

Exhibition: *When Image Processing Became Painting*

Alex Carver, Charles Gaines, Jean-Luc Godard, Wade Guyton, Kate Mosher Hall, Tishan Hsu, Scott Lyall, Helen Marten, Richard Prince, R. H. Quaytman, Raha Raissnia, Blake Rayne, Cheyney Thompson, Andy Warhol

Dates: February 2 – March 9, 2024

JEAN-LUC GODARD

*Histoire(s) du cinema (Histories of Cinema)*

Chapter 1a, *Toutes les histoire (All of the (Hi)stories)*, 1988

Video, 51 minutes

Looped 11:57 minute fragment



Note:

In this montage sequence, Godard sets up cinema's battleground between images and sounds, between the people's thirst for the mythical and reality's ultimate revenge – the age-old tension between fiction and the documentary image. War footage from World War II is interspersed with clips from Jean Renoir's *The Rules of the Game*, for instance, and George Steven's *A Place in the Sun* with Elizabeth Taylor and Montgomery Clift. Art, and painting in particular, is summoned as the source of rebirth from the ashes of war and destruction with lyrically woven fragments of paintings and drawings by Caravaggio, Rembrandt, Goya, Monet, Van Gogh, and Picasso, among others.

Photograph of Gerhard Richter's *Tisch (Table) 1*, 1962  
by Jennifer Bornstein

Digital print

17 x 22 in. (43.2 x 56 cm)



Note:

This document of Gerhard Richter's renowned early painting is revealing of the artist's ambivalent relation to photographic sources as the basis for his work. The quick painterly gesture at the center of the composition partly conceals the image of the table as it asserts the act of painting on its own terms.

## ANDY WARHOL

*Hammer and Sickle*, 1977

Synthetic polymer paint and silkscreen on canvas

14 7/8 x 18 7/8 in. (38 x 48 cm)

[AW1000.77]



### Note:

Andy Warhol created his *Hammer and Sickle* series in 1976-77 after a trip to Italy where the most common graffiti in public spaces was this symbol found on Soviet flags. Under communist control, it signified the union of industrial and farm workers' interests. In Italy, a democratic country since the end of WWII, the repeated graffiti symbol was to Warhol more pop art than political. After returning to the United States, Warhol asked his studio assistant Ronnie Cutrone to find source pictures of this symbol. The reproductions found in books were like the Soviet flag, flat in appearance, and Warhol wanted something different. Cutrone purchased a double-headed hammer and a sickle at a local hardware store and arranged and photographed the tools in many positions. Warhol used the Cutrone photographs for his silkscreened series. In 1977, these works were exhibited under the ambiguous title *Still Lives* at the Castelli Gallery in New York City. Warhol disavowed any political ties to his work, though he was aware of the power of symbols and the cultural climate of the Cold War.

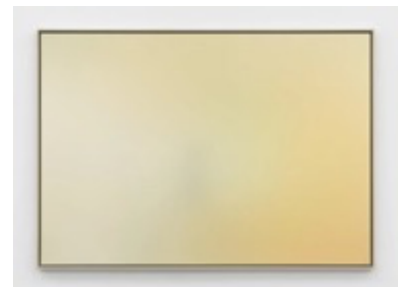
## SCOTT LYALL

*Talent 55*, 2023

UV-cured inkjet on glass, mirror, acrylic gel medium and gold nano particles

48 x 67 1/2 x 2 in. (121.9 x 171.5 x 5.1 cm)

[SL2281.23]



### Note:

Lyall's *Talents* are made of two compressed sheets of glass. The back sheet is a mirror; the front pane is printed on the inside with a unique, yet potentially infinite progression of colored pixels to constitute a polychrome surface which brings to mind a monochrome. An admixture of gel medium and nanoparticles of gold is applied by the artist's hand to the outside surface to complete the work – the painter as window cleaner, if you will.

Activated by the mirror's reflective play of light, the pixels produce a diffused hue or golden aura. In containing gold, the mixture recalls the etymology of talent (in Latin, the amount of metal in a coin). Akin to the golden backgrounds in Cimabue paintings, the gold creates an effect of groundlessness, the fundamental reality of abstraction itself. Simultaneously reflective and absorbing, the painted *Talent* oscillates between a world-reflecting image and an adventure of embodiment.

