

This summer, the New Museum will present the first major New York museum exhibition of the work of German artist Albert Oehlen. Demonstrating his immeasurable influence on contemporary painting, *“Albert Oehlen: Home and Garden”* will feature paintings from several of his most important bodies of work. The exhibition will include a selection of the artist’s early self-portraits, his computer paintings and switch paintings from the 1990s, and more recent works fusing appropriated advertising signage and abstract marks. Rather than following a chronological path through Oehlen’s prodigious thirty-year career, the exhibition explores contrasts between interior and exterior, nature and culture, and irony and sincerity, while also demonstrating Oehlen’s commitment to continually expanding the language of painting in surprising ways.

*“Albert Oehlen: Home and Garden”* is curated by Massimiliano Gioni, Artistic Director, with Gary Carrion-Murayari, Kraus Family Curator, and Natalie Bell, Assistant Curator, and will span the Third and Fourth Floor Galleries.

In the 1970s, Oehlen studied in Hamburg with Sigmar Polke and joined the circle of artists associated with the painter Jörg Immendorff. Oehlen came to prominence in Germany in the early 1980s alongside his friends and frequent collaborators Martin Kippenberger, Georg Herold, and Werner Büttner, participating in a general return to painting taking place internationally at the time. At the very beginning of his career, Oehlen set himself the task of exploring the language, structures, and experiences of painting. His work has oscillated between figuration and abstraction, a dynamic that Oehlen constantly renews through the creation of rules and limitations that yield unpredictable results. Through this process, he has managed to reinvigorate seemingly exhausted genres of painting like portraiture, collage, and gestural abstraction. His work encapsulates both a skepticism of and faith in painting in the face of shifting critical positions and technological innovations.

The imagery and range of techniques that Oehlen has deployed throughout his career are staggering. His canvases capture haunting interiors, mutating self-portraits, archaic and digital landscapes, cryptic fragments of language, and abstractions enlivened by myriad chromatic and stylistic variations. Across all of his work, Oehlen displays an experimental and intuitive approach to painting infused with a refreshingly irrational sensibility inspired by a variety of influences, including punk and Surrealism. In recent years, as a younger generation of artists has turned again to painting as a critical medium, Oehlen’s work has only become more influential and prescient.

Albert Oehlen was born in 1954 in Krefeld, Germany. He studied at the Hochschule für Bildende Kunst in Hamburg, Germany, and has exhibited extensively throughout Europe and the United States. Oehlen has been the subject of solo exhibitions at a number of international institutions, including the Museum Wiesbaden, Germany (2014); Museum Moderner Kunst, Vienna (2013); Kunstmuseum Bonn, Germany (2012); Musée d'Art Moderne de la Ville de Paris (2009); Arnolfini, Bristol, and Whitechapel Art Gallery, London (2006); Museum of Contemporary Art, North Miami (2005); Kunsthalle Basel (1997); IVAM Centre del Carme, Valencia, Spain (1996); the Renaissance Society at the University of Chicago (1995); and Kunsthalle Zurich (1987). He has participated in many major group exhibitions, including the 2013 Venice Biennale. Oehlen was Professor of Painting at the Kunstakademie Düsseldorf from 2000 to 2009. He currently lives and works in Switzerland.

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