

GAGOSIAN



ALBERT OEHLLEN

SEXE, RELIGION, POLITIQUE

Opening reception: Saturday, October 13, 6–8pm

October 13–December 21, 2018

4 rue de Ponthieu, Paris

Albert Oehlen, *Hill and Gully Rider*, 2018, oil on aluminum sheet, 102 3/8 × 102 3/8 inches (260 × 260 cm)

10 September 2018

If I have to decide whether to make a beautiful painting or a new painting, I will choose new every time. That's what the job of painting is for me. I want to make something that has not been there before.

—Albert Oehlen

Gagosian is pleased to present *SEXE, RELIGION, POLITIQUE*, a group of new paintings by Albert Oehlen.

Through bold expressionist brushwork, surrealist methodology, computer-generated lines, and an acute awareness of the self-conscious act of painting, Oehlen fearlessly engages with the history of abstraction, multiplying the potential of visual codes through processes of layering and erosion. Central to his expansive oeuvre is the innate freedom of the creative act.

Painted on Alubond in oil and lacquer, these new works contain echoes of Oehlen's previous series—crudely drawn figures, smears of artificial pigments, and combinations of various rules and constraints—yet yield entirely new results. The paintings feature dynamic black lines and forms over

fields of bright egg-yolk yellow. Sometimes the black paint is viscous like tar, and at others it is matte and opaque, as Oehlen seamlessly transitions between thick fluidity and sharp angularity. The paintings' titles are as enigmatic as they are evocative, from *King Inna The Jungle* and *Walking Jewelry Store* to *Zungguzungguzunggzeng* (all 2018).

In many of the works, Oehlen paints over sections of black with the thinner yellow paint, producing ghostly, greenish shapes. Fragments of extremities, like flailing limbs and jutting branches, appear momentarily, only to dissolve, drip, or simply disappear. In this way, the compositions recall the Lascaux cave paintings in Montignac, France. Discovered in 1940, these Paleolithic paintings depict various animals, plants, and human figures, interspersed with elegantly placed dots and lines. When crowds of tourists first began to visit the caves, changes in air quality caused lichen and fungus to obscure the paintings, leading to the closing-off and restoration of the caves. Mirroring this trajectory, Oehlen's new paintings poignantly reveal tensions between creation and erasure, moisture and dryness, capturing the urgency of artistic gesture, as well as the sorrow of its impending disappearance.

Shown together at Gagosian and Galerie Max Hetzler, Paris, this new body of work unapologetically reveals Oehlen's ongoing resistance to painterly expectation.

Albert Oehlen was born in 1954 in Krefeld, Germany, and currently lives and works in Switzerland. Collections include the Museum of Modern Art, New York; Cleveland Museum of Art; Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles; Museum of Contemporary Art North Miami, FL; Broad, Los Angeles; Museum für Moderne Kunst Frankfurt am Main, Germany; Centro de Arte Contemporáneo de Málaga, Spain; Centre Pompidou, Paris; Tate, London; Istanbul Modern; and Museo Jumex, Mexico City. Recent institutional exhibitions include Museo di Capodimonte, Naples, Italy (2009); *Réalité Abstraite*, Musée d'Art Moderne de la Ville de Paris (2009); *Terpentin*, Kunstmuseum Bonn, Germany (2012); *Albert Oehlen: Malerei*, Museum Moderner Kunst Stiftung Ludwig Wien, Vienna (2013); 55th Biennale di Venezia (2013); *Die 5000 Finger von Dr. Ö*, Museum Wiesbaden, Germany (2014); *Home and Garden*, New Museum, New York (2015); *An Old Painting in Spirit*, Kunsthalle Zürich (2015); *Albert Oehlen: Behind the Image*, Guggenheim Bilbao, Spain (2017); and *Albert Oehlen: Woods near Oehle*, Cleveland Museum of Art (2017).

Albert Oehlen: Cows by the Water is currently on view at the Palazzo Grassi, Venice, through January 6, 2019. A solo exhibition of Oehlen's work will also open at the Aishti Foundation, Beirut, on October 21, 2018.

#AlbertOehlen

Press

FAVORI

Grégoire Marot | Nadia Banian

+33 1 42 71 20 46

+33 6 34 53 65 95

nadia@favoriparis.com

Gagosian

pressparis@gagosian.com

+33 1 75 00 05 92