

# GLADSTONE GALLERY

## **James Ensor. An Intimate Portrait**

Curated by Sabine Taevernier

130 East 64th Street

New York

November 12, 2021 – January 15, 2022

Gladstone Gallery is pleased to announce an exhibition of historic works by Belgian artist James Ensor, a monumental figure in the late 19<sup>th</sup>-century Belgian avant-garde and a singular influence in the development of Expressionism. Curated by Sabine Taevernier, this show brings together paintings, drawings, and etchings, made between 1888 and 1896, alongside one of the most prolific and significant periods of creation during Ensor's lifetime. Spanning a diverse collection of subjects and figures, the works in this exhibition demonstrate the artist's perceptive eye in capturing both his internal strife and the external variables that impacted him and the artists, friends, and family he was surrounded by.

Born in 1860 in the seaside town of Ostend, Belgium, Ensor would spend time between his hometown and Brussels, which offered him a diversity of experiences and friendships with significant figures who deeply influenced Ensor throughout his lifetime. He had a challenging childhood in Ostend with his merchant parents, as he and family members dealt with depression, anxiety, and alcoholism that eventually led to his father's death and caused great internal strife for the artist. His main refuge was his attic studio, where Ensor surrounded himself with his paintings, drawings, and collection of found masks that inspired his realistic and imaginary narratives. In Brussels, where Ensor spent most of his winters, he found companionship with the Rousseau family, who housed him during his excursions away from the beachfront. Comprised of academics, artists, and doctors, the Rousseau family would discuss science and politics, but also music, literature, and visual art, opening him up to a variety of interdisciplinary perspectives and multifaceted modes of thinking. Primarily perceived as a reclusive thinker and worker, Ensor's interpersonal relationships were essential forms of communication and understanding of the political, cultural, and fantastical world around him that greatly influenced the nature of and approach to his practice.

A comprehensive exhibition catalogue published by the gallery with essays by Susan M. Canning, Sabine Taevernier, Herwig Todts, and Xavier Tricot accompanies the show, and includes a series of essays that further explore the themes presented in this presentation.

Elizabeth Murray  
515 West 24th Street  
October 30 – December 18

Alex Katz  
530 West 21st Street  
October 28 – December 18

Arthur Jafa  
12 Rue du Grand Cerf  
November 6 – December 18

For further information, please contact Andrew Huff: [ahuff@gladstonegallery.com](mailto:ahuff@gladstonegallery.com)  
New York gallery hours: Tuesday–Saturday, 10am–6pm  
Brussels gallery hours: Tuesday–Friday, 10am–6pm and Saturday, 12pm–6pm