

GAGOSIAN

Gagosian Athens to Exhibit Works on Paper and a New Sculpture by Albert Oehlen

Artist's First-Ever Exhibition in Greece Opens on June 9, 2022



Albert Oehlen, *Untitled*, 2022, cast aluminum, 33 1/2 × 27 5/8 × 23 1/4 inches (85 × 70 × 59 cm), edition of 3 + 2 AP
© Albert Oehlen. Photo: Stefan Rohner

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I think if you can revise your own judgment, it's the most beautiful thing that can happen to you.

—Albert Oehlen

ATHENS, May 27, 2022—Gagosian Athens is pleased to announce *Works on Paper and a Sculpture*, an exhibition of work by Albert Oehlen featuring recent drawings and collages and a new sculpture. The exhibition opens on June 9 and is part of a dynamic calendar of art events taking place in Greece this summer.

In the exhibition's solitary sculpture, Oehlen refers to his cryptic Ömega Man motif, a genderless humanoid form prompted by the character of Dr. Robert Neville in the eponymous dystopian sci-fi action movie from 1971. A doomed survivor of a global pandemic, Neville symbolizes, in his desperate predicament, the runaway scientific development that led to humanity's downfall; Oehlen's deliberately crude but powerfully robust homage, rendered in cast aluminum, suggests a firm stance in the face of impending calamity.

While sculpture is a more recent area of interest for Oehlen, he remains committed to testing the boundaries of painting, the practice he has explored for more than forty years. In his work on

paper, he continues to juxtapose and combine abstract, figurative, and collaged elements, revising and disrupting the histories and conventions of modernism with an unexpected nod to classical art. Shifting from careful planning to free improvisation, he unearths surprising new possibilities.

In several of twenty-one small works in watercolor and ink on paper on view in Athens, Oehlen also refers to the same source as the John Graham paintings of his 2021 exhibition at Gagosian Beverly Hills. In these new drawings, Oehlen works alternately in black and white and with a restricted color palette, picturing biomorphic forms alongside wholly abstract passages, infusing both with anarchic energy.

In thirteen larger works in ink, paper, pencil, and watercolor, on paper, Oehlen refers to his *Ö-Norm* paintings of 2020–21. Characterized by wandering organic lines that often stretch to the edges of their supports, the drawings share with their root paintings a raw, unfinished quality and establish a tension between elegance and abjection. Here, drawing becomes an arena in which ideas of authenticity and expression undergo a thorough but still playful reassessment through experimentation with line, shape, and tone. An additional large charcoal drawing from 2016 features a loose web of black lines that traces the expansive gestures and directional shifts of the artist's hand.

Finally, in six collages from 2009, Oehlen juxtaposes various found images and materials, including posters, postcards, stickers, and magazine advertisements, with original drawings and prints. These pared-down compositions allude to the continual reframing of aesthetic value and conceptual weight characteristic of twenty-first century consumer culture, while the heterogeneity of their components also challenges the viewer to uncover further visual and thematic links.

The exhibition follows a solo presentation of the artist's work by Gagosian at Frieze New York from May 19 to 22, 2022.

Albert Oehlen was born in Krefeld, Germany, and currently lives and works in Switzerland. Collections include the Museum of Modern Art, New York; Museum of Contemporary Art, North Miami, Florida; Cleveland Museum of Art; Art Institute of Chicago; the Broad, Los Angeles; Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles; Museo Jumex, Mexico City; Tate, London; Centre Pompidou, Paris; Kunsthaus Zürich; Museum Ludwig, Cologne, Germany; and Museum für Moderne Kunst, Frankfurt am Main, Germany. Exhibitions include Museo di Capodimonte, Naples, Italy (2009); *Réalité Abstraite*, Musée d'Art moderne de la Ville de Paris (2009); *Terpentin*, Kunstmuseum Bonn, Germany (2012); *Malerei*, Museum Moderner Kunst Stiftung Ludwig Wien, Vienna (2013); 55th Biennale di Venezia (2013); *Die 5000 Finger von Dr. Ö*, Museum Wiesbaden, Germany (2014); *Home and Garden*, New Museum, New York (2015); *An Old Painting in Spirit*, Kunsthalle Zürich (2015); *Behind the Image*, Guggenheim Bilbao, Spain (2017); *Woods near Oehle*, Cleveland Museum of Art (2018); *TRANCE*, Aïshti Foundation, Beirut (2018); *Cows by the Water*, Palazzo Grassi, Venice (2018–19); *Unfertig*, Lokremise Kunstmuseum St. Gallen, Switzerland (2019); Serpentine Galleries, London (2019–20); and *Big Paintings by Me with Small Paintings by Others*, Museo d'arte della Svizzera italiana, Lugano, Switzerland (2021–22).

#AlbertOehlen

ALBERT OEHLER

Works on Paper and a Sculpture

Opening reception: Thursday, June 9, 6–8pm

June 9–August 20, 2022

22 Anapiron Polemou Street, Athens

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