

GAGOSIAN GALLERY

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PRESS RELEASE

GAGOSIAN GALLERY

555 WEST 24TH STREET

NEW YORK NY 10011

GALLERY HOURS:

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Tuesday - Saturday 10AM – 6PM

FRANZ GERTSCH

Tuesday, January 20 – Saturday, February 28, 2004

Reception for the artist: Tuesday, January 20, 6:00 – 8:00pm

The Gagosian Gallery is pleased to announce an upcoming exhibition of paintings and large-scale woodcuts by Franz Gertsch.

On view will be Gertsch's *Patti Smith* series of five paintings dating from 1977-79. Fashioned after photographs taken by the artist, all but one of the works document Smith's 1977 performance at the Galerie Veith Turske in Cologne. The final painting in the series records Smith's visit to Gertsch's studio and home in 1979. Realist in style, the paintings offer snapshot views of their subject in action while eclipsing the greater context of the performance space. The images presented in these paintings, as well as the earlier *At Luciano's House* (1973), offer selective accounts of reality that are modified through the imagination of the artist. Gertsch's fascination with the minute details of his subjects culminates in his series of portrait paintings, inaugurated with the artist's *Self-Portrait* (1980), on view in the exhibition. Also exhibited will be several of Gertsch's monumental woodcuts from the early 1990s, whose details of rippling water or blades of grass offer poetic, almost abstracted, depictions of the natural world.

Gertsch was born in 1930 in Mörigen, Switzerland. His work reflects both the contemporary sensibility of Pop art, as well as more traditional oil painting and printing techniques. Gertsch has been the subject of numerous solo exhibitions and participated in the 1972 Documenta V in Kassel, as well as the 1978 and the 1999 Venice Biennales. The *Patti Smith* paintings were the subject of a 2003 exhibition organized by the Museum Franz Gertsch, Burgdorf, which traveled to the Pinakothek der Moderne in Munich before arriving here. This will be Gertsch's first exhibition at Gagosian.

For further information, please contact the gallery.