

GALLERI NICOLAI WALLNER

GLENTVEJ 47 - 49 · DK-2400 COPENHAGEN

PHONE +45 32 57 09 70

INFO@NICOLAIWALLNER.COM

WWW.NICOLAIWALLNER.COM

Chris Johanson
Paintings
November 8 - December 20 | 2019

Galleri Nicolai Wallner is pleased to present *Paintings*, a solo exhibition of new works by Chris Johanson. This exhibition marks the first time that the gallery has exhibited textile works by Johanson, who in the past year has begun working with found studio drop cloths.

Since the 1990s, Chris Johanson has put forward an ongoing commentary on the realities and disparities present in contemporary American society. Taking as his starting point the people, social situations, ecosystems, and politics that inhabit the West Coast alongside him, Johanson's works are honest, immersive, provocative and insistent. What we have become accustomed to and what we deal with on a regular basis is put into question as Johanson asks us whether or not we are comfortable with the truths of our existence and daily lives.

Equally political and integral to this practice is his use of found materials, which further anchors Johanson within his community. This is done in the light of environmental reasons, but at the same time introduces elements of both chance and connectivity. Colours and materials are dictated by what Johanson can source, and as such speak very much to the specific time and the place in which he finds himself and furthermore the time and place in which we find ourselves.

The paintings that form the exhibition are therefore linked through their materials, but also in subject matter—speaking to Johanson's insistence on exploring the world he finds himself in. Compared to previous works, the use of paint feels more sparse and decisive. Certain elements repeat themselves throughout the works—people in profile, ants in a line, colourful energy fields—in a way that feels almost meditative.

With the same hand that Johanson very directly asks us to question our way of life, he also creates an open and free environment in which this discussion is able to take place, a space where we are able to think and feel. The studio drop cloths that make the base of the paintings are stretched like canvas on thin wood frames, echoing the importance of space as the works almost melt into the walls.

There is a sense of peacefulness that is associated with clarity felt throughout *Paintings*, and this is precisely what Chris Johanson is trying to create not only for himself, but for us, giving us a means of thinking forward.

Chris Johanson (b. 1968, USA) has become one of America's most challenging painters. A fundamental figure within the San Francisco Mission School, he has had recent solo presentations at LA MOCA Pacific Design Center (Los Angeles), the Tang Teaching Museum and Art Gallery (Saratoga Springs), Portland Museum of Art (Portland) and Malmö Konsthall (Malmö), as well as group presentations at Louisiana Museum of Modern Art (Humlebæk), SFMOMA (San Francisco), Museum of Contemporary Art (Chicago), CCA Wattis Institute for Contemporary (San Francisco), MCA Chicago (Chicago), and the Whitney Biennial (New York), Istanbul Biennial (Istanbul) and the Berlin Biennale (Berlin). Johanson's works can be found in the public collections of Hammer Museum (Los Angeles), San Francisco Museum of Modern Art (San Francisco) and the Whitney Museum of American Art (New York) among others.