

GAGOSIAN

Gagosian to Present *Easy Solutions & Problems* by Urs Fischer in Gstaad

Exhibition Opening February 12, 2025, Includes Works from the New *Chumbox* Series and New *Problem Paintings*



Urs Fischer, *Spirits*, 2024, aluminum panel, aluminum honeycomb, polyurethane adhesive, epoxy primer, gesso, solvent-based screen-printing paint, and water-based screen-printing paint, 80 7/8 × 64 3/8 inches (205.3 × 163.5 cm) © Urs Fischer

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GSTAAD, January 30, 2025—Gagosian is pleased to announce *Easy Solutions & Problems*, an exhibition of paintings by Urs Fischer. On view at the gallery in Gstaad are seven paintings on canvas from the new *Chumbox* series (2024–) and five new works on aluminum from the *Problem Paintings* series (2010–).

The title of the *Chumbox* series derives from a fishing technique called “chumming” in which meat-based ground bait (or “chum”) is scattered on the water. In 2015, web designer John Mahoney popularized a variant of the term, *chumbox*, using it to denote grids of thumbnails that confront online readers with outwardly compelling juxtapositions of image and text. These now-ubiquitous inserts link to tangential and sometimes offensive promotional material. Generally amateurish in appearance, they lure unwary users through confrontational imagery and outlandish claims, further extending the reach and power of advertising and ensuring that it continues to operate as a default corpus of visual and verbal reference. The ads also recall “classic” Conceptual art in their frequent disruptions of the logical relationship between image and text, underscoring the extent to which the foundational movement’s strategies have been absorbed into popular culture and marketing.

In *Easy Solutions & Problems*, Fischer uses examples of chumbox material to willfully disrupt his own exhibition, allowing their absurdity and incongruity to color our experience of the *Problem Paintings*, and of his practice in general. The works on view in Gstaad reproduce many of the chumbox form's basic archetypes, which include non sequitur sexual images, promises of "weird tricks" and "miracle cures," and fabricated celebrity gossip. In one painting, a striking image of a woman undergoing a dental whitening treatment is accompanied by a truncated caption that reads "Seniors: The Cost of Full Mouth." Another features an image of a dead rodent next to a burning candle and the text "Easy Trick to Eliminate Mice (2024)," the styling of which gives it an oddly title-like feel. A third work juxtaposes an image of actor Laura Dern with a bedraggled-looking unnamed woman. The caption "Once a Star, Now Bankrupt" suggests, falsely, that both images represent the same individual.

The *Problem Paintings* series represents a flattening out and forcing together of disparate categories and associations, calling the status and relationship of each image's components into question. In the new entries on view in Gstaad, Fischer revisits the territory of his 2024 Gagosian Paris exhibition, *Beauty*, enlarging publicity headshots of classic Hollywood film stars Grace Kelly, Elizabeth Taylor, and Gene Tierney to a monumental scale before obscuring them with silkscreened close-up images of flowers. Embodying a more "forgiving" variant on the series' established format, in which faces are often paired with less delicate objects such as household tools or food items, Fischer's new works convey a genuine appreciation for his subjects' timeless charisma; he has also noted that the dramatic lighting of the original portraits, which echoes the elegant aesthetic of fashion photographer Horst P. Horst, grants the women a quasi-divine remoteness from everyday reality.

Urs Fischer was born in Zurich and lives and works in Los Angeles. Collections include Kunstmuseum Basel; Migros Museum für Gegenwartskunst, Zurich; Museo d'arte della Svizzera Italiana, Lugano, Switzerland; Fondation Carmignac, Paris; FRAC Provence-Alpes-Côte d'Azur, Marseille, France; Vanhaerents Art Collection, Brussels; Museum of Modern Art, New York; and Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles. Exhibitions include *Marguerite de Ponty*, New Museum, New York (2009–10); 54th Biennale di Venezia (2011); *Skinny Sunrise*, Kunsthalle Wien, Vienna (2012); *Madame Fisscher*, Palazzo Grassi, Venice (2012); Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles (2013); YES, DESTE Foundation Project Space, Slaughterhouse, Hydra, Greece (2013); *Small Axe*, Garage Museum of Contemporary Art, Moscow (2013); *Mon cher...*, Fondation Vincent Van Gogh, Arles, France (2016); *The Public & the Private*, Legion of Honor, Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco (2017); *The Lyrical and the Prosaic*, Aïshti Foundation, Beirut (2019–20); *Lovers*, Museo Jumex, Mexico City (2022); and *PLAY*, Tel Aviv Museum of Art (2022).

#UrsFischer

URS FISCHER

Easy Solutions & Problems

Opening reception: Wednesday, February 12, 11am–6pm

February 12–March 23, 2025

Promenade 79, Gstaad

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