

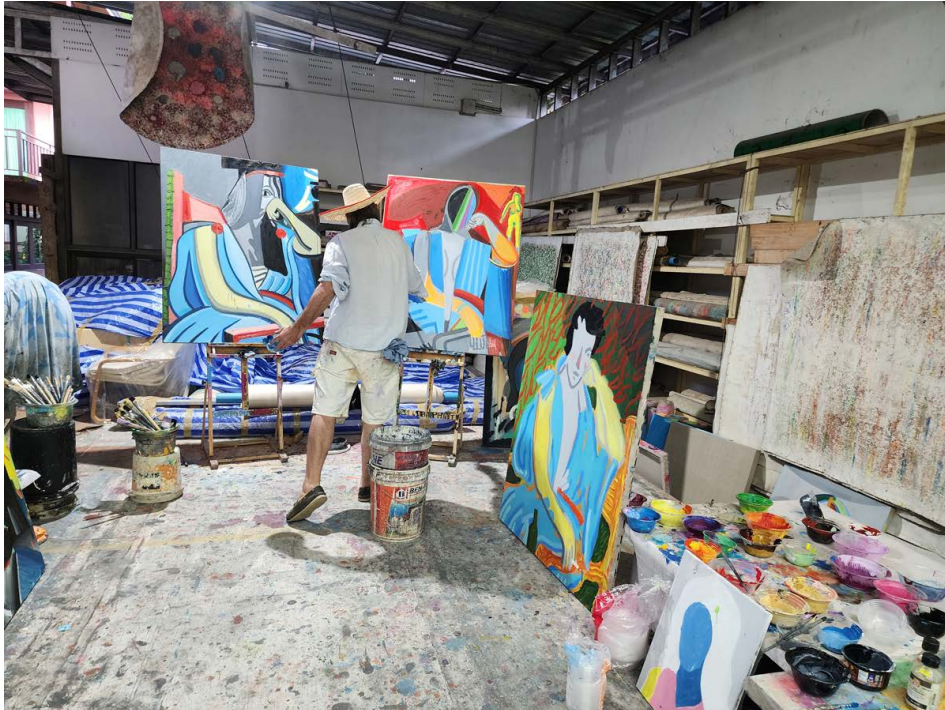
# GAGOSIAN

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Gagosian to Present New Work by Spencer Sweeney in Hong Kong

*Paint* Features Figure and Portrait Paintings Produced During a Residency in Thailand

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Spencer Sweeney painting in Bo Sang, Thailand, 2025. Artwork © Spencer Sweeney. Photo: Udomsak Krisanamis

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**HONG KONG, November 10, 2025**—Gagosian is pleased to announce *Paint*, an exhibition of new paintings by Spencer Sweeney opening at the Hong Kong gallery on November 19, 2025. These imposing works—oil portraits of seated figures with visible torsos, and others in which only the subjects’ heads and shoulders are depicted—convey intense energy and feeling through Sweeney’s use of rich color and bold paint handling.

Sweeney cites jazz as having sparked his love for improvisation, which he interweaves with references to pop culture and art history in nudes, portraits, and self-portraits. Resonating with the spirits of artists from Henri Matisse to Giorgio de Chirico and American painter Bob Thompson, his images embody a Neo-Expressionist verve while repeating signature motifs, and are characterized by their juxtaposition of direct emotional appeal with a freewheeling exploration of the creative process. In a complement to his painting practice, Sweeney transforms gallery spaces into studios and stages, conjuring dynamic “atmospheres” in conjunction with figures from various disciplines, including Lizzi Bougatsos, with whom he cofounded the New York noise-art group Actress.

The bodies of work that make up *Paint* originated in Sweeney’s seated portrait drawings of Bougatsos, images that subsequently reminded him of an earlier drawing he had made after a work on paper by Matisse. The perceived correspondence between these depictions led the artist to produce figure paintings. Canvases such as *Sentient Painting* (2025) are characterized—despite their lively palette—by a subtly melancholic tone that evokes the act of waiting. This mood, suggested in part by the sitters’ head-in-hand poses, is consistent with an understanding of painting as a practice that remains inherently demanding of time and patience—a desirable attribute in the age of instant visual generation (and corresponding knee-jerk reaction).

In the head-and-shoulders paintings on view, Sweeney employs his established “automatic” process, through which he blurs the boundaries between naturalistic representation and abstracted psychological exploration. By making use of gestural paint application alongside a more organized graphic technique, the artist questions our tendency to regard creative strategies as fixed and exclusive. Certain of these works feature similar compositions but differing palettes; some of the images function like drawings while others are more painterly.

Sweeney produced both sets of paintings in *Paint* during a 2025 residency at the Bangkok Kunsthalle. In a further extension of his rangy and in some senses unconventional practice, he painted many of the works on view in Hong Kong outdoors. “I love painting outdoors in Thailand for several reasons,” he enthuses. “I like the songs of the birds and frogs, the butterflies, bats, dragonflies, lizards, and cats that keep me company working late into the night.” While in Bangkok, Sweeney has also organized several public events, including film screenings and listening sessions that, in their embodiment of a fluid and open creative spirit, matched his canvases’ vibrant imagery.

For Spencer Sweeney’s biographical information and exhibition history, [please visit gagosian.com](http://gagosian.com).

#SpencerSweeney

**SPENCER SWEENEY**

*Paint*

Opening reception: Wednesday, November 19, 6–8pm

November 19, 2025–February 28, 2026

7/F Pedder Building, 12 Pedder Street, Central, Hong Kong

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