

# GAGOSIAN

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Gagosian Paris to Exhibit New Body of Work by Giuseppe Penone

*Impronte di luce / Empreintes de lumière* Opens on October 17, Coinciding with Paris+ par Art Basel

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Giuseppe Penone, *Impronte di luce (Imprints of Light)*, 2023, oil on canvas, 72 1/8 × 72 1/8 inches (183 × 183 cm)  
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*The imprint reveals the golden ratio that I have in my hands. With my eyes closed, my skin's points of contact are endless. The hand touching the surface casts a shadow that turns into light when it is retracted and the color appears.*

—Giuseppe Penone

**PARIS, September 18, 2023**—Gagosian is pleased to announce Giuseppe Penone's *Impronte di luce / Empreintes de lumière*. Opening on October 17 at 4 rue de Ponthieu, the exhibition centers on an entirely new body of paintings, unique in the artist's more than fifty-year career. Inspired by Penone's experience of Le Corbusier's Couvent Sainte-Marie de La Tourette in Éveux, France, these canvases are on view alongside imprints used in their production; an artist's book, *Le Bois Sacré du Couvent de La Tourette* (2022), which collects rubbings made from the building's wood-grained concrete walls; and other graphic and sculptural works.

Penone's complex and extended relationship with the convent—he has visited it repeatedly and exhibited there in 2022—sparked a dialogue that led to these new paintings. Working with paint—a medium to which he is a relative stranger—and making use of Le Corbusier's sixty-three-color palette for “architectural polychromy,” the artist has again employed a process of imprinting and tracing. First stamping sections of his hands in ink on paper to generate shapes that suggest animal or human figures, he then projected the designs onto canvases, reproducing them at a larger scale in oil paint.

Throughout his career, Penone, a protagonist of Arte Povera, has wielded a broad range of materials and forms to explore growth, respiration, and other involuntary processes. Hands and skin have long been important motifs in his practice, linked inextricably to the manipulation of artistic materials. The fine dermal lines visible in the paintings are, like tree rings, indicators of age; their delicate textures also speak to the sense of touch as a means of experiencing and knowing the world. The dimensions of Penone's paintings—each is a 183 cm square—mirror those of Le Corbusier's Modulor, an anthropometric scale based on the golden ratio. (The series also recalls Yves Klein's *Anthropométries* [1960] in its direct transference of pigment from human body to painterly support.)

Also included in the exhibition, on the gallery's ground floor, are *Svolgere la propria pelle – 10 giugno 1970 (To Unroll One's Skin – June 10, 1970)* (1970), one of Penone's earliest works; drawings from the *Maldoror* series (1986–88), which was inspired by Comte de Lautréamont's 1868–69 prose poem "Les Chants de Maldoror" and sees Penone using hand imprints to create "a changing landscape of signs"; and a large untitled drawing from 1983 that employs some of the same motifs. On the first floor are five works from the celebrated *Propagazioni (Propagations)* series (2012), slabs of onyx engraved with fingerprints.

On October 18, 2023, Penone will be appointed a foreign associate member of the Académie des beaux-arts in Paris.

**Giuseppe Penone** was born in Gressio, Italy, and lives and works in Paris and Turin, Italy. Collections include Centre Pompidou, Paris; Tate, London; Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York; Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles; Museum of Modern Art, New York; and Louvre Abu Dhabi. Exhibitions include Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam (1980); National Gallery of Canada, Ottawa (1983); Castello di Rivoli Museo d'Arte Contemporanea, Turin, Italy (1991); *The veins of stone*, Toyota Municipal Museum of Art, Japan (1997); *Rétrospective*, Centre Pompidou, Paris (2004); *Penone Versailles*, Château de Versailles, France (2013); *Being the River*, Repeating the Forest, Nasher Sculpture Center, Dallas (2015); *Scultura*, Museum of Modern and Contemporary Art of Trento and Rovereto, Italy (2016); *Giuseppe Penone in het Rijksmuseum*, Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam (2016); *A tree in the wood*, Yorkshire Sculpture Park, Wakefield, England (2019); *Alberi in versi*, Galleria degli Uffizi, Florence, Italy (2021); *Sève et pensée*, Bibliothèque nationale de France, Paris (2021); *Dessins*, Centre Pompidou, Paris (2022); *River of Forms: Giuseppe Penone's Drawings*, Philadelphia Museum of Art (2022); and *Gesti universali (Universal Gestures)*, Galleria Borghese, Rome (2023). Penone has received numerous accolades, including the Praemium Imperiale, Japan Arts Association (2014). In 2017, *Germination*, his permanent, site-specific installation for the Louvre Abu Dhabi, was presented at the inauguration of the museum.

#GiuseppePenone

## GIUSEPPE PENONE

*Impronte di luce / Empreintes de lumière*

Opening reception: Tuesday, October 17, 5–8pm

October 17–December 22, 2023

4 rue de Ponthieu, Paris

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