

GAGOSIAN



GEORG BASELITZ

Devotion

Opening reception: Thursday, January 24, 6–8pm
January 24–March 16, 2019
555 West 24th Street, New York

Georg Baselitz's studio, Ammersee, Germany, 2018. Artwork © Georg Baselitz. Photo: Martin Müller, Berlin

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There have always been portraits throughout art history. But more important than the subject has always been the artist himself. . . . I call this exhibition Devotion because the people I portray here are especially meaningful to me.

—Georg Baselitz

Gagosian is pleased to announce *Devotion*, new paintings and works on paper by Georg Baselitz.

A pioneering Neo-Expressionist, Baselitz employs raw, painterly gestures to create visceral compositions with an intense emotional charge. By continually reinterpreting artistic precedents—his own previous works included—he has returned the figure to a central place in painting while expanding the very definition of abstraction.

Baselitz's interest in portraiture emerges from his fascination with memory and its inconsistencies, as well as his observation that every painting—even a portrait of another person—is the artist's self-portrait. At the Kunstmuseum Basel, he saw Henri Rousseau's *The Muse Inspires the Poet (Marie Laurencin and Guillaume Apollinaire)* (1909) and assumed that the depicted couple was Rousseau and his wife—only to discover later that the painting shows the poet Apollinaire and his muse, painter Laurencin. This realization gave rise to a new line of inquiry for Baselitz. Over the past year, he has intensified his ongoing engagement with images of the past, producing paintings and drawings based on artists' self-portraits. As he works, in paint or ink, he recalls the effects of each portrait and captures them in his own unique style.

In this exhibition, Rousseau reappears, this time alongside the monumental heads of Frank Auerbach, Cecily Brown, Alexander Calder, Willem de Kooning, Otto Dix, Nicole Eisenman, Tracey Emin, Philip Guston, Erich Heckel, Joan Mitchell, Paula Modersohn-Becker, Piet Mondrian, Jackson Pollock, Mark Rothko, Karl Schmidt-Rottluff, Arnold Schoenberg, Clyfford Still, Andy Warhol, and others.

Devotion is much more than an acknowledgement of Baselitz's inspirations. Each source painting slides through the complex filter that is Baselitz's eye. And as the portraits materialize before him, Baselitz brings them into physical permanence—uniting past, present, and future at the intersection of formal precision and sincere homage.

The exhibition is accompanied by a fully illustrated catalogue with a text by Baselitz and an essay by Morgan Falconer.

Georg Baselitz was born in 1938 in Deutschbaselitz, Germany, and lives and works between Ammersee, Germany; Basel, Switzerland; Imperia, Italy; and Salzburg, Austria. Collections include the Museum of Modern Art, New York; Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York; Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York; San Francisco Museum of Modern Art; Centre Pompidou, Paris; Museum Ludwig, Cologne, Germany; Städel Museum, Frankfurt am Main, Germany; Fondation Beyeler, Basel; and Tate, London. Recent institutional exhibitions include *Pinturas Recentes*, Pinacoteca, São Paulo (2010–11); *Baselitz sculpteur*, Musée d'Art Moderne de la Ville de Paris (2011–12); *Works from 1968 to 2012*, Essl Museum, Vienna (2013); *Back then, in between, and today*, Haus der Kunst, Munich (2014–15); 56th Biennale di Venezia (2015); *How it began...*, State Russian Museum, Saint Petersburg (2015); *The Heroes*, Städel Museum, Frankfurt am Main, Germany (2016, traveled to Moderna Museet, Stockholm; Palazzo delle Esposizioni, Rome; and Guggenheim Bilbao, Spain, through 2017); *Preview with Review*, Hungarian National Gallery, Budapest (2017); *Baselitz Maniera: Nonconformism as a Source of Imagination*, Staatliche Kunstsammlungen, Dresden, Germany (2018); *Works on Paper*, Kunstmuseum Basel (2018); and *Six Decades*, Fondation Beyeler, Basel (2018, traveled to the Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden, Washington, DC).

In May 2019, coinciding with the Biennale di Venezia, a major survey curated by Kosme de Barañano will open at the Gallerie dell'Accademia, Venice, the first exhibition by a living artist in the museum.

#BaselitzDevotion

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