

Petzel

THOMAS EGGERER

Todd

September 8 – October 14, 2017

Opening Reception: Friday, September 8th, 6–8pm

456 West 18th Street

Thomas Eggerer's new paintings in *Todd*, the artist's sixth solo show at Petzel, present the viewer with aerial views of street surfaces—topographical evolutions of Eggerer's longstanding interest in public spaces.

Each square canvas features precisely choreographed fragments of resting bodies, cutting in from the margins of the painting. This temporal occupation is contrasted with a circular “lid” or “cover” and intersecting parallel diagonals. The lids carry institutional significance, pointing to municipal authority, which contrasts with the transient fragility of leisurely carnal exposure. The lids also emphasize the presence of a concealed space underneath, quintessential to New York street life.

While the aerial viewpoint allows for voyeuristic surveillance, the 90 degree rotation from the birds-eye vista to the gallery wall, generates a vertiginous perspective where gravity and weight become factors. The resulting destabilization of a fixed viewing position is further augmented by the fact that the paintings appear to gyrate around the lids, subjecting the bodies to centrifugal forces and pointing to the space beyond the margins of the canvas.

The fragmentation of the bodies has a limiting effect on the bodies' self-determination, and yet, perhaps as a consequence, it intensifies the fetishistic charge of the exposed skin, which is rendered in great detail like all other parts of the paintings. This attention to detail appears to be a new development in Eggerer's work, which has previously exploited tensions between line and color or the “finished” vs. the “unfinished”. Hands appear to play a particular role here; while the purpose of the body as a whole is often unclear, manual activities are rendered with exacting precision (touching, holding, pushing). These gestures and poses appear somewhat out of place in a public space. The street floor is not treated like a part of the urban arena but rather like a natural domestic habitat.

Petzel Gallery is located at 456 West 18th Street New York, NY 10011. Gallery hours are Tuesday through Saturday from 10:00 AM–6:00 PM. For press inquiries, please contact Janine Latham at janine@petzel.com, or call (212) 680-9467.