

David Renggli

SUV Paintings

Opening: Thursday, 23 July 2020, 11 am – 6 pm

Exhibition: 24 July – 29 August 2020

Wentrup is pleased to present the sixth solo show by the Swiss artist David Renggli at the gallery. Under the title *SUV Paintings*, the artist shows his eponymous latest series of paintings that was just presented to the public for the first time at the museum Villa Merkel in Esslingen.

Renggli's oeuvre, spanning from sculpture and painting to collage, is a witty engagement with the topics of western society as well as a reflexive exploration of art history. In his well-known *Desire Paintings*, he addresses longings and desires for luxury apartments or a dream vacation in Venice; in his new paintings, he engages with a subject that is quite provocative in today's society: the SUV. These large luxury cars divide our society and trigger in some people a latent anger. Their armour-like, enclosed appearance gives the impression of a hermetic sense of security. The difference to an open convertible car with its echoes of a sense of freedom could not be greater. The field of tension of the ambivalence between attraction and rejection that is inherent to SUVs, forms the point of departure for Renggli's new conceptual paintings.

While Renggli painted the *Desire Paintings* on alternative material, namely jute or coconut fibre material, for the *SUV Paintings* he used bed sheets as supports, which he found at flea markets, in thrift shops, or on eBay. The patterned fabrics with lemons, flowers, checks, or bubbles form the background for the paintings. This background occasionally shines through the paint that is in some places thick and in others thinner. On that, Renggli imposes in a collage manner words that name SUVs, like "Porsche", "Cayenne", or "Macan". Their typography is reminiscent of cut-out letters or phrases that can be found on holiday postcards.

While some of the *SUV Paintings* are abstract colour field paintings, in others we find depictions of "Cowboys and Indians games" or rather Native American games that obviously refer to the term "Cayenne", appropriated and modified by Porsche. At the same time, these depictions appeal to clichés of good and evil that are deeply set in our minds. But also references to popular culture, like the frog Kermit that lies on its stomach with its legs drawn close, laughing at us, are part of these paintings and are combined with shapes that refer to – as Renggli calls them – nameless sculptures, more reflecting their idea than actually depicting them. A classic nude from the back can be found in *SUV Painting – Alamy Red Woman*, and the question of our own self and our significance in life is raised by *SUV Painting – Mid Career Canoe*, showing a woman with a bent back, sitting on what is likely a canoe on which we read "Mid Career Career". The topics and motifs that Renggli uses are interconnected in numerous ways, and allow for a wide range of potential interpretations, so that not just the formal structure is reminiscent of a collage – that is also true in terms of content.

By dotting his paintings with the word “alamy” or the letter “a”, on the one hand he generates a stylistic device that has an almost ornamental character, on the other hand he appropriates the usual mechanisms of stock photo platforms that make a digital photo only completely visible after payment has been received. By using painting to copy a digital copy protection, Renggli raises questions about the authorship and use of images. The artist takes the topic of authorship to an extreme by signing his *SUV Paintings* with “Range Rover 2021” or “Cayenne 2023” – naturally on the front in the bottom right hand corner, and in a certain size, thus fulfilling all expectations for an artist’s signature.

David Renggli (born in Zurich in 1974) lives and works in Zurich, Switzerland and Texas, USA.

David Renggli had solo exhibitions at Kunstmuseum Bellpark Kriens in Luzern; Migros Museum, Zurich; Museum Rietberg, Zurich; Kunsthalle Freiburg; Kunsthalle St. Gallen (all Switzerland); Museum Kunstraum Baden, Germany and the Associaziane Barriera in Turin, Italy.

Recently, Renggli participated in the group shows *Europe in China* at the Sculpture Art Museum in Qingdao, China; *Coup de Founder* at Maison van Doesburg in Meudon, France and *Von Pablo Picasso bis Robert Rauschenberg* at Kunstsammlung Chemnitz in Germany. He participated in further group exhibitions at institutions like Tate Britain, London, UK; Kunsthalle Bern, Switzerland; CCAndratx, Mallorca, Spain; and The Swiss Institute, New York, US.

Works by David Renggli are in the collections of the Migros Museum, Zurich; Kunsthaus Zürich; Museum Bellpark, Kriens; Fotomuseum Winterthur; Bächler Stiftung, Zurich; (all Switzerland); FRAC Nord de Palais, Dunkerque, France; Sammlung Philara, Düsseldorf, Germany; Pizzutti Collection in Columbus, USA and Rosenblum Collection in Paris.