

Life's Balance (with Money)
John Baldessari



Date : 1989-90

Etching, aquatint and photogravure in colors, on irregularly shaped Somerset paper

51 x 42 3/4 in.

Edition of 45

Pencil signed and numbered

Artist bio

Throughout his career, John Baldessari has defied formalist categories by working in a variety of media —creating films, videotapes, prints, photographs, texts, drawings, and multiple combinations of these. In his use of media imagery, Baldessari is a pioneer “image appropriator”, and as such has had a profound impact on post-modern art production.

Born in 1931, John Baldessari studied art, literature, and art history at San Diego State College and the University of California, Berkeley. Baldessari initially studied to be an art critic, but growing dissatisfied with his studies, he turned to painting.

Inspired by Dada and Surrealist literary and visual ideas, he began incorporating photographs, notes, texts, and fragments of conversation into his paintings. Baldessari remains fundamentally interested in de-mystifying artistic processes, and uses video to record his performances, which function as “deconstruction experiments”. These illustrative exercises target prevailing assumptions about art and artists, focusing on the perception, language, and interpretation of artistic images.

Allowing pop-cultural artifacts to function as “information” as opposed to “form”, Baldessari’s works represented a radical departure from, and often a direct critique of, the modernist sensibility that dominated painting for decades.