

Arnulf Rainer

Reminiscenz

1955-2025

15 May – 11 July 2025

13 rue de Téhéran
75008 Paris



Untitled, 1987/1988

Wax pencil and oil on canvas, 200.5 × 124 cm

© Arnulf Rainer. Courtesy Galerie Lelong

Galerie Lelong is presenting a major retrospective devoted to Arnulf Rainer, a leading figure in contemporary art for over 70 years. This exhibition retraces his artistic career, from his first works in the 1950s to his most recent creations, and marks 40 years of collaboration between the gallery and the artist.

Arnulf Rainer is internationally renowned for his radical and expressive approach to painting. From the outset, he developed a singular style, marked by violent gestures and successive layers of paint that covered and transformed existing images. His "Übermalungen" (overpaintings) have become his signature, exploring the limits of representation and perception. In these works, Rainer engages in a dialogue with his own photographic self-portraits, as well as with works by artists such as Rembrandt, Goya, Victor Hugo, Van Gogh and Henri Michaux.

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The exhibition presents a selection of emblematic works, ranging from the first informal experiments of the mid-1950s to the image coverings that have made his name. Also on view are *Face Farces* from the 80s and two great dramatic crosses. Added to this is a series of etchings, including several recently published by the Galerie Lelong, which bear witness to Rainer's ongoing exploration of techniques and materials, as well as his creative vitality.

"My paintings are tributes, fragments of memories, that which remains. It's what's left that I paint. As I paint, I create the outline, the shape of ruins of memories that welcome and undergo time".

Born in Baden, Austria, in 1929, Arnulf Rainer played a key role in the Viennese Actionism movement of the 1960s, while maintaining an independent and profoundly singular artistic practice. His work has been exhibited in numerous museums, including the Musée national d'art moderne/Centre Pompidou (Paris), the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum (New York), the Stedelijk Museum (Amsterdam), the Albertina (Vienna) and the Pinakothek der Moderne (Munich). He has received numerous awards for his contribution to contemporary art. In 2009, a museum dedicated to his work opened in Baden.

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