

GAGOSIAN



NATE LOWMAN

Never Remember

Opening reception: Friday, October 19, 6–8pm

October 19–December 15, 2018

980 Madison Avenue, New York

Nate Lowman, *Memory Quilt for a Large Ball*, 2017, oil, acrylic, alkyd, latex, dirt, sugar, and nylon thread on canvas, 91 1/2 × 145 1/8 inches (232.4 × 368.5 cm)

October 12, 2018

My goal is to dislodge the illusion that the country we live in is a fixed thing. I would like to suggest a destabilization of the map through the serializing of it, referencing other historical times when the map was different and territories were different. The country is not fixed. Borders are in flux. The way it is now is not even how it should be.

—Nate Lowman

Gagosian is pleased to present Nate Lowman's first exhibition with the gallery, a survey of the drop-cloth paintings known as *Maps*, begun in 2013, as well as additional related works.

Lowman collects and transforms the detritus of contemporary American life, reevaluating familiar signs and symbols from print and electronic media as well as from street, home, and studio. In the

liminal space between original and copy, his paintings in oil and alkyd resemble a sort of hybrid between the blurred Xerox image and a fresh tattoo, while his depictions of pop-culture figures, such as Marilyn Monroe and Nicole Brown Simpson, act as unlikely hieroglyphs, standing in for the mythologies that have built up around them. As Lowman's impulses oscillate between additive and subtractive, print technologies and mass media take on the intimacy (and mortality) of flesh.

Never Remember—the exhibition title a biting reversal of the slogan “Never forget”—takes place in the very gallery where Jasper Johns's map paintings were shown thirty years before. Lowman's *Maps* expand on his own shaped canvases begun in the early 2000s, depicting doodled hearts, trompe l'oeil decals of bullet holes, and air freshener trees. Yet, while those earlier works reflected on the printed image, the *Maps* explore the effects of chance, gesture, and history, merging erratic splatters and stains with allusions to American quilt-making, Pop art, and politics. The works are produced by cutting fragments of studio drop-cloth into the shape of individual states and combining them. For the medium and small *Maps*, the states are first sewn together with a nautical-grade zigzag stitch and then stretched over canvas supports to form the general outline of the continental United States. *Untitled* (2013–15), the largest *Map* in the exhibition, is made up of fifty states on individually stretched canvases, each hung in correct geographic relation to the rest, with subtle gaps between the pieces like in a jigsaw puzzle.

Beyond being practical tools for navigation, maps are windows onto the construction of knowledge itself, revealing the political, religious, and personal factors at play when humanity seeks to represent space and time, self and other. Generations of artists have tapped into the conceptual and aesthetic power of mapmaking, from medieval *mappae mundi* to Alighiero Boetti's embroidered maps made in active collaboration with Afghan artisans, which represent shifting subjectivities with regard to world order.

Lowman's *Maps* infuse the geometries of the United States with a gritty, gestural tactility, combining chance and intention in the generative possibilities of a single form. With sharp political skepticism, Lowman employs abstraction to point to the arbitrariness of borders and the limitations of jingoism, thus expounding on the complexities and contradictions of the American way.

A fully illustrated catalogue will accompany the exhibition.

Nate Lowman was born in Las Vegas in 1979, and lives and works in New York. Collections include the Whitney Museum of American Art, New York; Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York; Museum of Modern Art, New York; Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York; Albright-Knox Art Gallery, Buffalo, NY; Rubell Family Collection, Miami; Los Angeles County Museum of Art; Marciano Art Foundation, Los Angeles; The Warehouse, Dallas; Moderna Museet, Malmö, Sweden; Centre Pompidou, Paris; Museum Boijmans Van Beuningen, Rotterdam, Netherlands; Astrup Fearnley Museet, Oslo; and Pinault Collection, Venice. Recent institutional exhibitions include *Axis of Praxis*, Midway Contemporary Art, Minneapolis (2006); *The Natriot Act*, Astrup Fearnley Museet, Oslo (2009); *I Wanted To Be an Artist But All I Got Was This Lousy Career*, Brant Foundation Art Study Center, Greenwich, CT (2012); 12th Biennale de Lyon, France (2013); *America Sneezes*, Dallas Contemporary (2015); *World of Interiors*, FRAC Champagne-Ardenne, Reims, France (2016); *Before and After*, Aspen Art Museum, CO (2017); and *Nate Lowman—Works from the Astrup Fearnley Collection*, Astrup Fearnley Museet, Oslo (2018).

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