

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

ALEX KATZ

NOVEMBER 10 – DECEMBER 15, 2012

"Well, I think you try to get into the present tense in the work. It's something that's more common in music and singing, but not so much in painting. It's really kind of impossible to achieve in painting, but that's really what I'm trying to do."
Alex Katz

Gavin Brown's enterprise is pleased to announce a solo exhibition of new paintings by Alex Katz. Opening November 10, this will be Katz's second exhibition at the gallery.

Alex Katz is, without doubt, the preeminent painter of modern life. Over the past fifty years he has defined the American visual vocabulary: no one is more influential, more iconic, and more enduring. What is perhaps most remarkable about Alex Katz is that at 86, he continues to mirror the present moment. He continues to describe our lived experience, here in 2012. Like all great painters his work is both beyond and rooted in time. His work is timeless. The theme *is* time itself.

For his latest exhibition Katz presents 11 paintings, each of women, each wearing a headscarf. While we are used to contemporary clothing slicing the picture plane of a Katz painting, reminding us that we are in the here and now, this cloth feels different. This is a newer and graver moment. What clue is being laid here? Are these women in mourning? Or are they simply what they have always been: Women, and *all* that entails - Sisters, Mothers, Daughters, Wives.

In each painting he crystallizes the eternity of the moment with the deftest of touches. These faces become surfaces to reflect Light - that which describes time and also *is* time. He captures something that approximates an eternal present tense. This sense of an ever-present now-ness that is a defining characteristic of Katz's art.

Today, in 2012, the particularness of the American experience from which Katz emerged half a century ago has been crowded out. Shouldered right next to it are other voices, each demanding equal hearing. Today, Alex Katz's Americanness reveals itself to be anything but specific to place and time. It is common and universal. It is as transcendent and sacred as the human face.

We approach a crescendo of commonality and shared experience, and these paintings of women, each in the simplest and most ancient of garments, each rendered in the sparest of gestures, remind us of ourselves, of our breath, of the light all around us.

Alex Katz has exhibited widely all over the world for half a century; including major touring retrospectives and solo presentations of his work. In 2012 the artist's work will be the subject of major solo exhibitions at the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, and the Tate, St Ives. His work is included the permanent collections of over one hundred important museums worldwide, including The Museum of Modern Art, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, and the Whitney Museum of American Art, in New York; The Smithsonian Institute, Washington, D.C.; Carnegie Museum of Art in Pittsburgh, PA; The Art Institute of Chicago; The Tate Gallery, London; the Centre Georges Pompidou, Paris; Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofia, Madrid, Metropolitan Museum of Art, Tokyo, the Nationalgalerie, Berlin, Tate St. Ives, Cornwall, and Turner Contemporary, Kent.