



NEW RELEASE 2022

## Ralph Gelbert *Call Me Gelbert*

Texts by Steffen Egle, Michael Petry, Martin Stather

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### New powerful and fascinating work by the German abstract expressionist

*Ralph Gelbert's canvases explode with exuberant, uninhibited color—the effect of which can be so striking that viewers may find themselves taking an involuntarily step back. Materiality and presence of color are at the heart of Gelbert's painting technique. The context between surface as carrier of meaning and surface as site of the painterly aesthetic event is constantly redefined and recalibrated during the painting process.*

*The artist's often large-format works fascinate with their boldness of color and dynamic placement, leaving the viewer feeling as if they are in the presence of a 21st century action painter. Islands of color, spread across the canvas like a dense archipelago, overlapping, crowding up against and over one another in a way that threatens to overwhelm the viewer. This eruption of color against the eye has practically nothing at all to do with action painting, however. It is only up close that the complex, multi-layered nature of the painting becomes evident—even within a single work, multiple layers of color may be found. The painting techniques employed are likewise numerous, from the conventional to the experimental, broad and fine brushes as well as spray paint. The wealth of detail is astonishing; the eye being drawn into apparently unfathomable depths that suddenly disappear as the surface of the picture reimposes itself. The pictorial space has an intangible, fluctuating quality, becoming a shifting cosmos of fragmented images that reconfigure and resolve themselves once more into a single whole. [...]*

*Gelbert's works overwhelm the viewer and pursue a painterly strategy that finds its own way to negotiate the demarcation lines of the great schools of the past. At the same time, he is committed solely to his own aesthetic, his own creative drive, constantly dis-*

*covering surprising, contemporary painterly means of expression that draw on the experiences of generations of painters from the Renaissance to street art..*

(From the text by Martin Stather, *Alla Prima*)

**Ralph Gelbert**, born 1969 in Landau in der Pfalz (Palatine), Germany, lives and works in Neustadt an der Weinstraße, Germany and Dublin, Ireland. Following an Art degree in Florence, Italy, Gelbert had numerous national and international exhibitions in Berlin, Bologna, Cape Town, Cologne, Karlsruhe, London, Madrid and Paris. He is a lecturer at Department for Virtual Design, Fachhochschule Kaiserslautern (University of Applied Sciences, Kaiserslautern, and at Kunstakademie Bad Reichenhall (Art Academy of Bad Reichenhall). Gelbert is member of the Arbeitsgemeinschaft Pfälzer Künstler (Association of Palatinate Artists), Berufsverband Bildender Künstler Rheinland-Pfalz (Professional Association of Visual Artists Rhineland-Palatinate) and Chelsea Arts Club (London). His monograph *Beyond the Visible* was published by Kehler Verlag in 2018.

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