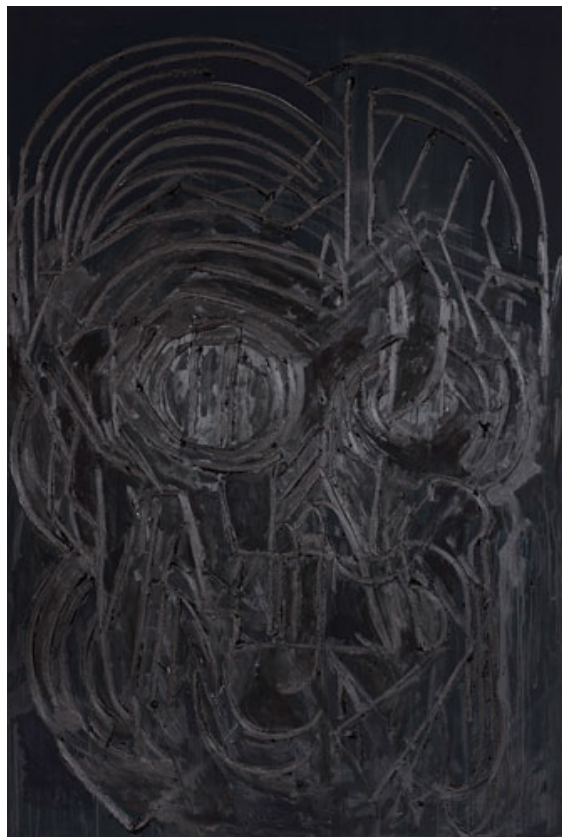


GAGOSIAN

December 23, 2016



THOMAS HOUSEAGO

THE RIDGE

Opening reception:
Thursday, January 12, 6–8PM
January 12–February 16, 2017

456 North Camden Drive
Beverly Hills, CA 90210

As emotional beings we need to excavate our fragility, our vulnerability. A sculpture can be a temple, a play area, a structure.

—Thomas Houseago

Gagosian is pleased to present “The Ridge,” an exhibition of sculpture and paintings on canvas by Thomas Houseago. This is his first exhibition with the gallery in his hometown of Los Angeles.

The title of the exhibition derives from Houseago's childhood memory of a rocky pass in Leeds, England, known locally as “The Ridge,” where a manmade stone wall runs along the upper edge of a steep natural stone ridge. With the stone wall of the adjacent estate, this creates a narrow footpath or ginnel, blocking the drop beyond the ridge and the sightlines within the pass. Houseago's recollection of this place is as much about a sense of peril and rite of passage as the actual physical experience.

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The first element of the exhibition is a sculpted screen twelve feet in height made of cast plaster and rebar. Like previous works such as *Masks (Pentagon)* (2015), which consisted of five huge sculpted masks forming a chamber open to the sky, *Open Wall (Beautiful Wall)* (2016) resembles a pagan edifice or archaic ruin, more than a functional wall. The Z-shaped structure of permeable walls, like cellular membranes, divides and creates new spaces that allude to the human body. Beyond this structure, the exhibition continues with a series of geometric and spiral sculptures in white plaster. Within their nuanced abstractions of human form, the interlocking structures suggest power and vulnerability, and masculine and feminine energies. With open, concentric cubic structures, these *Nesting Abstracts* have a similarly anthropomorphic quality, with loops that undulate against constraining geometry and dense material.

Twelve works on canvas constitute a new series entitled *Black Paintings*. In an interplay between two and three dimensions, visages in stark relief are scratched out of thickly applied oil paint, meditative and evocative. Mining memories of roots, kin, and human relations, Houseago intensifies his investigations of the inspirational human form, and the kinesphere it occupies.

For Houseago, the spatial experience of the studio has been especially important to the creation of this particular body of work, so, for this exhibition, the galleries have been adapted to evoke his private working space through references to his methods and processes. Houseago will also be the guest editor of the gallery's Instagram on January 11 and 12, providing further insight into his inspirations and influences as well as a direct link to the activities of the working studio. Please join the conversation with Thomas Houseago at Gagorian via #GagorianArtistEye.

Thomas Houseago was born in 1972 in Leeds, U.K. He lives and works in Los Angeles. Public collections in which his work features include The Rubell Family Collection, Miami; The Saatchi Gallery, London; The Broad, Los Angeles; The Rennie Collection, Vancouver; MOCA, Los Angeles; Zabludowicz Collection, London; Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam; and Museum Boijmans van Beuningen, Rotterdam. Recent institutional solo exhibitions include “Thomas Houseago: Where the Wild Things Are,” Sainsbury Centre for the Visual Arts, Norwich, United Kingdom (2012–13); “Thomas Houseago: Striding Figure/Standing Figure,” Galleria Borghese, Rome (2013); “Thomas Houseago: As I Went Out One Morning,” Storm King Art Center, New Windsor, New York (2013); and “Thomas Houseago: Studies ‘98–‘14,” Gemeentemuseum Den Haag, The Netherlands (2014). Houseago collaborated with the New York Public Art Fund on *Statuesque* (2010) and *Masks (Pentagon)* (2015).

Image: *Black Painting 3*, 2016, oil on canvas mounted on board, 108 × 72 inches (274.3 × 182.9 cm) © Thomas Houseago. Photo by Fredrik Nilson.

For further information please contact the gallery at losangeles@gagosian.com or at +1.310.271.9400. All images are subject to copyright. Gallery approval must be granted prior to reproduction.

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Please join the conversation with Gagosian via the hashtags #ThomasHouseago #TheRidge
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