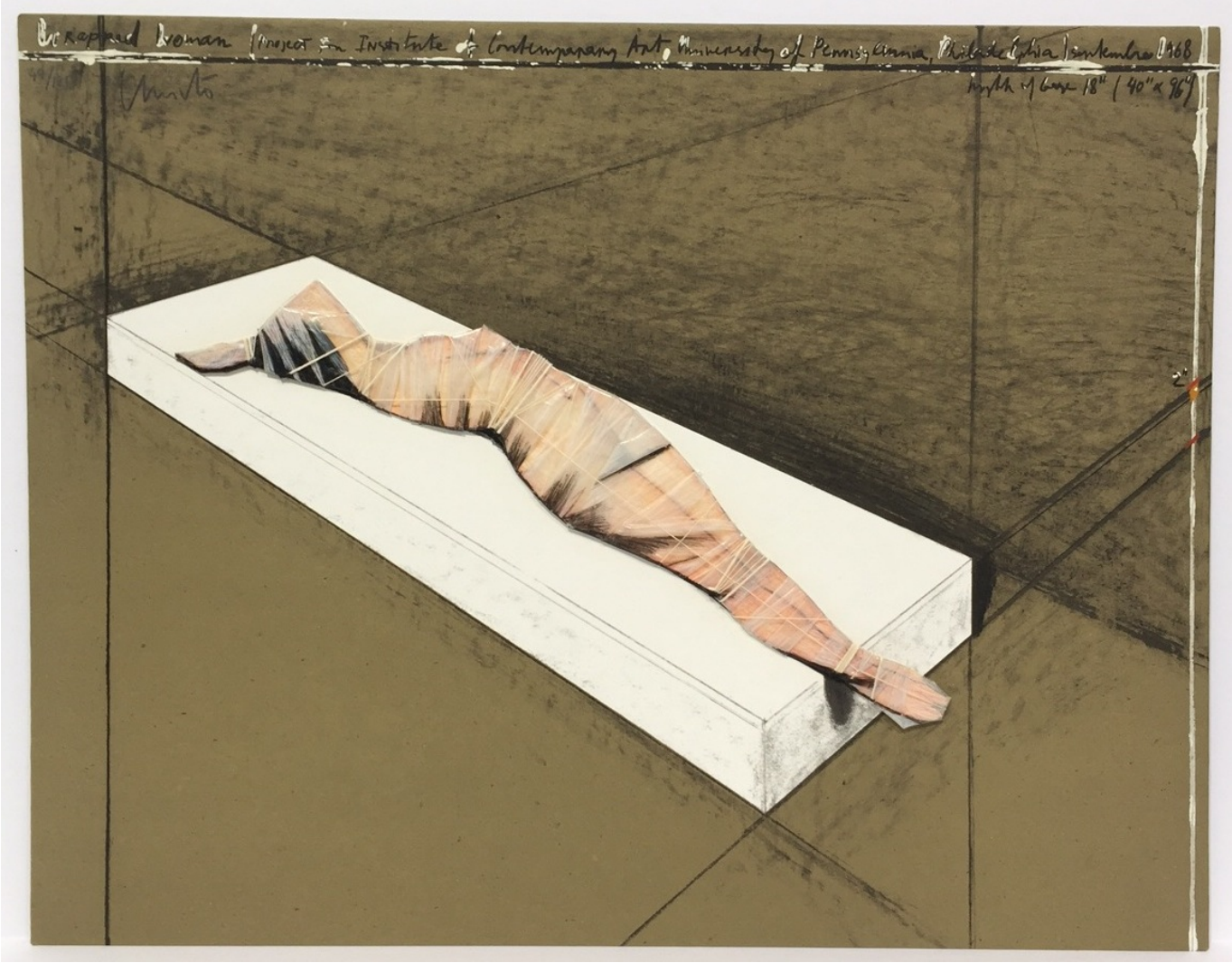
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Wrapped Woman
Christo



Date : 1997
Lithograph with collage of polyethylene and twine, with pencil additions
22 x 28 in.
Edition of 125
Pencil signed and numbered

Artist bio

Christo was born in Bulgaria in 1935. He grew up studying art behind the “iron curtain” where realism was the only kind of art; and art was only deemed to be of value insofar as it supported national goals. Christo fled to Paris in the 1950s where he met his wife and manager, Jeanne-Claude (who died in 2009). They emigrated to the U.S. in 1964 and became citizens.

Christo started out small, wrapping cans andbottles in 1958-59 as the Pop movement andconceptual environmental art were in their infancy. He then moved up to ever larger and larger items, finally evolving to whole buildings, bridges, valleys and islands. Although their work is visually impressive and often controversial as a result of its scale, the artists have repeatedly denied that their projects contain any deeper meaning than their immediate aesthetic impact. The purpose of their art, they contend, is simply to create works of art or joy and beauty and to create new ways of seeing familiar landscapes.

One of the saddest things for an artist is to see one of his or her works deteriorate. His 1976 Running Fence in California, his thousands of umbrellas in California and Japan in 1991, his wrapping the Reichstag in Berlin in 1995 (top), and his pink skirted Key Biscayne Islands in 1983 (below, left), have cemented his name in the art history books for all time. Yet not one of these works of art exists today.

“I am an artist, and I have to have courage… Do you know that I don’t have any artworks that exist? They all go away when they’re finished. Only the preparatory drawings, and collages are left, giving my works an almost legendary character. I think it takes much greater courage to create things to be gone than to create things that will remain“.

But they do. They all continue to exist – in the memories of those who saw them and gaped in awe at their daring magnificence. There is more to Christo’s art than covering up landmarks with plastic or cloth so that they may be seen in a new light. His works have enabled millions to see art in a new light. He takes art out of galleries and museums and made it span rivers of complacency as he did both literally and figuratively when he wrapped Paris’ Pont Neuf (New Bridge) in millions of yards of golden fabric, turning its hard stone into billowing softness. Not uncommonly, locals who have scoffed at his projects find themselves wishing they could remain permanently.