

Press Release

Richard Artschwager / Gary Hume

April 15–May 22, 2026

Public Reception: April 14, 6–8pm

Sprüth Magers, New York

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Monika Sprüth and Philomene Magers are pleased to present a duo exhibition with works by Richard Artschwager and Gary Hume, marking the first time their work has been brought into dialogue. For this show – the first at the New York gallery for each artist – Hume selected his works in direct response to Artschwager’s.

The work of Artschwager and Hume circles the same fundamental problem: what an object, or an image, becomes when its surface is the subject. Hume’s signature use of high-gloss household paint on aluminum carries light rather than depicts it, implicating the viewer and their surroundings into the image itself. Artschwager set out to make “paintings for the touch” and “sculptures for the eye,” constructing his works from commercial materials such as Formica and Celotex, and casting familiar domestic objects – chairs, tables, doors – at distorted scales and unexpected configurations that deliberately blur the boundary between painting and sculpture. Where Hume’s paintings insist on their own surface, Artschwager’s objects insist on their own ambiguity; both complicate the act of seeing.

This shared preoccupation runs through the works on view. *Table (Drop Leaf)* (2008), constructed from Formica on wood, is characteristic of Artschwager’s deliberate mingling of materials and categories, where the sophisticated and the ordinary are placed in tension to confuse and expand the viewer’s frame of reference. Revisiting Hume’s earlier, well-known *Doors* series, *The Couple (diptych)* (2004) and *The Argument (diptych)* (2004) anthropomorphize the doors, presenting them as a pair of lovers and a couple in disagreement, respectively. Artschwager’s punctuation marks and Hume’s silhouettes share an interest in the smallest units of legibility: *Exclamation Point* (1988), made of bristles on a wooden core, is stripped of its grammatical function and turned into an object that is at once emphatic and purposeless, prompting the viewer to look again at something they thought they already understood. Hume’s *Yellow Nude 8* (2015) operates similarly – a shiny yellow surface with a black silhouette, it represents not the body itself but the void between hip and arm, the shape of an absence.

Richard Artschwager (1923–2013) lived and worked in Hudson, New York. Selected solo exhibitions include Mart, Rovereto (2019, traveled to Guggenheim Museum, Bilbao), Nouveau Musée National de Monaco (2014), Whitney Museum of American Art, New York (2012, traveled to Hammer Museum, Los Angeles; Haus der Kunst, Munich and Nouveau Musée National de Monaco), Museum of Contemporary Art, Miami (2003), Kunstmuseum Winterthur (2003, traveled to Kaiser-Wilhelm-Museum, Krefeld, and Staatliche Graphische Sammlung, Munich), Museum für angewandte Kunst, Vienna (2002), Neues Museum, Nuremberg (2001, traveled to Serpentine Gallery, London), Portikus, Frankfurt (1993, traveled to Lenbachhaus, Munich), San Francisco Museum of Modern Art (1988, traveled to Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles; Palacio de Velázquez, Madrid; Centre Georges Pompidou, Paris, and Städtische Kunsthalle, Düsseldorf).

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Gary Hume (*1962, Tenterden, England) lives in London. Selected solo exhibitions include Museum Dhondt-Dhaenens (2020), Aspen Art Museum (2016), Tate Britain (2013), PinchukArtCentre, Kyiv (2012), Modern Art Oxford (2008), Kestnergesellschaft, Hanover (2004), Kunsthau Bregenz (2004), Irish Museum of Modern Art, Dublin (2003), Fundación La Caixa, Barcelona (2000), ICA London (1999) and The National Galleries of Scotland, Edinburgh (1999). Selected group exhibitions include National Portrait Gallery, London (2018), Birmingham Museum and Art Gallery (2017), Astrup Fearnley Museet, Oslo (2016), Museum of Modern Art, New York (2006), Tate Britain, London (2004), Kunsthalle Basel (2002), and Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles (2001). Hume represented Great Britain at the 48th Biennale di Venezia (1999) and the 23rd Bienal de São Paulo (1996).

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