

BERGGRUEN

GALLERY

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JOHN ALEXANDER: NEW PAINTINGS AND DRAWINGS

August 11 – September 12, 2021

Berggruen Gallery is proud to present *John Alexander: New Paintings and Drawings*, an exhibition of recent paintings and drawings by Texas-born, New York-based artist John Alexander. This show marks Alexander's third solo exhibition with the gallery and will be on view August 11 through September 12, 2021. The gallery will host an opening reception for the artist on Thursday, August 12 from 5:00 to 7:00pm.

John Alexander's most recent body of work presents a detailed collection of botanicals, sea life, birds and animals – each subject a representation of the artist's own mind and experiences. Alexander grew up between the bayous and the wooded wilderness of East Texas, enjoying camping and fishing trips within the lush, diverse landscape that would ultimately become so influential to him. Moreover, Alexander's understanding and appreciation for the natural world was fortified by his father's environmentalism. For Alexander, developing an environmental acuity, especially for his native Texas, was familial. Today, the artist creates work in reference to the nature-based consciousness he developed in his youth.

The introspective nature of Alexander's work is revealed through the artist's keen observations of his surrounding environment and the vivid way in which he paints his subjects. Employing bold, painterly strokes, Alexander maintains an acute sensibility of his subject matter – whether it be the detailed rendering of the spiny lobster, an expressive portrayal of cardinals and Eastern bluebirds perched on branches, or the vibrant depictions of florals. The artist also injects elements of whimsy; the playful monkeys peer out of their canvases engaging the viewer directly. Thus, each work is imbued with an authentic, raggedly pristine, emotional sense of the earth we inhabit. In this way, Alexander creates scenes that are deeply personal, yet also shared...nostalgic yet ongoing...exotic yet familiar...of the world yet otherworldly. Saturating his landscapes with humor, sentimentality and veneration, Alexander reveals as much about himself as he does about nature.

The paintings and drawings in the show come together to celebrate the raw and beautiful qualities of the natural world. Invoking his experiences in Texas as well as Amagansett, Alexander carefully composes bucolic images through the juxtaposition of reality and idealization. Perhaps most unexpectedly, Alexander nods to the Abstract Expressionists, applying thick strokes of paint in a gestural, emotional meditation. In turn, this body of work pays tribute to the long and varied legacy of floral and faunal painting before him while simultaneously remaining true to his very personal connection to nature. Through the amalgamation of art historical context, environmental conservation and the integration of a more intimate narrative, Alexander produces a body of work that is raw, compelling and perhaps above all else, natural.

John Alexander: New Paintings and Drawings, August 11 – September 12, 2021. On view at 55 Main Street, East Hampton, NY 11937. Images and preview are available upon request. For all inquiries, please contact the gallery by phone (631) 604-6730 or by email info@berggruen.com. Gallery Hours: Wednesday – Sunday, 11:00am – 5:00pm.

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About John Alexander

John Alexander was born in Beaumont, Texas, in 1945. He received his B.F.A. from Lamar University in Beaumont in 1968 and his M.F.A. from the Southern Methodist University in Dallas in 1970. Following graduate school, Alexander taught at the University of Houston. Though the artist's Texas roots influence much of his work, to solely categorize Alexander as a "Texas" artist would be inaccurate. In 1979, having established himself in Houston as a prominent local artist, Alexander moved to New York City. Today the artist divides his time between his SoHo studio loft and home in Amagansett, East Hampton. Alexander's work has been widely exhibited at such prestigious institutions as the Corcoran Gallery of Art and the Smithsonian American Art Museum, both in Washington, D.C., and the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston. His work is featured in the permanent collections of several leading institutions, including The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York; the Dallas Museum of Art; and the Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles; as well as many other public and private collections worldwide.

About Berggruen Gallery

John Berggruen first opened his pioneering gallery in the spring of 1970 on Grant Avenue in downtown San Francisco. Berggruen Gallery opened in its new 10,000-square-foot space at 10 Hawthorne Street, a historic three-story brick building across from the recently expanded San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, on January 13, 2017. The gallery specializes in contemporary art and 20th-century American and European paintings, drawings, sculpture, and limited-edition prints. The gallery exhibits the work of major American post-war artists as well as established and emerging contemporary artists, such as Alicia McCarthy, Julie Mehretu, Richard Serra, George Condo, Bridget Riley, Tauba Auerbach, David Bates, and Diana Al-Hadid. In addition, Berggruen Gallery presents curated exhibitions of historic works by artists, including those of the Bay Area Figurative movement, such as Richard Diebenkorn, Nathan Oliveira, and David Park, as well as Alexander Calder, Willem de Kooning, Mark di Suvero, Ellsworth Kelly, Henri Matisse, Georgia O'Keeffe, Ed Ruscha, Frank Stella, and Wayne Thiebaud.

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