

I live not in myself, but I become Portion of that around me: and to me High mountains  
are a feeling, but the hum Of human cities torture: I can see Nothing to loathe in  
Nature, save to be A link reluctant in a fleshly chain, Class'd with those who ever since  
the Flood Have felt no fellowship with hearts that feel— Distinguish'd from the sordid  
and the vain.

Lord Byron

## JOHN ZURIER

### MOUNTAINS ARE FEELINGS

John Zurier was born in 1956 in Santa Monica, California and lives and works in Berkeley, California and Reykjavik, Iceland.

Selected museum exhibitions include Stavanger Art Museum; The National Gallery of Iceland, Reykjavik; Gagosian, London (all 2023); UC Berkeley Art Museum and Pacific Film Archive (2022, 2018, and 2014); Moderna Museet Malmö, Malmö (2021); San Francisco Museum of Modern Art (2017); New Mexico Museum of Art, Santa Fe (2016); Colby Museum of Art, Waterville, Maine (2015). He has also exhibited at the 30th São Paulo Biennial (2012); California Biennial, Orange County Museum of Art, CA (2010); 7th Gwangju Biennial (2008); and the Whitney Biennial (2002).

In 2010 he was awarded the prestigious John Simon Guggenheim Fellowship. His work can be found in numerous public collections including the UC Berkeley, Art Museum and Pacific Film Archive; Moderna Museet, Stockholm; San Francisco Museum of Modern Art; Fine Art Museums of San Francisco; Museum of Fine Arts Houston; Colby College Museum of Art, Waterville; Farnsworth Museum, Rockland; Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco and Oakland Museum of California. A catalogue surveying his work from 1981 to 2014 with an essay by Robert Storr was published in 2015.

Galerie Nordenhake Mexico City is pleased to present Mountains Are Feelings, the second solo exhibition by American artist John Zurier (Santa Monica, California, 1956) at this venue.

Mountains Are Feelings brings together a selection of works created by Zurier from 2019 to the present, painted in California and Iceland. More than half of these pieces were painted in one of the artist's studios in Iceland, specifically located at the foothills of a mountain. Collectively, the works move beyond signaling specific themes, suggesting instead connections between time and space, distance and proximity, and objective and subjective states.

Zurier's pictorial language explores the brushstroke as a structural element from which layers of paint emerge: at times leaving the canvas exposed, while at other moments the oil layers are superimposed like small hills within the painting. In his works, color and its tonal degradations are also a material and perceptual exploration of how color operates in the world and within the painting itself.

The exhibition title is inspired by Canto III of Childe Harold's Pilgrimage (1816) by the English poet Lord Byron. Zurier plays with the quote: "High mountains are a feeling." In the context of the exhibition, the artist transfers the poetic meaning of the phrase to a more personal, philosophical, and emotional state.

Mountains, the most ancient natural landscape, are situated conceptually and sensitively within the abstract and pictorial language to which Zurier appeals. Their geology is narrated through primitive memories, and their entity forms part of the cycle of time. We experience these earth elevations contemplatively and sensitively, not only when observing the passage of the seasons on the world around us but also as a recurring theme within Zurier's artistic and poetic interest.

The contemplation of the exhibition simulates the observation of a unified whole, much like mountains frame the great landmass without compelling us to focus on one specific meadow. Through the inherent ambiguity of abstract painting, Mountains Are Feelings subtly guides the viewer toward a sensory reading. Collectively, the works demand the observation of a mountain that has lived longer than we will ever know, orienting and enriching the perceptions of those who contemplate the space where the painting exists.