As essentially split-objects, the *Talents* first exist as immaterial files awaiting output, or their uncertain moment of incarnation onto one substrate or another, which is indeed not guaranteed. At their core, each of these identical (same process), yet unique (singular field of color) works both engage and subvert the two ghosts of contemporary art: the mirror and the monochrome.

**WADE GUYTON**

*Untitled*, 2020

Epson UltraChrome HDX inkjet on linen

84 x 69 in. (213.4 x 175.3 cm)

[WG1000.20]



**BLAKE RAYNE**

*Skull Ayre*, 2018

Oil on linen

92 x 77 in. (233.7 x 195.6 cm)

[BR1486.18]



Note:

When questioned about the subject matter of this series of paintings, Rayne simply responds, “now paintings are skulls.” In this way, Rayne points to the structural nature and cultural status of painting, if you will, as it exists in the world today. Depicting images sourced from widely circulated archaeological reconstructions of Neanderthal and early human skulls, the paintings are constructed from twelve layers of screen projections, each in a singular tone. Rayne approaches these skulls as objects of discovery, provoking confrontations between minimal gestures of paint application and pixelated image production. As such, the artist asserts the raw materiality of painting as an affective tool for imagining the future.

## CHARLES GAINES

*Numbers and Trees: Drawing 23, 2016*

Ink on paper

33 x 25 in. (83.8 x 63.5 cm)

Framed: 39 x 31 x 2 in. (99 x 78.75 x 5 cm)

[CG1002.16]



*Numbers and Trees: Drawing 24, 2016*

Ink on paper

33 x 25 in. (83.8 x 63.5 cm)

Framed: 39 x 31 x 2 in. (99 x 78.75 x 5 cm)

[CG1003.16]



*Numbers and Trees: Drawing 30, 2016*

Ink on paper

33 x 25 in. (83.8 x 63.5 cm)

Framed: 39 x 31 x 2 in. (99 x 78.75 x 5 cm)

[CG1001.16]



*Numbers and Trees: Drawing 31, 2016*

Ink on paper

33 x 25 in. (83.8 x 63.5 cm)

Framed: 39 x 31 x 2 in. (99 x 78.75 x 5 cm)

[CG1000.16]



### Note:

These meticulously rendered ink drawings continue Gaines's investigation into a system that serializes a set of related images. Applying the same photographic sources from *Numbers and Trees: Central Park* series, the drawings employ a rule-based numeric system to create soft, numbered marks on a hand-drawn grid. They sequentially plot the silhouette of a tree, building layer upon layer as the drawings accumulate throughout the series. What was once a recognizable tree dissolves the image into a matrix of numbers. The reduction of the tree to a structure set into place not a better understanding of the subject, but a relational consideration that deconstructs the tree within its own framework. These drawings are preparatory works Gaines used to execute before he initiated the Plexi versions within each series. Due to computer generated templates, he now no longer makes these as part of his practice.

## ALEX CARVER

*Sword Man*, 2022

Oil on linen

37 x 78 1/2 in. (94 x 199.4 cm)

[AC2114.22]



### Note:

In his painting, *Sword Man*, Carver derives his imagery from the technology servicing torture and execution: the Catherine Wheel, a torture method used for public execution primarily in Europe from antiquity through the Middle Ages into the early modern period by breaking the bones of a criminal or bludgeoning them to death. A phrase like 'drawn and quartered' takes on new resonance in light of Carver's work, tracing the dismemberment of bodies—surgically, punitively, and sacrificially—as a practice that transits from cultural incarnations of authority to graphic indices and icons of the cyclical creation and de-creation of human bodies. Through his layering of machine stenciled screens, frottage, and brush work, and the combining of scientific precision with the fantastical, Carver's paintings develop an elusive world of imagery in which dense layers are splintered with negative images, like a vectorized labyrinth, set against a sweeping gesso ground that gathers and binds together the painting's diverse materials.

