London solo show in 2025, where she first experimented with combining spoken word and visual art to create absorbing, synesthetic experiences.

The centrepiece, which lends the exhibition its title, *Return* (2025), is a monumental 22-panel painting spanning 13 metres. Comprising sixty-three life-size figures, the work pays homage to the power and precision of Greco-Roman sculpture. Installed across three walls on the building's top floor, the painting echoes the structure of an altar triptych and draws inspiration from Gustav Klimt's Faculty Paintings—*Medicine*, *Philosophy* and *Jurisprudence* (1900–1907).

Like Klimt's allegorical masterpiece in which the human form is rendered within a collective river of life, Hades traces a spectrum of human experience, positioning figures in varied emotive states—at once solitary yet merging into one another as they are beckoned towards an abyss at the centre of the composition.

*Sphinx* (2026)—an immersive sculptural installation rendered in mirrored chrome - simultaneously evokes ancient Egyptian ruins and otherworldly futures. As arts writer and editor Mark Westall observes, "Hades' figures exist somewhere between relic and machine, sacred and speculative, as though excavated from a civilisation that mistook its gods for aliens".

New works from Hades' *Confessions* series (2025 - ongoing) draw on decades of journaling that began in early childhood. Here, the artist extracts lines from discarded pages of handwritten diaries and enlarges them onto slabs resembling materials such as concrete and marble.

For Hades, "by making one's thoughts and feelings public, we can consolidate shared experiences and feel less isolated." By magnifying these intimate personal musings into delicately composed artworks, she explores the act of making the private public and, for the first time in her practice, positions text at the centre of the art work—probing the tensions between confession, memory and material permanence.

## ABOUT ARCH HADES

**Arch Hades** first rose to international acclaim as a best-selling poet, known for her meditative poignancy and sustained explorations of the human condition. In recent years, her practice has expanded into visual art, with her prose underpinning a multidisciplinary body of work that merges the lyricism of her verse with richly imagined visual forms.

Working at the intersection of visual art and spoken word, Hades' practice expands on the Romantic lyricism of her poetry while engaging with themes of loss, existentialism and her longstanding fascination with Surrealism. Her work spans painting, sculpture and performance and she is the author of six volumes of poetry.

In 2021, Hades' fourth volume, *Arcadia*, was sold at Christie's New York in the form of an abstract animation, soundtracked by RAC and illustrated by Andrés Reisinger. Achieving a hammer price of \$525,000, it became the most expensive poem ever sold. Hades made her museum debut in Florence in 2022 with this work, pioneering a practice in which poetry, sound and image converge to create meditative experiences that invite viewers to reflect on a shared 21st-century existential condition and the entanglement of daily life with social media.

Previous solo exhibitions include: ***We Are All Just Passing Through***, 8 Berkeley Square, London in 2025 and ***Arch Hades***, Ladbroke Hall, London in 2024.

In March 2025, Hades was among twenty-nine international artists featured in Christie's Post-War and Contemporary Art Day Sale in London, raising funds for Great Ormond Street Hospital Charity. With Licht Feld Gallery, Hades regularly exhibits at international art fairs including ZONAMACO, Art Miami, Art Dubai and LA Art Show.

Recent performances include the inauguration of the Italian Pavilion for the opening of the Venice Architecture Biennale and re:VERSE, a poetry symposium at Ladbroke Hall, both in 2025.

*Arch Hades*

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PRESS ENQUIRIES

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## LOCATION

Scoletta Battioro e Tiraoro di Venezia

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