

# LÉVY GORVY

## LÉVY GORVY TO PRESENT NEW PAINTINGS AND WATERCOLORS BY GÜNTHER UECKER

### **Günther Uecker: Notations**

November 7, 2019—January 25, 2020

Lévy Gorvy  
909 Madison Avenue  
New York

### **Opening Reception: Wednesday, November 6 | 6-8 PM**



**New York**—Beginning November 7, 2019, Lévy Gorvy will present *Günther Uecker: Notations*, the artist's first solo exhibition with the gallery in New York. *Notations* brings together new large-scale nail paintings with a selection of watercolors from series made by Uecker (b. 1930, Wendorf, Germany) during his global travels over the past three decades. The exhibition is the first to juxtapose these disparate bodies of work, which together provide deeper insight into Uecker's practice and the sociopolitical concerns that have informed his artistic efforts over the past 60 years. *Notations* will be on view through January 25, 2020.

To create his signature nail paintings, Uecker stretches canvas over thick panels of wood; works a mixture of white paint and carpenter's glue into a dense, visceral surface; then hammers nails into the panels, varying their placement, angle, and groupings intuitively to form undulating painted reliefs that cast shadows in constant motion. Unified by pictorial composition and material presence, the nails project out into the viewer's space, suggesting forces of growth and movement, unity and disruption, order and entropy. A highlight of this new series is *Weisser Schrei* (White Scream), a painting Uecker describes as a self-portrait.

Uecker's watercolors reveal a wholly different but essential part of the artist's practice. Autonomous from but parallel to his studio work, the watercolors are made spontaneously "on the road" by an inveterate traveler responding to his experiences in far-flung locales. In the tradition of the Romantics, Uecker records the intense sensations evoked by landscapes, plant life, architecture, and qualities of light and atmosphere. Abstracting these



encounters into idiosyncratic forms and intense colors, Uecker's watercolors capture the artist's sense of wonder at the natural world. Through these watercolors, *Notations* will explore the impact that Uecker's travels across Australia, Brazil, Egypt, Germany, Israel, Japan, the United States, Vietnam, and other places have had upon him as an artist.

Personal in nature and intimate in scale, Uecker's watercolors are at the same time intensely public by virtue of his active engagement with outside world. By contrast, the nail paintings are profoundly private, made in the solitude of his studio in a performative, nearly ritualistic process. The repetitive, sonorous, and tactile operations that Uecker uses to create his nail paintings comprise a meditative practice. The two contrasting bodies of work are nevertheless united by their reliance upon fluidity: both nail paintings and watercolors express motion, physical change, and spiritual transformation. By bringing these two bodies of work together, *Notations* aims to invite new insights into the imperatives of Uecker's groundbreaking art.

In conjunction with *Notations*, Lévy Gorvy will publish the first English language book dedicated to Uecker's watercolors. This catalogue will feature writings by the artist, as well as a conversation between Uecker and Hans Ulrich Obrist.

### **About the Artist**

Uecker has exhibited extensively around the world since the 1960s, with one-artist exhibitions held at Kunsthalle Bern (1966); Staatliche Kunsthalle Baden-Baden (1968); Moderna Museet, Stockholm (1971); Kunstmuseum Düsseldorf (1975); Staatsgalerie Stuttgart (1976); Nationalgalerie, Berlin (1982); Instituto Aleman de Madrid (1988); Museum Moderner Kunst Stiftung Ludwig Wien, Vienna (1992); Museu de Arte Moderna, Rio de Janeiro (1996); Martin-Gropius-Bau, Berlin (2005); Ulmer Museum, Ulm (2010); Tehran Museum of Contemporary Arts (2012); and Museo Nacional de Bellas Artes, Havana (2014); and the Imam Ali Religious Arts Museum, Tehran (2016). The Central House of Artists, Moscow, staged a retrospective of Uecker's work in 1988. This exhibition was followed in 1993 by a retrospective at Kunsthalle der Hypo-Kulturstiftung, Munich, and a large-scale presentation of his oeuvre was organized by Kunstsammlung Nordrhein-Westfalen, Dusseldorf, in 2015.



Uecker has been the recipient of numerous accolades, including induction into the German Pour le Mérite order for Sciences and Arts in 2000; the Berliner Bär, B.Z. Kulturpreis, Berlin, in 2005; the Jan-Willem-Ring from Dusseldorf in 2010; and the Staatspreis des Landes Nordrhein-Westfalen in 2015. Public institutions that house Uecker's work include the Art Institute of Chicago; Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York; Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles; Museum of Modern Art, New York; Walker Art Center, Minneapolis; Hamburger Bahnhof, Berlin; Peggy Guggenheim Collection, Venice; Museum Ludwig, Cologne; Centre Georges Pompidou, Paris;

Staatsgalerie, Stuttgart; Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam; and Tate Modern, London.  
Günther Uecker lives and works in Düsseldorf, Germany.

### **About Lévy Gorvy**

Lévy Gorvy cultivates a program devoted to innovation and connoisseurship in the fields of modern, postwar, and contemporary art. Founded by Dominique Lévy and Brett Gorvy, Lévy Gorvy maintains gallery spaces at 909 Madison Avenue in New York, in Mayfair, London, and in Central, Hong Kong. The gallery fosters continued dedication to the living artists and artists' estates that it represents and offers a robust program of exhibitions and multidisciplinary events. The gallery also produces ongoing art historical research and original scholarship, publishing exhibition catalogues, monographs, and other key publications. The Zürich office, Lévy Gorvy with Rumbler, offers bespoke private advisory services to collectors and institutions around the globe.

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TOP IMAGE: *Weisser Schrei*, 2019. White paint and nails on canvas on wood, 78.74 x 62.99 inches (200 x 160 cm). Photo: Ivo Faber. MIDDLE IMAGE: *Wolken*, 1992. Watercolor on handmade paper, 5 3/10 x 7 1/2 inches (13.5 x 19 cm). From the series *Wolken*. Photo: Ivo Faber. BOTTOM IMAGE: *Action Libyan Desert*, 1977. *Where Two Lines Meet is a Point, That's Where I Drive My Nail In*. Courtesy of the Artist, Uecker Archiv. © 2019 Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York / VG Bild-Kunst, Bonn. © Wilfried Kaute. All images: © 2019 Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York / VG Bild-Kunst, Bonn.