

Reena Spaulings

Keep on Truckin'

June 1 — July 25, 2024



© Reena Spaulings.

Reena Spaulings presents a new series of cut-out paintings that repeat a specific hieroglyphic shape, somewhere between a figure and a letter. In fact, this shape comes from a scan of a piece of trash found on the streets of Manhattan: the discarded, flattened-out paper packaging for a set of Apple earbuds. When the shape is rotated ninety degrees, four distinct signs can be articulated, almost an alphabet. The final move was to join our found sign-figure with a cut-out acrobat taken from Matisse.

The cut-out rearticulates painting via a hard “Egyptian” contour, allowing Reena Spaulings to steal painting back from the window-like space of realism, Surrealism, etc. Abstraction becomes a sort of figure and the figure is like a letter that recodes space. The flattened-out, rotated, hieroglyph serves as a vehicle and support for everything else that makes the paintings paintings: color and gesture, speed and light, chaos and kitsch, etc.

A cut-out acrobat becomes ensnared within the articulations of a rotating sign-apparatus, or perhaps leaps out and escapes. Almost a dance, almost an allegory. In some paintings, the two figures combine to form an abstract monster, which can also be rotated. Using a technique invented in Los Angeles by Albert Oehlen, unstretched canvases are adhered directly to the wall with rubber cement, like giant stickers. Others are mounted on wooden supports to give them a more sculptural presence in the space.

—

Founded in 2004.

Reena Spaulings first emerged in the eponymous novel published in 2004 as a fictional character of a young woman making her way in the New York art scene of the 2000s. Meanwhile, Reena Spaulings Fine Art opened on Manhattan's Lower East Side and its founding members started commercial and artistic collaborations with the gallery's artists such as Ei Arakawa, Claire Fontaine, Klara Liden, Jutta Koether and Seth Price. Spaulings' artistic work embraces ambiguities that question as much the traditionally accepted notion of authorship, as the customary division of labour within the art world.

Reena Spaulings work has been featured in solo exhibitions by the Museum Ludwig, Köln (2017), the St. Louis Contemporary Art Museum, St. Louis (2008) and the Kunsthalle Zurich, Zurich (2007).

Its work has been shown internationally in numerous exhibitions held by the following institutions: Yuz Museum, Shanghai (2018); Musée d'art moderne et contemporain, Genève (2017); Musée National d'Art Moderne, Centre Georges Pompidou, Paris (2016); Museum Brandhorst, Munich (2015); Whitney Museum of American Art, New York (2015); FRAC Nouvelle Aquitaine, Bordeaux (2013); MD 72, Berlin (2013); CAPC, Musée d'art contemporain de Bordeaux (2011); Indipendenza Studio, Rome (2011); Musée d'Art Moderne, Paris (2010); Tate Modern, London (2009); National Gallery of Canada, Ottawa (2009) among others.

Work by Reena Spaulings have joined the collections of the Museum of Modern Art, New York, NY, USA; Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, NY, USA; FRAC Nouvelle Aquitaine, Bordeaux, France; Collection Charles Riva, Brussels, Belgium.