



# Self-portrait III

Antonio Saura

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## On display

**Title/Description:** Self-portrait III

**Artist/Maker:** Antonio Saura

**Born:** 1966

**Object Type:** Painting

**Materials:** Canvas, Oil paint

**Measurements:** Unframed: (h. 600 x w. 720 x d. 1 mm) Framed: (h. 620 x w. 753 x d. 42 mm)

**Accession Number:** 443

**Historic Period:** 20th century

**Production Place:** France

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Born in Huesca, Spain, Saura was self-taught as an artist. Between 1953 and 1955 he lived in Paris, where, influenced by late Surrealistic ideas, he developed automatist techniques. However, he quickly became disenchanted by the lack of control inherent in automatism, and, returning to Madrid, reduced his means and imagery to black and white and the human figure respectively.

With Rafael Canoger, Luis Feito and Manolo Millares he co-founded the El Paso group. In both the general approach to painting and basic subject matter, Saura has close affinities to Millares (see object 21). Much of Saura's work addresses the omnipresent nature of decay and death in the midst of life.

In Self-Portrait III the head crowns the canvas, as if the artist were peering closely in a mirror. Nose, eyes and cheekbone are drawn boldly in a sequence of slashing strokes, but are transformed in such a way that the head described is as much insect as human.

Entry taken from Robert and Lisa Sainsbury Collection 3 volume catalogue, edited by Steven Hooper (Yale University Press, 1997).

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