

Matt Connors

Look Up

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Press Release

Xavier Hufkens is pleased to present *Look Up*, Matt Connors' second exhibition with the gallery. For much of his career, Connors, a New York-based painter, has shown an almost mischievous embrace of familiar templates to create what he refers to as "compelling confusion." His approach to painting puts an emphasis on the idea of the structure of his work. By overloading the canvas with pigment-rich paint, or using laminate as a compositional material, he creates pieces that bend conventions. Much like the title of his 2012 book, *A Bell Is A Cup*, a painting is also a physical construction.

For his new exhibition, Connors has developed a wide range of tones, building on the inspiration he draws from life in a city built on grids, lines, and boundaries. Serendipity is an important compositional tool for Connors, and for this show.

Figures re-emerge in different patterns, with varied weights and palettes. Deep fields of color are balanced with blocks of white space. Borders can be traditional—contained within the idea of a frame—or can jut into the viewer's world: Some of the pieces are not on canvas, but are instead plaster casts that paint has been encouraged to seep into. By mounting them on the wall or on pedestals, Connors turns them into objects with a mysterious form and function.

Point of view is essential to examining these images. We could indeed be looking up, or even down, at the infrastructure of a modern metropolis. We could be looking out from, or even into, the myriad patterns of urban life. We could be looking through the windows of a moving vehicle, with all the refractions of light that moving through such a city produces. Connors says these potential filters come from a directive he has given himself as a 21-st century city dweller. What questions arise when we look at the world not as the signifiers we know, but as a series of unknowns? What knowledge can we gain by confusing ourselves?

Matt Connors (b. 1973, Chicago) lives and works in New York. Recent group exhibitions include: *New York Painting*, Kunstmuseum Bonn (2015); *The Forever Now: Contemporary Painting in an Atemporal World*, MoMA, New York (2014) and *Painter, Painter* at the Walker Art Center, Minneapolis (2013). Solo exhibitions include: *Impressionism*, MoMA PS1, New York (2012), *Gas... Telephone... One Hundred Thousand Rubles*, Kunsthalle Düsseldorf, Germany (2011). In 2015, Matt Connors was a resident at the Chinati Foundation, Marfa, Texas. In 2012, he published the award-winning book *A Bell is a Cup*.

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