

Petzel

SEAN LANDERS

March 1 – April 21, 2018

Opening Reception: Thursday, March 1st, 6–8pm
35 East 67th Street

*“Hey you artists go weave a basket! Make something [useful]. For Christ sakes there’s enough trash in New York already. Look at this show augh! Fuck! Get me out of here please somebody take this off the wall and [throw] it away...”*¹ scribbled Sean Landers on yellow legal paper in 1991.

*“It was so close to me today, I almost got to it. But it got away. I wonder about it though. Where it is, what it looks like and how it’s doing”*² Landers muses in 2017; an echo of the vulnerability shown in the early works, but here his sentiments are painted on canvas.

If the early works were considered Landers’ antidote to the aesthetics of a hyper-inflated art industry of the 1980s, these twelve new paintings (approximately 36.25 x 27.5 inches, and 71.5 x 55.5 inches) are more elegiac. The paint is delicately applied on pre-printed yellow canvas; each touch is clearly a mark in script. Disguised as ‘finished’ bozzetti, these works seem to further illuminate the private thoughts Landers unleashed almost 30 years ago. Not only do the new paintings arrest the artist’s stream-of-consciousness, but they also elevate his meditations on mortality, our current political climate, and the success of a middle-aged artist—while simultaneously injecting new urgency and amplifying scale.

Parallel to Landers first solo show at Petzel’s uptown location, the gallery will premiere a suite of new tree paintings at The Art Show, Park Avenue Armory. Some, if not all, of the quotes on the yellow legal pad paintings will find another form of expression as “carvings” in the bark of Landers’ painted trees. As if the thoughts in the gallery show were still a preliminary language (or nascent state of mind) here they are ‘realized’ as images.

Etched into the Aspen trees in *Things I’ve Learned Part One* (2017) #6 is listed as “things can always get worse”; *Things I’ve Learned Part Two* (2017) continues the aphoristic list with the likes of #69, “the secret: life is meaningless”. This thought is balanced in #70, “not to worry though, it is still wonderful”. *Things I’ve Learned Part III* (2017); a yellow legal pad painting, specifies as #52 that “there is true joy in anticipation”. #53 extends the thought, “and undeniable disappointment upon delivery”, to its completion in #54 “well, not always”.

Landers continues to weave together modi of conceptual art with exercises in painting, two genres that seem mutually exclusive.

A 64-page catalogue will bring all these works together, and we encourage the visitor to read AND view how Landers plays with expectations of text and image.

The ADA Art Show at the Park Avenue Armory runs from February 27th to March 4th.

Petzel Gallery is located on the third floor of 35 East 67th Street between Madison and Park Avenues, New York City. Gallery hours are Tuesday through Saturday from 10:00 AM–6:00 PM. For press inquiries, please contact Janine Latham at janine@petzel.com, or call (212) 680-9467.

¹ Sean Landers, *Summer Group Show*, 1991, Ink on paper.

² Sean Landers, *In Barrel Approaching the Falls*, 2017, Oil and archival inkjet on canvas.