

Amy Sherald

30 August 1973 (age 48 years), [Columbus, Georgia, United States](#)





1 of 38 lots



PROPERTY FROM THE COLLECTION OF
PAMELA K. AND WILLIAM A. ROYALL JR.

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Amy Sherald

The Bathers

signed and dated "Amy Sherald 2015 Amy
Sherald" on the reverse

oil on canvas

72 1/8 x 67 in. (183.2 x 170.2 cm)

Painted in 2015.

[Full Cataloguing](#)

Estimate

\$150,000 - 200,000

SOLD FOR \$4,265,000

Contact Specialist

Amanda Lo Iacono

Head of Auctions

New York

Sherald was born on August 30, 1973 in [Columbus, Georgia](#) to dentist Amos P. Sherald III and Geraldine W. Sherald. As a schoolchild, Sherald had an early interest in art, staying from recess to draw and often adding images to the ends of sentences, depicting whatever she was writing about—a house, a flower, a bird. Sherald's parents wanted her career to be in medicine, and discouraged her from pursuing art. She enrolled at Clark Atlanta University, where Sherald began college on the pre-med track her parents hoped for, but also registered for a painting class. Sherald has been highly motivated as an artist, wanting to be a painter so badly that she waited tables until she was 38.

The choice as well as her process echoed and was reinforced by 19th- and 20th-century black-and-white photographic portraits, especially W.E.B. DuBois's black and white photographs of black people in the 1900 Paris Exposition, which at the time sharply contrasted with other exhibitions' sensationalized displays of black bodies.

Sherald said in a round table:

"When I finally came across the black-and-white photography, I realized that I was setting these people up and recreating that same kind of quietness and dignity that I saw in these photographs that Black families were having taken of them. I just recognized my work inside of these photographs and started to go further."

Sherald usually develops these paintings by inviting people she meets in her everyday life—for much of her career, in Baltimore—to sit for a photography session and then paints from the photographs.

In 2016, Sherald won the Outwin Boochever Portrait Competition, and she was chosen by First Lady Michelle Obama to paint her official portrait for the National Portrait Gallery the year after. In 2020, Sherald painted Breonna Taylor's portrait on the September cover of *Vanity Fair*.

Sherald's father died of Parkinson's disease in 2000, and her aunt developed a brain infection around the same time. Later, her brother passed away from lung cancer. Sherald was diagnosed at the age of 30 with congestive heart failure when she went in for a normal checkup during her triathlon training. Sherald's doctor informed her that her heart function was at 5% then she waited two months in the hospital waiting for a new heart. She was the recipient of a heart transplant on December 18, 2012 at the age of 39. Before her heart transplant, Sherald's artistic career was also put on pause when she had to care for an ill family member. After 13 years with Baltimore as her home base, in 2018 Sherald moved to New Jersey where she lives with her partner Kevin Pemberton

Miss Everything (Unsuppressed Deliverance), 2016 painting by Amy Sherald and winner of the Boochever Portrait Competition

[https://
portraitcompetition.si.edu/
exhibition/2016-outwin-
boochever-portrait-competition/
miss-everything-unsuppressed-
deliverance](https://portraitcompetition.si.edu/exhibition/2016-outwin-boochever-portrait-competition/miss-everything-unsuppressed-deliverance)

Grisaille (/grɪˈzɑː/ or /grɪˈzeɪl/; French: *grisaille*, lit. 'greyed' [ɡʁizaj], from *gris* 'grey') is a **painting** executed entirely in shades of grey or of another neutral greyish colour





SHE HAD AN INSIDE AND AN OUTSIDE NOW AND SUDDENLY SHE KNEW HOW NOT TO MIX THEM
2018, 54 x 43 inches, Oil on Canvas



SHE ALWAYS BELIEVED THE GOOD ABOUT THOSE SHE LOVED
2018, 54 x 43 inches, Oil on Canvas



SHE WAS LEARNING TO LOVE MOMENTS, TO LOVE MOMENTS FOR THEMSELVES
2017, 54 x 43 inches, Oil on Canvas



THE LESSON OF THE FALLING LEAVES
2017, 54 x 43 inches, Oil on Canvas



INNOCENT YOU, INNOCENT ME
2016, 54 x 43 inches, Oil on Canvas



ALL THINGS BRIGHT AND BEAUTIFUL
2016, 54 x 43 inches, Oil on Canvas



First Lady Michelle Obama. Portrait of Michelle Obama 2018 oil on Linen 183.2 cm (72.1 in) x 152.7 cm (60.1 in) x 7 cm (2.8 in)

THE GREAT FIRE: A Special Issue, Edited by TA-NEHISI COATES

VANITY FAIR

SEPTEMBER 2020



**BREONNA
TAYLOR**
A BEAUTIFUL LIFE

Painting by
AMY SHERALD

Breonna Taylor, a 26-year-old medical worker, was fatally shot in her bed on March 13, 2020 by Louisville police officers who had forced their way into the apartment.

Sherald created this image of Taylor with her signature gray-scale skin colouring, along with a free-flowing blue dress against an aqua background.

Sherald told Vanity Fair: "[Taylor] sees you seeing her. The hand on the hip is not passive, her gaze is not passive. She looks strong! I wanted this image to stand as a piece of inspiration to keep fighting for justice for her. When I look at the dress, it kind of reminds me of Lady Justice