## CHEYNEY THOMPSON

*490-1215 (1879-1900)*, 2018

Graphite on paper

Framed, total: 62 1/4 x 45 1/2 in. (158 x 115.5 cm)

[CT1014.18]



### Note:

This set of generative drawings results from all possible combinations of the tool paths retrieved from Cézanne's ten drawings. The frame colour of each work provides an index of the source data that has originated them. The amount of possible drawings is determined by a mathematical formula that calculates five groups of nine combinations, deriving in 45 new compositions. The combinatorial logic of the formula, which could be seen as a productive constraint, is in fact what gives access to an unexplored inventory of forms. Although these combinations are not exhaustive, they formulate a field of possibilities that are derivative, and the source of further transformations.

## CHEYNEY THOMPSON

3005/1140 [589 curves][1896-99], 2022

Graphite on paper mounted to book cloth

28 7/8 x 20 in. (73.3 x 50.8 cm)

[CT1015.22]



3015/598 [620 curves][1883-86], 2022

Graphite on paper mounted to book cloth

28 7/8 x 20 in. (73.3 x 50.8 cm)

[CT1016.22]



### Note:

Over the course of two decades, Paul Cézanne produced ten drawings of Peter Paul Rubens' Bellona, which later became a reference point for this series of works by Cheyney Thompson, beginning in 2005. For Thompson, Cézanne's drawings of this allegorical figure of war held together reflections on the role of museums, the motif, and shifts in technologies of image-making.

Thompson began this series by transcribing Cézanne's ten drawings, employing vector-based paths to represent each line. By recording Cézanne's curves into a set of functions, the drawings become an abstract script, freeing them from dependence on the original image for reproduction. These drawings were then input into a CNC machine to faithfully reproduce precise mechanical replicas in various scales and materials, successfully capturing the pressure of Cézanne's pencil. Despite incorporating elements from each of the original drawings, the resulting offspring would not resemble either of them. Instead, it would employ techniques from data science and machine learning to generate entirely new compositions.

## R. H. QUAYTMAN

*Modern Subjects, Chapter Zero (Lion of Waterloo)*, 2021

Oil, silkscreen ink, gesso on wood

52 3/8 x 52 3/8 x 1 1/4 in. (133 x 133 x 3.2 cm)

[RQ2147.21]



### Note:

As part of her research into the artistic history of Brussels, artist R. H. Quaytman visited the Wiertz Museum. Quaytman asked herself: Who was Antoine Wiertz (1806-1865), and why did he turn his studio into a museum? Why did he choose to paint remarkably emancipatory scenes of women in distress on a monumental scale, as well as other gruesome depictions of poverty, war, and suicide?

“The choice of [Antoine Wiertz’s] subject matter suggests a revolutionary ideological orientation supporting the emancipation of women and the poor, and placing the blame at the feet of the military, the state and the rich — although his works on these subjects are displayed to the side of his gargantuan attempts to attain La Gloire.”

– R. H. Quaytman

Quaytman reinvents the production of pictorial images in today’s digital age, reinstating them within the context of art history and of painting in particular, reasserting their materiality and spiritual scope, and deconstructing prevailing narratives from a feminist and intersectional point of view. Her strategies are pictorial, photographic and conceptual, leading to the development of complex groups of works she titles as chapters. Composing each of her exhibitions in relation to a local reference, Quaytman builds her series as a narrative structure that shapes the overall organizational principle and the mode of execution of the individual works.

The installation scheme of the recent exhibition at WIELS consisted of building a long wall bisecting the gallery space and installing two sequences of paintings on both sides of the wall. The square painting at hand, which features a silkscreened detail of an Antoine Wiertz painting, was installed recessed into the wall in a circular crop.

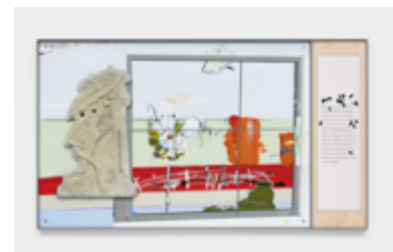
## HELEN MARTEN

*The Almost Horse (H)*, 2022

Cellulose paint on aluminium, epoxy resin on maple, aluminium, cast chemically patinated bronze, lampwork glass

23 x 39 7/8 x 1 5/8 in. (58.4 x 101.3 x 4.1 cm)

[HM1006.22]



## HELEN MARTEN

*The Almost Horse (U)*, 2022

Cellulose paint on aluminium, epoxy resin on maple,  
aluminium, cast chemically patinated bronze, lampwork glass

