

Alex Katz

Opening
Saturday 7 December 2019
6.30 pm

Exhibition
7.12.2019 – 20.7.2020

Hours
Tuesday – Saturday
3 – 7 pm

We are delighted to announce a solo exhibition by Alex Katz at the gallery in Zuoz. It will feature portraits from the last ten years, that belong to different cycles, depicting women of character in his essential style and thus transforming them into icons of our time. Amongst these is a recent portrait of Ada, his wife and muse for sixty years, whom he has painted more than two hundred times.

In the large canvases that Alex Katz calls *Splits*, a single subject is painted from different angles and repeated in sequence. The images are cut or “split”, as if taken by a camera. They are inspired by the new possibilities that the smartphone offers to take pictures easily, and thus sum up the paradigms of a contemporary world influenced by photography, cinema and the mass media.

Alongside the paintings we will show four preparatory *cartoons*: large drawings made by the artist to enlarge the images and transfer them onto canvas with the same technique that Raphael and the Renaissance artists used to transfer the outlines of their frescos to the walls. We will also present a number of drawings from the 1960s to the present, made in pencil or charcoal, and individual oil sketches on panel. The entire creative process will thus be visible, from the drawing through an oil study and a cartoon until the final oil painting.

Alex Katz was born in New York in 1927 as the son of Russian-Jewish immigrants and studied painting at the Cooper Union School of Art from 1946 to 1949. Since the 1960s he has developed a highly innovative realist style unlike any of his contemporaries. Having appeared on the American artistic scene at the end of the '50s, the years of Abstract Expressionism, and being a contemporary of Pop Art and the subsequent artistic movements, Katz surprisingly managed to reconcile the abstract movement with realism in US post war art, in a style that he himself defines as “totally American”. His final images are essential, luminous, direct and sharp, showing very intense color planes, rendered in a particular bidimensional perspective, free of any sentimental connotation and yet able to communicate a profound emotional involvement.

The work of Alex Katz is widely represented at museums in the USA, including MoMA, the Metropolitan and the Whitney in New York, as well as in European museums like Tate Modern in London, the Centre Pompidou in Paris, the MMK in Frankfurt and the Albertina in Vienna. Among his most important solo shows of the last years: Guggenheim Museum Bilbao in 2015, Serpentine London in 2016, Musée de l'Orangerie in Paris in 2019 and the upcoming exhibitions at the São Paulo Biennial, the Fosun Foundation in Shanghai and the Museum Thyssen-Bornemisza in Madrid, all in 2020.