

GLADSTONE GALLERY

Alex Katz

530 West 21st Street

New York

November 12 – December 23, 2021

Opening November 11, 6–8pm

Alex Katz is making one more debut, at age 94. This time at the Gladstone Gallery where, starting on November 11, he will open an exhibition of seven new landscape paintings made in the last year and a half. These paintings, all massive, were started in either Pennsylvania or Maine during lockdown, then completed in his studio of 53 years on West Broadway.

When we wake in the morning who knows their age? At 94, Katz wrestles and embraces time. For this painter that sense of selfhood cannot assert inside the strange equation of hand color mark surface and eye. As Katz paints he slides into a place without time, only the one moment. The marks and colors fall on to the canvas existing only in the instant removed from quotidian reality. He has worked inside this moment of here and now for his entire life, walking a tightrope of grace and risk. With the last-minute recklessness and flair of a bullfighter, or a Fred Astaire, or a Thelonious Monk working just a fraction behind the beat, Katz sidesteps time at the very last possible move. And then finds himself alone on his own unique plane.

The mood here is somber and contemplative, and how could it be otherwise? Look where we are and how alienated from ourselves, we have become. Even from that place of his own making Katz can sense the shadows and the light fading. Perhaps it's his own proximity to oblivion, or perhaps it's ours. Either way, these paintings, that are beyond us yet so human, we fall in to them, pass through them to another side, unbound by gravity, membrane or measure.

In a concurrent show at TRAMPS, Alex Katz will show a series of seven paintings of a couple: A man and woman in theatrical stylized relationship to each other, as though in a dance or on the stage. Katz has a long history making sets and stage design with the Paul Taylor Dance Company and many others. The formality of human relations particularly as it is played out on screen or stage, is evident in the 'social'

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pictures he has made through this life. In recent years accessories and adornments have fallen away leaving the stark visage of the human face, floating outside of time and context. In these new paintings both protagonists wear bold and colorful stage make up that evokes the desperation and beauty of the Weimar years in Germany, while their alienated distance from each other embodies the very contemporary visceral anxiety involved in actual physical proximity. With a decisive clear hand and an economic palette of purple, black, green and red Katz gets straight to the point, revealing this new age of alienation, in which grief and loss, desire and longing, are as vividly present as ever.

Alex Katz (b. 1927, Brooklyn, NY) is the preeminent painter of modern life. Acclaimed for his iconic portraits and epic landscapes, Katz has inspired generations of painters. Katz's work has been the subject of numerous retrospectives and solo presentations over the course of his expansive career. His work is in the permanent collections of over one hundred museums worldwide, including the Museum of Modern Art, the Metropolitan Museum of Art, and the Whitney Museum of American Art in New York; the Smithsonian Institute, Washington, D.C.; the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston; The Alford Collection of Contemporary Art, Cornell Fine Arts Museum, Rollins College, Winter Park, Florida; the Art Institute of Chicago; the Tate, London; Centre Georges Pompidou, Paris; el Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofia, Madrid, the Metropolitan Museum of Art, Tokyo; and the National Galerie, Berlin. He was the 2019 Honoree at TWO x TWO for AIDS and Art and had a solo survey exhibition at the Fosun Foundation in Shanghai in 2020. In fall 2022, Katz will be the subject of a retrospective at the Guggenheim Museum in New York.

For further information, please contact press@gladstonegallery.com
New York gallery hours: Tuesday–Saturday, 10am–6pm
Brussels gallery hours: Tuesday–Friday, 10am–6pm and Saturday, 12pm–6pm