

# GAGOSIAN

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Gagosian to Exhibit New Paintings by Thomas Houseago

*ABUNDANCE* Opens in Hong Kong on September 21

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Thomas Houseago's studio, Malibu, California, 2023. Artwork © Thomas Houseago. Photo: Josh White

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*I don't see being an artist as a heavy burden. I think it's an artist's obligation to emotionally connect.*

–Thomas Houseago

**HONG KONG, August 16, 2023**—Gagosian is pleased to announce *ABUNDANCE*, an exhibition of new still-life and landscape paintings by Thomas Houseago. This is the artist's second exhibition with the gallery in Hong Kong, following *Psychedelic Brothers – Drawn Paintings* in 2016.

*Abundance Paintings* is a new body of work produced *en plein air*, and in a new studio in Malibu, California, which reflects on cosmic and spiritual interconnectedness and the transcendental power of nature. The works' titles and expressive imagery evoke ocean waves and the flora of Malibu at sunrise and sunset, with suns, moons, rocks, and skies rendered in vibrant color and undulating lines.

Houseago first achieved widespread recognition through his original and vigorous approach to the subject of the human body. Utilizing mediums associated with classical and modernist sculpture alongside less traditional materials like rebar and hemp, he builds monumental figures whose surfaces and structures reveal the processes of their making. In works on canvas and paper that he describes as a cross between “drawing and mapping,” Houseago also explores the emotional and spatial power of saturated color and dynamic form. *ABUNDANCE* sees him further extend this aspect of his practice.

The works on view in Hong Kong reveal the influence of historical and modern Eastern and Northern European artists including the painters of the Dutch Golden Age, Munch, and Van Gogh. The notion of spontaneity also remains important; Houseago often listened to recordings of live performances by John Coltrane as he worked. The paintings of thirteenth-century Buddhist monk Muqi Fachang and Chinese painter Ma Yuan (c. 1160–1225) provided further inspiration, as did the writings of Japanese poets Saigyō Hōshi (1118–90) and Matsuo Bashō (1644–94), Chinese poets Li Bai (701–62) and Wang Wei (699–759), and ancient Chinese philosopher Laozi.

In *Cosmic Objects (for Abe)* and *Cosmic Objects for Julian Sands (to My Yorkshire Brother)*, Houseago represents groups of artifacts including flowers, shells, skulls, and skull-shaped vessels to again trace a connection between outwardly diverse materials and processes. Each component appears suffused with a vital energy that renders differences in scale, origin, and even function unimportant; these humble items have a resonance equivalent to that of the celestial bodies that populate the skies of *The Cosmos for Abe* and *Ghost Moon for A.W.* Where Houseago’s *Vision Paintings* explored a specific correspondence—between his imaging of the restorative power of nature and an iconic work in the Royal Museums of Fine Arts of Belgium’s collection, Jacques-Louis David’s *The Death of Marat* (1793)—the works in *ABUNDANCE* present an even more expansive perspective on the synergy between culture and environment, narrative and atmosphere. Reflecting Houseago’s sense of awe at the scale and energy of the universe, they also emphasize a hard-won rediscovery of the beauty and joy in everyday life.

**Thomas Houseago** was born in 1972 in Leeds, England, and lives and works in Los Angeles. Collections include the Musée d’Art Moderne de la Ville de Paris; Stedelijk Museum voor Actuele Kunst, Ghent, Belgium; Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam; The Broad, Los Angeles; and Los Angeles County Museum of Art. Exhibitions include *As I Went Out One Morning*, Storm King Art Center, New Windsor, NY (2013); *Studies ’98–’14*, Gemeentemuseum Den Haag, Netherlands (2014); *Almost Human*, Musée d’Art Moderne de la Ville de Paris (2019); Royal Academy of Arts, London (2019); and *Vision Paintings*, Royal Museums of Fine Arts of Belgium, Brussels (2021). Houseago was commissioned by the Public Art Fund, New York, to produce two public sculptures, *Statuesque*, City Hall Park, New York (2010), and *Masks (Pentagon)*, Rockefeller Plaza, New York (2015).

#ThomasHouseago

## **THOMAS HOUSEAGO**

*ABUNDANCE*

Opening reception: Thursday, September 21, 6–8pm

September 21–November 4, 2023

7/F Pedder Building, 12 Pedder Street, Central, Hong Kong

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