

Press release
January 2021

Wyatt Kahn

January 15 to February 20, 2021
Opening on Friday, January 15, 11 am to 6 pm
Maag Areal, Zahnradstr. 21, CH-8005 Zurich

Galerie Eva Presenhuber is pleased to present its fifth solo exhibition by the New York-based artist Wyatt Kahn.

For the past ten years, Kahn has been shaping wooden stretchers to produce canvas-covered wall reliefs that engage and indict Modernist legacies of both painting and sculpture. With each body of work, viewers have encountered shifts in scale, geometric adjacencies, contorted shapes, saturation of color, experimentation with surface treatments, and forays onto paper.

In his newest reliefs, Kahn strays from the previous two-dimensional line of advancement and initiates a third dimension in a deeper constellation. "This past year made me look back at the foundational structures of my practice and add layers of chaos on top of them," explains Kahn. The usual cadence of shapes, which shares affinities with Harvey Quaytman's swooning forms and the strategies of the Supports/Surfaces movement, is redirected into an echo. Planes that would usually radiate outwards, right and left, now pile up on top of each other, obstructing each other, complicating the picture with physical depth and shadowy perspective.

The arcs and circles in *Piled Up (Ben's Dream)* and *Untitled*, which harken back to Lygia Clark's Neo-Concrete *Ovo*, suggest the fast passing of solar and cyclical time. The titles of particular works, such as *Seated Bather* or *The Old Man*, are nods to early Modernism's preoccupations with lush arcadias, strewn with figures, even if we are only left with its foundational parts and limbs. Language, unspoken, unshared, or solemnly uttered in a vacuum, piles up. The way in which these new occlusions incite the body to move in a new choreography of apprehending recalls Willys de Castro, as well as Lee Bontecou. And yet, this absorption of references, forced through the simplest materials, is expressed in a visual language that is Kahn's alone. It is an inventory of the artist's syntax that guides us into the histories that inform his lexicon.

Wyatt Kahn was born in 1983 in New York, NY, US, and lives and works in New York, NY, US. Recent institutional solo exhibitions include *Variations on an object* at Museo di Arte Moderna e Contemporanea di Trento e Rovereto, Trento, IT (2016); and *Object Paintings* at the Contemporary Art Museum, St. Louis, MO, US (2015). The artist was also included in the group exhibition *Jay DeFeo: The Ripple Effect* at Le Consortium, Dijon, FR, which traveled to the Aspen Art Museum, Aspen, CO, US (both in 2018). His work is included in the collections of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, NY, US; the Museum of Modern Art, New York, NY, US; the Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, NY, US; Centre Georges Pompidou, Paris, FR; Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles, CA, US; Dallas Museum of Art, Dallas, TX, US; Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago, IL, US; CCS Bard Hessel Museum of Art, Annandale-on-Hudson, NY, US; and Albright-Knox Art Gallery, Buffalo, NY, US.

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