

GAGOSIAN



RICHARD WRIGHT

Opening reception: Tuesday, March 5, 6–8pm

March 5–April 26, 2019

Park & 75, 821 Park Avenue, New York

Richard Wright's silver-leaf work in progress at Gagosian, Park & 75, New York. Artwork © Richard Wright

February 28, 2019

I am interested in the fragility of the moment of engagement—in heightening that moment. . . . To see a work, knowing that it will not last, emphasizes that moment of its existence.

—Richard Wright

Gagosian is pleased to present new work by Richard Wright. This is his first solo exhibition in New York since 2005.

Wright's site-specific, often transient works unite painting with graphic and architectural elements, charging the spaces on which they are made with a fourth dimension. His paintings, works on paper, windows in leaded glass, and applied metal-leaf schemes dynamize the traditionally static relationship between painting and viewer, examining notions of memory, ephemerality, and duration.

With a deep understanding of art history that informs his diverse imagery, Wright oscillates between illusion and abstraction, pure and applied art, and includes references to Minimalism, Renaissance painting, de Stijl, Abstract Expressionism, Op Art, record covers, and commercial art. Produced in situ over a limited time period, each work develops while it is being made and is only fully formed and resolved once the working period has elapsed and the exhibition opens.

Wright is creating a site-specific, temporary work at Gagosian's Park & 75 space, responding to the 1920s storefront and interior. The red brick Victorian neo-Renaissance building, complete with its stylized pilasters and cornices, is the final remaining structure of the terrace that was built in 1891, now part of the landmarked Upper East Side Conservation District. In 1922, the building was converted to a storefront, a layout that the gallery maintains today. The labor-intensive process that Wright undertakes to gild his hand-drawn design onto the architecture's irregular interior surfaces will implicate the whole space. He will respond to the way in which light is captured throughout the day, whereby its tones and reflections render the work itself constantly in flux, with effects ranging from an iridescent, mirrorlike surface to a black negative. The work will be destroyed when the exhibition ends.

With epic, architecturally scaled painted and gilded works, Wright's interventions in different media expand within and throughout buildings, subverting perceptions of the space, often shifting between abstraction and representation, patterning and narrative detail, depending on where the viewer stands. In 2009, Wright was awarded the Turner Prize for an untitled gold-leaf wall work, the making of which employed the painstaking techniques of Renaissance fresco painting. In 2016, he was commissioned to make a permanent work for the 400th anniversary of the Inigo Jones–designed Queen's House at the Royal Museums Greenwich, one the most significant buildings in British architectural history, and the first Classical building in the United Kingdom. Wright's work cloaks the entire ceiling and upper walls of the Great Hall. In 2018 he was commissioned by the Crossrail Art Programme to make a vast ceiling work more than eighty feet long at Tottenham Court Road station for London's new Elizabeth railway line, projected to open in 2020.

Richard Wright was born in 1960 in London, and lives and works in Norfolk, England, and Glasgow, Scotland. Exhibitions include Tate Liverpool, England (2001); Dundee Contemporary Arts, Scotland (2004); 55th Carnegie International, Pittsburgh (2008); and Theseustempel, Kunsthistorisches Museum Wien, Vienna (2013). Permanent commissions include the Museum of Contemporary Art, San Diego (2007); Scottish National Gallery of Modern Art, Edinburgh (2010); Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam (2013); Tate Britain, London (2013); Queen's House, London (2016); and Tottenham Court Road station, Elizabeth line, London (forthcoming). Wright won the Turner Prize in 2009.

This fall, Gagosian will publish a comprehensive book surveying the last ten years of Wright's work.

#RichardWright

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