

GAGOSIAN

Gagosian to Participate in ART021 Shanghai with a Solo Presentation of Paintings by Dan Colen
Fair Opens November 9, at Shanghai Exhibition Center, Coinciding with West Bund Art & Design



Dan Colen, *Mother (Flowers)*, 2023, oil on canvas, 42 × 56 inches (106.7 × 142.2 cm) © Dan Colen. Photo: Rob McKeever

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Using popular iconography helps me focus on the materiality of the works and the processes behind them. The Disney paintings are more object than image.

—Dan Colen

HONG KONG, October 31, 2023—Gagosian is pleased to announce its participation in this year’s edition of ART021 Shanghai from November 9 to 12 with a solo presentation of new and recent paintings by Dan Colen. The gallery is also participating in the tenth edition of West Bund Art & Design, Shanghai, on the same dates.

At ART021 Shanghai, Gagosian is presenting nine new entries from Colen’s *Mother* series (2009–) alongside two paintings from the *Woodworker* series (2021–). These works refer to the Disney films *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs* (1937), *Pinocchio* (1940), *Bambi* (1942), and *The Fox and the Hound* (1981).

The narratives of these familiar animations center on the fragility of life and the transformative power of loss. For Colen, their idealized backdrops resonate with our shared aspiration to a secure existence, and the *Mother* paintings propose various unpeopled sites as potential manifestations of the promised land or “home.” These range from the wooded abundance of *Mother (Path)* (2023) to the inviting domesticity of *Mother (Home)* (2023) and even the memento mori of *Mother (Skull)* (2023).

In the *Woodworker* paintings, Colen depicts details of Geppetto's studio from *Pinocchio* in part to explore his own relationship with his father, thematizing a parallel between creative influence and familial bonds while alluding to materials' eventual autonomy from their artisanal user. *Woodworker (Music Boxes)* (2022), for example, which pictures figurines in the puppeteer's workspace, alludes to the artist's output, while *Woodworker (Candle)* (2021–22) focuses on a dripping candle surrounded by wood shavings in a gesture toward the act of observation.

The iconic images in these paintings provoke age-old questions around the material of oil paint and its history. Colen "quotes" brush marks identified with various art historical movements, from German Romanticism to American Spiritualism and Photorealism. And while he describes the works as being about their medium, the narratives they describe—the *Woodworker* paintings' workshop scenes, for example—are also about materiality, thereby emphasizing process over object.

Dan Colen was born in 1979 in Leonia, New Jersey, and lives and works in New York. Collections include the Whitney Museum of American Art, New York; Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden, Washington, DC; Jiménez-Colón Collection, Ponce, PR; and Dakis Joannou Collection, Athens. Exhibitions include the Whitney Biennial, New York (2006); *Peanuts*, Astrup Fearnley Museet, Oslo (2011); *The Illusion of Life*, Inverleith House, Royal Botanic Garden, Edinburgh, Scotland (2013); 12th Biennale de Lyon, France (2013); *Help!*, Brant Foundation Art Study Center, Greenwich, CT (2014); *The L...o...n...g Count*, 421 East 6th Street, New York (2014); *Psychic Slayer*, Herning Museum of Contemporary Art, Denmark (2015); *Shake the Elbow*, Albright-Knox Art Gallery, Buffalo, NY (2015); *Oil Painting*, Dallas Contemporary (2016); *Sweet Liberty*, Newport Street Gallery, London (2017); and *Dan Colen—Works from the Astrup Fearnley Collection*, Astrup Fearnley Museet, Oslo (2018).

#ART021

ART021 SHANGHAI

November 9–12, 2023

Shanghai Exhibition Center

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