

# GAGOSIAN

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## ROE ETHRIDGE

### Beach Umbrella

July 1–August 27, 2021

Park & 75, 821 Park Avenue, New York

Roe Ethridge, *Beach Umbrella with Cup and Flip Flops*, 2020, dye sublimation print on aluminum, 40 × 53 inches (101.6 × 134.6 cm), edition 1/5 + 2 AP © Roe Ethridge

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June 25, 2021

*When I arrived at the beach, it was littered with broken umbrellas and various other “day at the beach” sundries. It had that semi-apocalyptic vibe that permeates everything nowadays but was also joyful in an archaeological way, like discovering the remains of a party or ritual celebration.*

—Roe Ethridge

Gagosian is pleased to present *Beach Umbrella*, an exhibition of new photographs by Roe Ethridge.

Moving fluidly between the realms of fine art, fashion photography, stock imagery, and social media, Ethridge juxtaposes carefully staged scenes with vignettes from everyday life, pursuing a visual language that is, in his own words, “right’ in its wrongness.” Investigating the constant

tension between chance occurrence and the photographer's editorial eye, he produces surreal and theatrical images that reflect the textures of modern society.

On four Mondays in July and August last summer, Ethridge photographed an assortment of discarded umbrellas at Rockaway Beach, New York. Positioned against the sun, shot from beneath, and cropped to the point of near abstraction, the umbrellas fill each image from edge to edge with vibrant color, their wedges of luminous fabric stretched against graphic metal frames. In one picture, a broad, rainbow-hued umbrella arches over a volleyball and an open pack of cigarettes, casting the objects in a stark and foreign light. The resulting still life seems highly contrived, blurring the line between realism and artifice.

Ethridge also explores additional unorthodox visual techniques throughout the series. In *Beach Umbrella with Cup and Flip Flops* (2020), he digitally montages multiple images atop each other: a palm tree-patterned umbrella intervenes with a pair of blue flip-flops, a discarded blue plastic cup, and a fallen red warning flag. With its strange geometries and crimson hue, the final composition evokes the multiplied warm-toned photographs printed on brass featured in Ethridge's 2017 exhibition *Innocence II*. Other seemingly more straightforward images depict an untended and bent-over sunflower and the model Maryel Sousa in a swimsuit and faux fur coat with pink zinc on her nose, a beach umbrella slung over her shoulder. Haunting in their mundanity and utter solitude, these works exemplify Ethridge's ability to evince uncanny and stylized forms through precise explorations of color, kitsch, and cultural symbolism.

*Beach Umbrella* is accompanied by a full-color illustrated catalogue with a text by Ethridge, available at the Gagosian Shop.

**Roe Ethridge** was born in 1969 in Miami and lives and works in New York. Collections include the Museum of Modern Art, New York; Institute of Contemporary Art, Boston; Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles; and Tate, London. Solo exhibitions include *Momentum 4*, Institute of Contemporary Art, Boston (2005); *Selected Works*, Charles Riva Collection, Brussels (2012); Le Consortium, Dijon, France (2012, traveled to Museum Leuven, Belgium); and *Nearest Neighbor*, FotoFocus Biennial, Contemporary Arts Center, Cincinnati (2016). Ethridge's work was included in the 2008 Whitney Biennial. In 2011 he was shortlisted for the Deutsche Börse Photography Foundation Prize.

#RoeEthridge

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