

# Art gallery repping Hunter Biden received \$500K federal COVID loan, records show

 [nypost.com/2021/10/09/art-gallery-repping-hunter-biden-received-500k-covid-loan](https://nypost.com/2021/10/09/art-gallery-repping-hunter-biden-received-500k-covid-loan)

By Isabel Vincent

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A federal COVID loan to the art gallery repping Hunter Biden more than doubled after his father took office, records show.

The Georges Berges Gallery initially received a \$150,000 COVID “disaster assistance loan” from the Small Business Administration last year, according to public records.

But the loan was recently “revised,” with the SBA approving a further \$350,000 to the SoHo gallery this summer, records show.

The approval came on July 26, in the lead-up to Berges’ exclusive marketing of 15 paintings by the president’s scandal-scarred son, public records show.

In addition to the COVID disaster assistance loans, the SoHo gallery received nearly \$80,000 in two payments in April 2020 and February 2021 under the SBA’s Paycheck Protection Program, funds meant to help businesses keep up with paychecks to employees during the pandemic.

All tolled, \$580,000 in taxpayer-funded COVID relief aid was doled out to a gallery with only two employees, according to SBA records.

Berges declined to specifically respond to repeated queries from The Post on whether the Bidens interceded in his loans; if any of the government cash went directly to Hunter Biden as a salary or stipend; or if any of it was used to market his artwork.

“I received my PPP loan in April of 2020 when Donald Trump was president, along with countless other galleries which, considering a global pandemic was happening, we had every right to. ... Most galleries received this loan,” Berges told The Post in an email. “We were not unique.”

While there is no evidence President Biden helped secure the additional \$350,000 loan, a watchdog group found that of the more than 100 galleries in New York City’s 10th congressional district, which includes SoHo, TriBeCa and Chelsea, the Georges Berges Gallery received “by far” the largest SBA disaster loan windfall.

“We’ve reached a new low in American politics where the President’s son gets his midlife crisis art career subsidized by the American people as part of our pandemic response to COVID,” said Tom Anderson, director of the government integrity project at the National Legal and Policy Center.

The Virginia-based organization this week submitted a complaint to the SBA questioning the the taxpayer-funded loans to the gallery, and noting the discrepancy in the size of its loan when compared to other local galleries.

“You can’t make this up,” Anderson said, adding that funds from the federal loans could have been used to promote Biden’s work — a possible ethical breach. “This is a unique situation in which the president’s son is directly benefiting from federal loans made to a third party,” he



Besides being the President’s son, Hunter Biden also creates art.

TheImageDirect.com

said.



The Georges Berges Gallery initially received a \$150,000 COVID “disaster assistance loan” from the Small Business Administration last year.  
Georges Berges Gallery

Another government ethics expert questioned the gallerist’s loan.

“If he [Georges Berges] got any special treatment on the loans from the president, that could be problematic,” said Richard Painter, a law professor at the University of Minnesota and former chief White House counsel to President George W. Bush, from 2005 to 2007.

Berges, 45, told The Post that he met Biden through collectors in Los Angeles two and a half years ago, and has helped the largely self-taught and once drug-addled entrepreneur turn his abstract expressionist painting from a hobby to a full-time job.



Last week Berges held a private viewing for 200 celebrities and collectors at the Milk Studios in Los Angeles. Guests, including Los Angeles Mayor and Biden nominee for ambassador to India Eric Garcetti and former boxer Sugar Ray Leonard, nibbled hors d'oeuvres as they viewed Biden's canvases and prints, which are priced between \$75,000 and \$500,000.

## Our artists

### Hunter Biden

A lawyer by profession, Hunter Biden now devotes his energies to the creative arts, bringing innumerable experiences to bear. The results are powerful and impactful paintings ranging from photogenic to mixed media to the abstract. His chosen substrates are canvas, yup paper, wood, and metal on which he affixes oil, acrylic, ink along with the written word; all of which creates a unique experience that has become his signature.



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[bergesgallery.com](http://bergesgallery.com)

An exhibit of the work that was scheduled to open at the SoHo gallery this month has been postponed to the spring, a source told The Post Thursday.

Even before the LA show, Biden sold five prints, valued at \$75,000 each, The Post revealed this week. In an interview with The Post on Saturday Berges' publicist denied that any of Biden's prints had been sold and would not specify when the exhibit of Biden's work would open at the gallery, citing security concerns.

In an effort to prevent influence-peddling, the White House promised that the buyers of Biden's art work would remain anonymous and that the gallery owner, Berges, would not disclose their identities to the president. But critics have already pointed out that the artist's participation in publicity events to promote his work makes this arrangement difficult to enforce. "I've said from the beginning it wasn't going to work to make it anonymous," said Painter. "Word is going to get out."

Congresswoman Claudia Tenney, an upstate Republican who is a member of the House’s Small Business Committee, noted that “Hunter Biden’s recent diversion into the art world is the perfect example of Washington DC grifters profiting from public service.

“Revelations that Hunter Biden’s art broker was granted a massive SBA loan further erodes public trust in the President, just when you thought it could not go any lower,” she told The Post.

A spokesman for the SBA would not discuss individual loans, but said that under the Biden administration, small businesses could apply or “revise” their loan for exponentially higher amounts. “Businesses may apply for an additional increase even if they have already applied for and received previous loans,” said Matthew Coleman, the New York spokesman for the SBA.

The long-term SBA loans, which carry favorable interest rates of 3.75 percent, can be secured by personal property, but public land records show the gallery used none of its property as collateral.

The SBA approved more than \$270 billion COVID disaster relief loans to small businesses in fiscal 2021, which ended last month.

In addition to Biden, the West Broadway gallery, which has an outlet in Berlin, represents 18 other artists.

Biden, 51, began painting a few years ago, partly to deal with addictions to alcohol and drugs, struggles he documented in “Beautiful Things,” a memoir released in April.

Biden has been at the center of bombshell scandals, including alleged corruption in his business dealings with China and Ukraine.

*Additional reporting by Jon Levine*



Hunter Biden’s art is finally going up for sale at an NYC gallery, with the most expensive pieces expected to top \$500,000, and buyers promised anonymity.

Georges Berges Gallery