

MATTHEW MARKS GALLERY

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PRESS RELEASE

Paul Sietsema

February 24 to April 15, 2023

Opening: Thursday, February 23, 6:00 to 8:00 PM

Matthew Marks is pleased to announce **Paul Sietsema**, the next exhibition in his gallery at 523 West 24th Street. The exhibition includes fifteen new paintings and works on paper.

A group of works painted in acrylic on canvas appears to be copies of posters for a Picasso exhibition at the Grand Palais in Paris. While the exhibition was real and did take place in 1990, Sietsema's posters are imagined, their images based on reproductions of Picasso paintings taken from museum postcards and catalogues. Sietsema's work frequently addresses the production, consumption, and proliferation of cultural objects. In these new paintings and drawings, he foregrounds the historical role of mass-produced posters in the broad dissemination of art. By hand painting his invented posters, Sietsema brings his own materials and mark making to Picasso's famous imagery, in the process restoring physical aspects of a painting that mechanical reproduction has stripped away.

Four paintings in enamel over found canvases depict enlarged fragments of American, European, British, and Chinese currency. Sietsema carefully selects each of the found canvases on which he paints for its evocation of a notable movement or style. Before adding the images of currency, the artist must carefully remove the areas in the found paintings where he will make the new additions, a process that he has described as one of "erasure and excavation."

In another series of paintings, Sietsema has rendered images of rotary telephones in monochromatic tones. To make these works, he first mixes paint to match the original color of each telephone. He then pours the mixture over the phone, coating it in a pool of paint. The paint-covered phone is photographed, and the resulting image painted by hand on the canvas. Sietsema considers these works an interrogation of realism and painting, where paint exists simultaneously as material and subject.

Two ink drawings in the exhibition present enlarged full-page newspaper advertisements from *The New York Times*, on top of which the artist has painted images of over-sized dollar coins dripping in enamel. The coins, soaked in paint and thrown across the surface, generate a composition determined by chance, functioning, as the artist describes, as "an image producing device with its own register."

Paul Sietsema (b. 1968) lives and works in Los Angeles. He has had one-person exhibitions at the Museum of Modern Art in New York, the Whitney Museum of American Art in New York, the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, the Museo Reina Sofia in Madrid, and the Kunsthalle Basel, among others.

Paul Sietsema is on view at Matthew Marks Gallery at 523 West 24th Street from February 24 to April 15, 2023, Tuesday through Saturday, from 10:00 AM to 6:00 PM.

For additional information, please call 212-243-0200 or email inquiries@matthewmarks.com.