

# GLADSTONE

## Claudia Comte's first solo exhibition opens at Gladstone Gallery in Brussels

Merging abstraction, form, and play, Comte transforms the gallery space with paintings and sculptures that bridge nature, design, and popular culture

Gladstone Gallery is pleased to present the gallery's first solo exhibition at our Brussels location with Swiss artist Claudia Comte. Drawing on myriad sources, from architecture and design to nature and popular culture, Comte creates paintings and sculptural works that playfully explore the relationship between material, space, and form. Comte began painting at an early age, producing her first formal series in 2001. Titled, "Our Most Wonderful Years," the paintings are photorealistic portraits of her childhood, depicting family vacations, birthday parties, and other memorable moments from her youth. Comte has since developed a formal style that tends towards abstraction, bringing together geometric forms, amorphous shapes, and figurative elements, to create a diverse body of work that incorporates multiple media. Often creating site-specific works, Comte investigates the way artwork can transform a space, combining surprising materials, textures, and colors to turn a static room into a dynamic environment.

The exhibition comprises three series of works, which are installed in a collage-like manner, nearly covering the walls and filling the floor space to create an immersive environment for visitors. The first series, a collection of ten wooden sculptures carved from the trunk of an eighty year-old cherry tree, represents a continuation of Comte's ongoing work with wood. Comte manipulates the wood with a chainsaw, typically in the place in the woods in which it was found, creating a sculpture that develops a type of personage or character as she works on it. For this most recent series, which is mounted on pedestals that are half glossy and half burned, the tubular sculptures have a letter-like quality, and, taken together read as an abstracted alphabet.

The second series, a collection of "Cocktail Paintings," are inspired by Comte's favorite bar in Berlin, a place known for its extremely precise drink recipes. Composed of eight brightly painted canvases, the "Cocktail Paintings" represent a melding of painting and sculpture. Comte paints the eight individual canvases as though they were one work, then separates and reassembles them, creating a modular work that can take on a new form each time it is installed. Finally, the exhibition includes a collection of "Circle" paintings, composed on a white circular canvas and painted with black acrylic. Each work consists of one gesture, which appears simple, yet hints at a larger meaning. Inspired by the cartoons of her childhood, in which a single black line could convey numerous movements, the works explore the way in which a simple brush stroke can express complexity.

### Exhibition Details

Claudia Comte

*Wir baden auf der Freianlage*

September 7 – October 18, 2013

Reception: September 6, 2 – 8 pm

12 Rue du Grand Cerf, Brussels

### About Claudia Comte

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Claudia Comte (b. Grancy, Switzerland) has been the subject of solo exhibitions at Centre d'art de Fribourg, Fribourg, Switzerland; Centre Culturel Suisse, Paris, France; and the Swiss Institute of Rome, Italy. She has also been included in notable group exhibitions at: Kunsthaus Glarus, Glarus, Switzerland; Aargauer Kunsthaus, Aarau, Switzerland; La Salle de Bains, Lyon, France; and the Musée Cantonal des Beaux-Arts, Lausanne, Switzerland.

## **About Gladstone Gallery**

Gladstone Gallery is known for its commitment to artists whose prescient approaches and experimental practices have defined the contours of contemporary art. The gallery has long been an active partner in the cultivation of iconoclastic careers, fostering a roster of artists recognized for their ground-breaking contributions. Headquartered in New York and including outposts in both Brussels and Seoul, Gladstone's impact extends globally, enabling both the presentation of new bodies of work, and an amplification of the international reach of its artists. Alongside its work with contemporary artists, the gallery is steward to the legacies of pivotal historical artists and serves as an advocate for the enduring power of art. Gladstone is led by a team of partners who spearhead its long-term vision and program, building on the values of its founder Barbara Gladstone.

## **Press Contact**

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