

# LISSON GALLERY

Press Release

Van Hanos

## Lisson Gallery at Frieze London 2023

11 – 15 October 2023

Lisson Gallery presents a solo booth by the US-born artist, Van Hanos, conceived specifically for Frieze London, featuring all new paintings that continue to explore and expand our understanding of the medium. Hanos describes this new series as “Viennese” as they are inspired by recent months spent as a voyeur in a new city, Vienna, appreciating the novelty of discovery and the pursuit of the familiar in the unknown. The presentation follows Hanos’s solo exhibition, *Twin*, at Lisson Gallery London in 2022-2023, in which the artist’s close community in Marfa – where he lived at the time – took centre stage through a series of portraits and allegorical vignettes. Through those paintings, Hanos documented a chapter of his life, and here the artist continues this autobiographical journal into the process of navigating a new city, somatically and psychologically. The resulting body of paintings is ultimately about identifying connections between people, places and objects that were not pre-conceived or perfectly paired. This serendipitous manifestation, a visual representation of the meaningful coincidences and moments that pass us by often without detection or recognition, is evident in individual paintings, but also exists in the spaces between the images.

Featured is *Still life with Polizei* in which an image of a luxurious banquet of fruit, lobster and fine tableware serves as the backdrop for a police car on the pavement in front. The work reconsiders the Dutch artist Abraham van Beyeren’s painting, *Banquet Still Life*, which welcomes viewers, via a large banner, through the façade of Vienna’s Dom Museum. Van Beyeren’s painting, a cautionary tale of excess and a reminder of the transience of life, itself incorporates a self-portrait of the artist hidden in the large silver jug. While Hanos was observing this scene outside the museum (and considering creating a reproduction of this reproduction), a passing police car stopped, reflecting in its windows the Cathedral across the street. Collectively, we see two institutions of systemic control foregrounded by a memento mori of a painting.

Another work that combines fleeting snapshots experienced together is *Sex Dolls*. Featured here is an advert for a strip club outside an antique shop, alongside two cherubic babies kissing and the reflections of windows and doors, nodding to the use of the window in art history – a tool often used to introduce another image plane. This concept of paintings that appear as if looking through something is, in Dutch painting, referred to as “doorkijkje”. These objects serve as a symbol for the lens through which we encounter the world, and how we frame our experiences.

Alongside this is *Power on Land*, focusing on the ‘Power on Land’ monument at Hofburg Palace in Vienna, opposite the paired ‘Power at Sea’ fountain, which both memorialise Austria’s military and naval victories. The ‘Power on Land’ statue depicts a heroic nude waving his sword triumphantly atop a ledge where beneath men fall, clinging to a ledge and fleeing from an eagle. The figure that Hanos specifically highlights is seen strenuously holding up a bolder, perhaps a reference to the Titan Atlas in Greek mythology who was responsible for bearing the weight of the heavens on his shoulders. This painting, featuring the intense stare of this fictitious character, is the only moment in the exhibition where the viewer is engaged directly with the gaze of a figure.

Other paintings in the exhibition, both large and small-scale – including *Der Rosarote Panther* costarring a large pink cuddly toy visible through a shop window, a lady taking a photo of another woman’s puppy in a rucksack, and an advertising image for a nail salon – all similarly record Hanos’s walks across Vienna and reflections on what it is we are drawn to, especially as a traveller in a new place, out of all the paraphernalia we intuitively disregard. Each painting captures a quick, transitory moment – a contrast to the speed at which they are created, intentionally at a slow pace through tracing, underpainting and the multiple finishing coats – resulting in a picture in motion, an ephemeral dance of chance occurrences that doesn’t exist in the following moment.

## About the artist

Van Hanos's approach to painting is best undefined, forsaking particular modes or methods. Ranging from landscape to portraiture, beyond categorization as either figuration or abstraction, his work navigates perceptual shifts and thematic rupture. Hanos explores the tremendous range of possibilities within the human mind and experience, and his paintings can be created as meticulous oil renderings of images taken from photographs, with technical precision and photographic tendencies, or as sublime, abstracted amalgamations of past observations and ruminations, replete with internal references to other paintings or past subjects, and layered with meaning. Hanos's work always beckons the viewer to look closer — as what one first experiences is undoubtedly bound to shift upon continued investigation.

Van Hanos (born 1979) has a BFA from Maryland Institute College of Art, Baltimore, MD, USA (2001), and an MFA from the School of the Arts at Columbia University, New York, NY, USA (2010). Recent solo exhibitions include *Interiors* at Château Shatto, Los Angeles, CA, USA (2020); *Mommy's Boy* at Cleopatra's, New York, NY, USA (2017); *Late American Paintings* at Château Shatto, Los Angeles, CA, USA (2017); *Awake At The Funeral* at Tanya Leighton, Berlin, Germany (2017); *Van Hanos* at Parapet Real Humans, St. Louis, MO, USA (2017); *Intercalaris* at Rowhouse Project, Baltimore, MD, USA (2016); and *Van Hanos* at West Street Gallery, New York, NY, USA (2011). Selected group exhibitions include *A Cloth Over a Birdcage* at Château Shatto, Los Angeles, CA, USA (2019); *The Land That I Live In* at Matthew Brown, Los Angeles, CA, USA (2019); *Pine Barrens* at Tanya Bonakdar, New York, NY, USA (2018); *An Uncanny Likeness* at Simon Lee Gallery, New York, NY, USA (2017); *The Lazy Sunbathers* at Sies + Höke, Düsseldorf, Germany (2015); *The Ninth Season of The Artist's Institute with Carolee Schneemann* at The Artist's Institute, New York, NY, USA (2015); and *Call and Response* at Gavin Brown's Enterprise, New York, NY, USA (2015). Paintings by Hanos were featured in the group exhibition, *The Rest*, at Lisson Gallery New York from January – February 2019, and his work was the subject of a solo presentation at Lisson Gallery in East Hampton in August 2020. His work is included in the permanent collection of the Institute of Contemporary Art, Miami.

## About Lisson Gallery

Lisson Gallery is one of the most influential and longest-running international contemporary art galleries in the world. Today the gallery supports and promotes the work of more than 60 international artists across spaces in London, New York, Los Angeles, Shanghai and Beijing. Established in 1967 by Nicholas Logsdail, Lisson Gallery pioneered the early careers of important Minimal and Conceptual artists, such as Art & Language, Carl Andre, Daniel Buren, Donald Judd, John Latham, Sol LeWitt, Richard Long and Robert Ryman among many others. It still works with many of these artists as well as others of that generation from Carmen Herrera to the renowned estate of Leon Polk Smith. In its second decade the gallery introduced significant British sculptors to the public for the first time, including Tony Cragg, Richard Deacon, Anish Kapoor, Shirazeh Houshiary and Julian Opie. Since 2000, the gallery has gone on to represent many more leading international artists such as Marina Abramović, Ai Weiwei, John Akomfrah, Susan Hiller, Tatsuo Miyajima and Sean Scully. It is also responsible for raising the international profile of a younger generation of artists led by Cory Arcangel, Ryan Gander, Van Hanos, Hugh Hayden, Haroon Mirza, Laure Prouvost, Pedro Reyes, Wael Shawky and Cheyney Thompson.

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