

Austin Eddy*Everything In Its Place.***Opening:** 1 March 2025, 6–8 pm**Exhibition:** 1 March – 19 April 2025

Austin Eddy is known for his colorful and abstract paintings. His works combine geometric forms with figurative allusions and are reminiscent of the Cubist and Modernist traditions. Eddy often works with texture and layering, giving his works a tactile quality. His themes revolve around everyday scenes, emotions, and narratives, which he captures in stylized, often humorous compositions. His works reflect an intimate, personal dimension and invite viewers to discover stories and relationships behind the abstracted forms. Inspired by folk art, modernist painting, and graphic elements, Austin Eddy combines tradition and innovation, which has led to his developing a distinctive aesthetic.

In his first solo exhibition at Wentrup - "Everything In Its Place" - the Brooklyn-based artist presents a new cycle of still lifes. Everything seems to be in its place, as in the painting whose title has become the exhibition title. Fruit and fish are placed on a table, a bouquet of flowers; a purple bird on the right-hand side of the picture is somewhat out of place. Despite the flatness of the painting, the overlapping of the individual objects, which are composed of various geometric shapes, creates depth in the room. Rectangles, circles, lines, and oval shapes dominate the picture, and yet the objects depicted can be clearly recognized for what they are. Paul Cézanne already believed that artists should look for geometric shapes in nature. And so does Austin Eddy. He places these geometric shapes on top of each other like a collage, always with sharp and clear outlines, so that the individual parts appear to have been cut out. At the same time, the forms painted in oil and pastel are reminiscent of color field painting. Color is a predominant theme in Austin Eddy's paintings. One shade of color can make more of a difference than the entire composition. His color palette traces the tension between figuration and abstraction.

It is typical for Austin Eddy that his works cannot be reduced to a single interpretation or reference. Seemingly easy to read at first glance, they unfold further dimensions after extended contemplation and play with art-historical and everyday references. Tables filled to the brim with fruit and fish often depict a life of abundance; however, transience is already inscribed - it is inevitable that they will rot over time. "Everything In Its Place" - but the question is how long. Another picture shows a table strewn with various fruits; the apple in the foreground almost seems to be falling down. The title of the work – *Fresh Fruit For Rotting Vegetables* - seems to allude to this very process of decay. However, it is borrowed from the Dead Kennedys' 1980 debut album of the same name and thus opens up yet another, at first sight, invisible interpretation: with their album, the band criticized all aspects of the so-called American way of life and the entire American political system. Even the falling vase of flowers in the painting *November 6th, 2024* – a commentary on America's current politics, poetically wrapped up in a still life.

With *The Card Players*, Austin Eddy again refers to Paul Cézanne, who painted a series of five pictures with card players in the 1890s. Versions three to five are now regarded as pioneers of Cubism. Instead of people, Austin Eddy has two birds sitting on a table full of cards. Birds, like humans, have spread and populated the earth with thousands of species. Birds in Austin Eddy's work often represent people close to him. And the card game becomes a metaphor for life: A common game that suddenly turns into something serious.

A closer look at Austin Eddy's work reveals not only ambiguity and profundity but also the skillful use of oil and pastel. If the paintings appear flat and homogeneous in their application from a distance, the different materials and their characteristic structures become clearly apparent as you approach them. The oil paint is applied either thickly or very thinly so that it almost takes on a watercolor-like character; traces are scratched into the thick oil paint with the end of the brush; the pastel paint is sometimes applied powdery, sometimes velvety.

Although Eddy's works are always autobiographical, they are not illustrative and do not tell specific stories. Instead of a narrative, the paintings exude a lyricism that is difficult to grasp: calm and yet playful, contoured and yet open, bright and yet subdued.

Austin Eddy (b. 1986) received his BFA from the School of the Art Institute of Chicago in 2010. He lives and works in Brooklyn, New York. Since graduating, he has exhibited internationally. His most recent solo exhibitions include "Still Life" at Kunstverein Heilbronn and "Songs For The Sun" at Galerie Presenhuber in Zurich (both 2024).

From 21st February his solo exhibition "Sea Song" is on view at Kunsthalle Emden. In fall 2025 Eddy will exhibit at the Museum Penzenberg - Campendonk Collection.

Further, Austin Eddy has had solo exhibitions at Berggruen Gallery, San Francisco, US (2023); Consortium, Dijon, FR (2022); Galerie Presenhuber, New York, US (2022); Baldwin Gallery, Aspen, US (2021); Half Gallery, New York, US (2020); SoCo Gallery, Charlotte, US (2019), The University of Kentucky Hospital, Lexington, US (2013) and The Horticultural Society of New York, US (2013). He has been part of group exhibitions at The De La Cruz Collection, Miami, US (2023 - 2024); Art And Newport at The Vernon House, Newport, US (2023); Frestonian Gallery, London, UK (2022); The Urban Institute of Contemporary Art, Grand Rapids, US (2022); The Pit, Los Angeles, US (2021); The Museum of Contemporary Art Detroit, US (2019); Shrine Gallery, New York, US (2019); Galleri Thomassen, Gothenburg, SE (2018); The New Hampshire Institute of Art, Manchester, US (2016); Adams And Ollman, Portland, US (2015); Museum of Contemporary Art of Georgia, Atlanta, US, (2014).