

# GAGOSIAN

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## DAVID REED

### New Paintings

Opening reception: Friday, January 10, 6–8pm  
January 10–February 22, 2020  
980 Madison Avenue, New York

David Reed, #715 (*For Beccafumi—His Fall of the Rebel Angels*), 2017–19, acrylic, oil, and alkyd on polyester, 26 × 117 inches (66 × 297.2 cm) © 2020 David Reed/Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York

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January 7, 2020

*We are used to observing ourselves from both inside and outside our bodies simultaneously. Baroque painting dealt with these out-of-body sensations as religious experiences, sometimes ecstatic, sometimes terrifying; today we live such experiences, often unexamined, through images on screens, as a part of our everyday lives.*

—David Reed

Gagosian is pleased to present David Reed's first exhibition of new work with the gallery, following *Painting Paintings (David Reed) 1975*, a presentation of his early brushmark paintings curated by Katy Siegel and Christopher Wool at Gagosian New York in 2017.

Since the outset of his career, Reed's central preoccupation has been to challenge and reinvent how to make a painting. Consistently, his paintings present a compelling tension between the gestural and the impersonal; in recent times this has been characterized by fluid, torquing, extended marks that reveal the viscosity of paint and the speed of color and light in a flattened manner that looks photographic or filmic.

When Reed came to New York from Southern California in the 1960s, he entered an art scene skeptical about painting's ability to be progressive. The young artist sympathized with the humanist, even metaphysical impulse in the work of painters such as his teachers Philip Guston and Milton Resnick, even as he admired the deadpan materiality of contemporaneous conceptual experiments in sculpture and film. Seeking to make paintings that were as direct as a poured steel sculpture, between 1974 and 1975 he prepared tall vertical canvases, either as single panels or as several panels bolted together; their height was determined by the door to his studio, their width by the limits of his own reach. Working wet into wet, Reed painted primarily black or red strokes from left to right, top to bottom, and sometimes diagonally, quickly filling the canvas.

Since that time, Reed has offered a vibrant discourse in thought and act, embracing a wide range of topics from Baroque painting theory to Abstract Expressionism. Though resolutely abstract, elements of his paintings—the long horizontal canvases, elongated forms, and lateral movements—bring to mind filmic techniques and motifs; taking the painted surface right to the edges of the canvas mimics the celluloid strip; shifts in scale evoke zoom and pan; and inserted sections, including stencils of brushmarks sourced from earlier works, function as jump cuts or flashbacks. As it was for the Pop artists before him, cinema is important to Reed’s thinking and process, though, crucially, not in terms of its iconography, but in the less literal forms of light, color, and structure, while still examining how screens, images, and media inflect our experiences and permeate our memories.

The outsize works in the current exhibition, some over a decade in the making, respond to the galleries at 980 Madison Avenue, testing and maximizing their spatial boundaries. Indexically numbered rather than titled, the works are painted in either intense, otherworldly colors or primarily blacks and grays, as if contrasting the delirious possibilities of the full-color moving image with the austerity of black, white, and gray. Throughout, disruptive elements appear to arrest what reads as movement, as though “pauses” are taking place. In #713 (2017–19), these pauses take the form of parallel vertical lines that divide the painting into four equal squares, while in #712 (2010–11/2018–19), they manifest as two horizontal bands filled with small looping strokes in bright, layered glazes that contrast with the larger, swirling brushmarks. Reed has long been enamored of historical techniques and palettes; for these new paintings, he employs *cangiante*, a Renaissance technique of modeling with hue rather than value. The works’ smooth grounds are built up and carved into using a variety of seemingly spontaneous but often highly manipulated gestures. These compressed gestures create a visual tension within the paintings’ structures, and it is within these tensions that meaning resides.

The exhibition will be accompanied by a fully illustrated catalogue, with an essay by Richard Shiff.

**David Reed** was born in 1946 in San Diego, California, and lives and works in New York. Collections include the Museum of Modern Art, New York; Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York; Museum of Contemporary Art, San Diego; Museum of Contemporary Art, North Miami, FL; Virginia Museum of Fine Arts, Richmond; Museum für Moderne Kunst, Frankfurt am Main, Germany; and Kunstmuseum St. Gallen, Switzerland. Exhibitions include *You look good in blue*, Kunstmuseum St. Gallen, Switzerland (2001, traveled to Kunstverein Hannover, Germany); *Leave Yourself Behind. Paintings and Special Projects 1967–2005*, Ulrich Museum of Art, Wichita State University, KS (2005, traveled to Roswell Museum and Art Center, NM; Luckman Gallery, California State University, Los Angeles); *Lives of Paintings*, Douglas F. Cooley Memorial Art Gallery, Reed College, Portland, OR (2008); *Heart of Glass, Paintings and Drawings 1967–2012*, Kunstmuseum Bonn, Germany (2012); *The Mirror and The Pool*, Haus Lange, Kunstmuseen Krefeld, Germany (2015); *Vice and Reflection – An Old Painting, New Paintings and Animations*, Pérez Art Museum Miami (2016); *Vice and Reflection #2*, Neues Museum, Nuremberg, Germany (2019); and *Drawings*, Kunst Museum Winterthur, Switzerland (2019).

#DavidReed

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