

# METRO PICTURES

Olaf Breuning

*RAIN*

December 10, 2020 - February 27, 2021

Olaf Breuning presents *RAIN*, an exhibition of colorful new woodcut landscape paintings and carved stone sculptures that draw upon the natural world to consider the pressing environmental concerns we face today.

Breuning returns to a more raw mode of production for his paintings, using rough-hewn, chainsaw-cut woodblocks to stamp out vivid and chaotic compositions. The imagery made with the carved blocks—shapes of waves, stars, raindrops, and blades of grass—conjures a time before technology was at the heart of our lives, when we lived more in tune with our natural surroundings. Evoking meteorological maps of turbulent weather, the paintings are a metaphor for the rapid pace at which climate change is affecting our environment, which is in constant disarray. The artist hopes that they are also a call to action, or at the very least, a reason to rethink our relationship with nature and the consequences of our actions.

The carved stone sculptures in the exhibition are from a series called *Sad and Worried Animals*. These works attempt to imagine that the animals comprehend the processes altering their habitats and humanity's destructive impact on the environment. The sculptures all have large, colorful glass eyes and sad expressions, as if they are anticipating terrible things to come.



Olaf Breuning was born in 1970 in Schaffhausen, Switzerland, and lives and works in New York. He was the subject of a major retrospective at the NRW-Forum Düsseldorf in 2016. Additionally, he has had one-person exhibitions at Palais de Tokyo, Paris; Chisenhale Gallery, London; Kunstverein Freiburg, Germany; Kunsthall Stavanger, Norway; and the Paul Klee Museum, Bern. Public exhibitions of his work include the Public Art Fund commission *Clouds*, Doris C. Freedman Plaza, Central Park, New York, as well as the Public Art Fund exhibition *Lightness of Being*, City Hall Park, New York. He participated in the 2008 Whitney Biennial and has been featured in group exhibitions at the Museum of Modern Art, New York; Pompidou Center, Paris; Haus der Kunst, Munich; Kunsthalle Zurich; Walker Art Center, Minneapolis; Jeu de Paume, Paris; KW Institute for Contemporary Art, Berlin; Whitechapel Gallery, London; and the Mori Art Museum, Tokyo.

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**Image:** Olaf Breuning, *Human Nature*, 2020, gesso and acrylic on canvas, 63 x 52 inches, 160 x 132.1 cm