

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**MERLIN CARPENTER**



22 NOVEMBER 2019 – 18 JANUARY 2020  
PRIVATE VIEW: THURSDAY, 21 NOVEMBER 6 – 8 PM  
SIMON LEE GALLERY, LONDON

*When one looks at [Mr. Lichtenstein's] paintings as handmade readymades, the problems are much more complex... It becomes art through a process that forces the critic outside art as such to become a sort of social critic.*

— Brian O'Doherty, 1963

Simon Lee Gallery is proud to present an exhibition of new paintings by Merlin Carpenter. The show considers the hand-painted object's capacity to engage with and complicate the language and history of the readymade.

Merlin Carpenter's work grapples with the potential relationship between painting and the readymade; and the possibility of collapsing the ideas that distinguish these practices. Since the 1990s the readymade object has been an integral line of inquiry in Carpenter's work; and in more recent years he has presented a number of readymade works that hang flat on the wall like a painting. Carpenter's new hyperrealistic paintings push the boundaries of painting into the discourse of the readymade in another way: the five works are so highly finished that they appear like a product, delivered from elsewhere. In this stark new presentation, Carpenter encourages the audience to both critique the authenticity of the paintings and simultaneously accept the role of the artist's hand.

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**NOTES TO EDITORS**

**About Merlin Carpenter**

Born in 1967, Merlin Carpenter lives in Shepperton, UK, and works in London and Berlin. Carpenter's work has been shown extensively internationally and has been the subject of numerous solo exhibitions, including Overduin & Co., Amsterdam, The Netherlands and Los Angeles, CA, 2018; Simon Lee Gallery, London, 2017; Galerie Neu, Berlin 2017; dépendance, Brussels, Belgium, 2016; Kunsthalle Bern, Bern, Switzerland, 2015; The Opening series of shows 2007-2009; Bergen Kunsthall, Norway 2005; American Fine Arts, Co., New York, NY, 2003; Secession, Vienna 2000; and projects, including Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, NY which travelled to Centre Pompidou, Paris, France, 2015; and Museum Brandhorst, Munich, Germany, 2015, which travelled to mumok, Vienna, 2016. His work is in major private and public collections including the Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles, CA; Centre Pompidou, Paris, France and The British Council, London, UK.

**About Simon Lee Gallery**

Founded in Mayfair, London in 2002, Simon Lee Gallery represents artists of diverse generations whose practices range from sculpture and painting to video and photography and who share a broad interest in an exploration of the conceptual. Aiming to provide a significant international audience for its artists, the gallery also regularly punctuates its programme with historical exhibitions and curated group shows, which present shifts in contemporary art practice and thought, whilst broadening the dialogue with artists outside of the gallery's core programme. In addition to its UK activity, in 2012 the gallery opened a space in Hong Kong, helping to introduce its artists to a wider public in Asia, with a fully independent programme. In 2014, Simon Lee Gallery opened an office and private viewing space in New York. In 2017, this space was re-launched with an independent year-round programme of exhibitions and events, showcasing the work of emerging and established artists in dynamic group and solo exhibitions.

Facebook, Instagram, Twitter: @SimonLeeGallery  
[www.simonleegallery.com](http://www.simonleegallery.com)

Image: Merlin Carpenter, *Untitled*, 2015. Smeg FAB28Q fridge, 151 x 60 x 68 cm. Ed. 3 + 1AP. Courtesy Galerie Neu, Berlin and Simon Lee Gallery. Photo by Stefan Korte.

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