

GAGOSIAN GALLERY

18 December 2015

Albert Oehlen

February 5 – March 24, 2016

Opening reception:
Thursday, February 4, 6–8PM

Gagosian Gallery

20 Grosvenor Hill, London W1K 3QD
www.gagosian.com



Gagosian Gallery is pleased to present an exhibition of new paintings by Albert Oehlen, his first solo exhibition with the gallery in London at Grosvenor Hill.

For Oehlen, the practice of painting and its inherent unpredictability is a subject in itself. The guiding principles of his method are impulse and eclecticism, while his tools are fingers, brushes, collage, and computer. He often begins by imposing a set of rules or structural limitations—restricting his palette or deliberately working at a slow pace—while challenging himself to approach each painting differently. He treats abstraction as either gesture or geometry, superimposed, in combination, or conflated with a figurative register, as in readymade posters covered in smudges and stains. Pictorial form is a trigger rather than an end in itself.

In a group of aluminum-panel paintings rendered in a simple, striking palette in various combinations of red, black, blue and white, Oehlen creates tree-like forms as vehicles for a methodical deflation of content. Like Piet Mondrian and Georg Baselitz before him, the tree has been a recurring motif for Oehlen since the 1980s: in paintings such as *Untitled* (1989), the isolated, literally described trees undermine the common role of identifiable images through “bad” painting. In the new schematic forms—rendered in non-naturalistic contrasts of vivid red, black, white, and blue—trunks and branches become pure silhouettes that suggest the digital marks of art and design software, even though they have been meticulously hand-painted in oil paint. Flattening and overlapping surface, color, and content through cut-and-paste revisions of a fundamental biological form, Oehlen calls into question both nature versus the most essential tools of painting.

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A forthcoming fully illustrated catalogue with an essay by Ann Goldstein will be published to accompany the exhibition. An artist talk between Albert Oehlen and Glenn Brown will take place on February 5, 2016 at Grosvenor Hill.

Albert Oehlen was born in 1954 in Krefeld, Germany and studied at Hochschule für Bildende Künste, Hamburg. From 2000-09 he was a professor of painting at Kunstakademie Düsseldorf. Recent solo exhibitions include "Réalité abstraite," Musée d'Art Moderne de la Ville de Paris (2009); "Albert Oehlen," Kunstmuseum Bonn (2012); "Albert Oehlen: Malerei," Museum Moderner Kunst, Vienna (2013); "Die 5000 Finger von Dr. Ö," Museum Wiesbaden (2014); "Home And Garden," New Museum of Contemporary Art, New York (2015); and "An Old Painting in Spirit," Kunsthalle Zürich (2015).

For further inquiries please contact the gallery at london@gagosian.com or at +44.207.841.9960. All images are subject to copyright. Gallery approval must be granted prior to reproduction.

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