

GAGOSIAN

Gagosian to Present *Social Abstraction* Curated by Antwaun Sargent

Two-Part Exhibition Opens on July 18 in Beverly Hills

Second Iteration to Be Staged in Hong Kong This September



Kevin Beasley, *Harvest Slab (Pane I)*, 2024 (detail), raw Virginia cotton and polyurethane resin, 24 × 16 inches (61 × 40.6 cm)
© Kevin Beasley. Photo: Maris Hutchinson

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BEVERLY HILLS, June 18, 2024—Gagosian is pleased to announce *Social Abstraction*, a two-part exhibition in Beverly Hills and Hong Kong curated by Antwaun Sargent. On view from July 18 to August 30, *Social Abstraction* in Beverly Hills features work by Kyle Abraham, Kevin Beasley, Allana Clarke, Theaster Gates, Cy Gavin, Alteronce Gumby, Lauren Halsey, Kahlil Robert Irving, Devin B. Johnson, Rick Lowe, Eric N. Mack, Cameron Welch, and Amanda Williams. It will be followed this fall by a second iteration in Hong Kong.

The intergenerational assembly of Black artists in *Social Abstraction* explores the intersections of nonrepresentational form and social consciousness. Moving between and beyond the poles of abstraction and figuration, they form shapes to become landscape and cityscape, color to reveal people and explore the limits of perception, and texture to map the totality of lived experience. Whereas some artists in *Social Abstraction* paint in oils and acrylics, others use ceramics, hair glue, mosaics, resins, textiles, wigs, and other materials charged with conceptual and cultural significance.

Spanning twenty-eight feet in length, Rick Lowe's collage painting *Cavafy Remains* (2024) is dedicated to Greek poet C. P. Cavafy. The large-scale work is structured by intersections and nodes that evoke lettering, maps of urban infrastructure, and the forms of domino games in a layered weave of vivid colors and intersecting lines.

In his paintings *Untitled (A meteor)* and *Untitled (Meteorite)* (both 2024), Cy Gavin presents expansive celestial scenes in which spectral colors emerge from fields of blackness. In *Untitled (Stars, reflected)* (2024), starlight is mirrored and refracted on the surface of water. Extending Gavin's explorations of nocturnal subjects, the works' gestural compositions convey the perceptual and imaginative associations of the night sky.

With its saccharine palette and layered, syrupy surface, *CandyLadyBlack (This Stuff Is Starting Now)* (2023) by Amanda Williams conjures a sense of nostalgia, paying tribute to both childhood treats and the figure of the "Candy Lady," an entrepreneurial fixture of Black American neighborhoods. In Devin B. Johnson's painting *Congealed & Stuck* (2024), fluid gestural brushstrokes call to mind the artist's memories of places and people.

Intrigued by the full range of human perception and the meanings of colors and materials, Alteronce Gumby incorporates agate and bismuth—as well as acrylic paint and glass—into *Dreams of a Distant Journey* and *Zulu* (both 2023), bringing the iridescent minerals' chromatic intensity to the works' surfaces. Cameron Welch's *The Golden Thread* (2024) is a densely composed mosaic of glass, marble, stone, and tile tesserae with passages of oil and acrylic paint. A labyrinthine, linear work that accommodates Welch's figurative impulse in abstract terms, it alludes to classical mediums and myths while subverting their conventions.

Lauren Halsey's untitled relief from 2024 is composed with synthetic hair that cascades down its surface, embodying the power and exuberance of self-adornment. *Witness Me* (2024) is sculpted by Allana Clarke with hair bonding glue. Stretching and shaping the dark, viscous material as it sets, Clarke develops it into an amorphous mass with a highly textured surface, contending with notions of beauty, Blackness, and bodily signification.

Theaster Gates's *Line study for alternative columnar projects* (2023) is a high-fire stoneware vessel that pushes the physical limits of clay in an investigation of materiality and transmutation. Kahlil Robert Irving's duo of sculptures mimic concrete and found objects but in fact are conglomerations of ceramic forms modeled by the artist. Covered in layers of enamel and digital collages, the ceramic objects are placed into vitrines that he constructs to reflect their fragility and precious nature.

To produce *There Is No Other Way* (2022), Eric N. Mack combines the modalities of abstract painting with the cultural associations and structure of clothing by turning multicolored patterned fabric into stretched panels. Kevin Beasley works with garments and raw cotton, embedding both into slabs of resin to create uniquely textured, vibrantly colored compositions that connect personal expression with shared history.

A special performance by choreographer and dancer Kyle Abraham and members of his company, A.I.M by Kyle Abraham, will take place during the opening weekend of *Social Abstraction*, on July 19 at 6pm. Galvanized by Black culture and history, Abraham's provocative body of work draws from his engagement with the visual arts. The evening will feature performances by Abraham, William Okajima, Donovan Reed, and Gianna Theodore of works chosen in response to the exhibition's themes, including *Show Pony*, "Ne Me Quitte Pas" and "Little Girl Blue" from *If We Were a Love Song*, and an early preview of Abraham's newest piece, *2x4* (working title).

A zine supplement to the fall issue of the *Gagosian Quarterly* guest-edited by Sargent presents conversations between the featured artists and contemporary thinkers.

#SocialAbstraction

SOCIAL ABSTRACTION

Curated by Antwaun Sargent

Opening reception: Thursday, July 18, 6-8pm

July 18-August 30, 2024

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