23 x 39 7/8 x 1 5/8 in. (58.4 x 101.3 x 4.1 cm)

[HM1005.22]



### Note:

A glib bronze temperature gauge in the form of a frog with downturned mouth and raised umbrella is repeated in sequence across each of the paintings [in the series]. Each depicts a replicated view through a window onto a classic Romantic landscape. The scene is torturous in its repetitive similarity. Each painting has been made using snapshots captured from a real 3-dimensional model moving in multiplane fashion through the constructed landscape. These fictional renderings of signs – trees, fences, clouds, cliffs – become more than the simple possibility of existence of the great labour force of nature continually producing objects of human and social utility, but part of the trompe l’oeil effect of privileging mobility over stasis.

These paintings also house a single “page” fragment of a fictional story written by the artist. Each paragraph begins with the next consecutive letter of the alphabet, an A-Z circuit whose narrative tells of the generative friendship of two strangers and their horse. The typography is punctured with falling leaves, 26 scattered over the beginning A, O at the concluding Z, meaning that a full seasonal cycle has flushed and then ended with the narrative closure of the story, the alphabet exhausted.

– Helen Marten

## WADE GUYTON

*Untitled*, 2022

Epson UltraChrome HDX inkjet on linen

84 x 69 in. (213.4 x 175.3 cm)

[WG1001.22]



## TISHAN HSU

*Double Interface - Blue*, 2024

UV cured inkjet, acrylic, silicone, ink on wood

33 1/2 x 48 x 3 in. (85.1 x 121.9 x 7.6 cm)

[TH1287.24]



### Note:

Always infused with the latest technological developments, from digital images and Photoshop to 3D printing, Hsu's oeuvre captures distorted and entangled human forms within the digital flow. Across a blue interface with nipples, eyes, and orifices, the image is deliberately manipulated, creating the impression of a glitch in the fleshy control panel.

## RICHARD PRINCE

*Untitled (The Band)*, 2013

Photomil and gravel

44 x 72 1/2 x 5 in. (111.8 x 184.2 x 12.7 cm)

[RP1002.13]



### Note:

Milled on high-density urethane, this image of The Allman Brothers Band sitting on train tracks first appeared on the cover of their 2005 album "Gold." Prince crops the photographic image by inserting a metal frame into the work and placing real gravel onto the bottom left corner of the frame, that is directly on top of the depicted gravel in the photograph.

## KATE MOSHER HALL

*Push*, 2023

Acrylic and Flashe on canvas

52 x 50 in. (132.1 x 127 cm)

[KH1047.23]



### Note:

Kate Mosher Hall's paintings oscillate between frank acknowledgement of her materials—flat planes, paint, printing screens—and a seductive illusionism that draws on illustration and found images. At times the works emphasize duality and fragmentation, and at others they underscore the merger of forms and ambiguity. In playing with such structures, the artist not only seeks visual stimulus but also intrigue and psychological affect. Indeterminacy and enigma, as she puts it, allow for visual complexities that are "allegories to life experiences and broken conditions that I ultimately celebrate."

## RAHA RAISSNIA

*Untitled*, 2013

image transfer, Sumi ink, compressed charcoal, and collage on paper

14 x 17 in. (35.6 x 43.2 cm)

Framed: 18 5/8 x 21 3/4 x 1.5 in. (47.3 x 55.2 x 3.8 cm)

[RR1089.13]



### Note:

Raha Raissnia's multimedia work is akin to a kind of timeless archeology of the image in which her images free flowingly circulate between film, photographic slides, painting, and drawing. Originated from a 35mm slide which she painted over by hand, the image was projected, rephotographed, transferred onto paper, and further manipulated in charcoal. As is typical of her work, the result oscillates indeterminately between abstraction and figuration.

## R. H. QUAYTMAN

*Cancel U.S.A. March 9, 2020, 2020*

Oil, silkscreen ink, gesso on wood

12 3/8 x 20 in. (31.4 x 50.8 cm)

[RQ2111.20]



### Note:

Produced for the 2020 exhibition, "Footnote 14: Angel of History," at Casa São Roque, Porto, Quaytman's *Cancel U.S.A. March 9, 2020* depicts the rejected ID card of her friend, the artist Joanna Zielinska—whose visa to enter the U.S. was denied, on no apparent ground or reason.