

Austin Lee Turns Donald Trump's Drawing of the Empire State Building Into a Symbol of the Unreality of Our Times—See It Here

Show of the Day: "Tomato Can" by Austin Lee at Peres Projects, Berlin.

Kate Brown, January 30, 2018

AUSTIN LEE

"Tomato Can" Peres Projects, Berlin

What The Gallery Says: "Lee's impetus for making art capitalizes on his obsession with a digitally and technologically advancing world, the impact this has on contemporary culture, society, politics, and how it affects the way we look at art. Lee's ambition in this body of work is to ask the viewer to question the relationship between digital manipulation and physical experience, and the exhibition functions as an intersection between reality and a surrealism driven by technological advancement."

Why It's Worth a Look: The New York-based artist's reductive painting style is increasingly iconic and his humorous, hazy-lined imagery has an updated Pop Art sensibility. Lee's use of ultra-vibrant colors and an overtly flat depth-of-field are familiar and readily digested by our screen-loving gaze, but his unlikely compositions—brought back after digital processing into the tactile realm of the painterly—create something that feels unexpected and new. *Tomato Can* is book-ended by two seismic works: a defeated boxer folded over ringside in *Lean* (2018) and *Empire* (2018), a reference to the viral drawing of the Empire State Building by President Trump that recently went to auction and sold for \$16,000. Together, they make for a powerful comment on the precariousness and surrealism of the times we are living in.

What it Looks Like:



Austin Lee's *SlowDance* (2018). Photo: Matthias Kolb. Courtesy Peres Projects, Berlin.



Austin Lee's *Hang* (2018). Photo: Matthias Kolb. Courtesy Peres Projects, Berlin.



Austin Lee's *Empire* (2018). Courtesy Peres Projects, Berlin.



Austin Lee's *RIP* (2018). Photo: Matthias Kolb. Courtesy Peres Projects, Berlin.



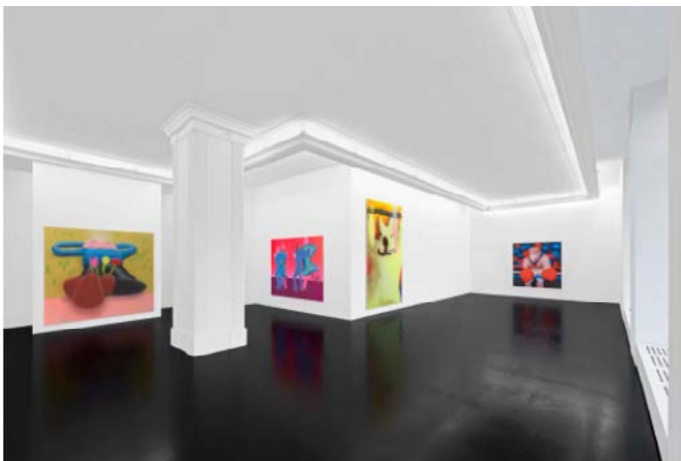
Installation view of Austin Lee's *Tomato Can* at Peres Projects, Berlin. Photo: Matthias Kolb. Courtesy Peres Projects, Berlin.



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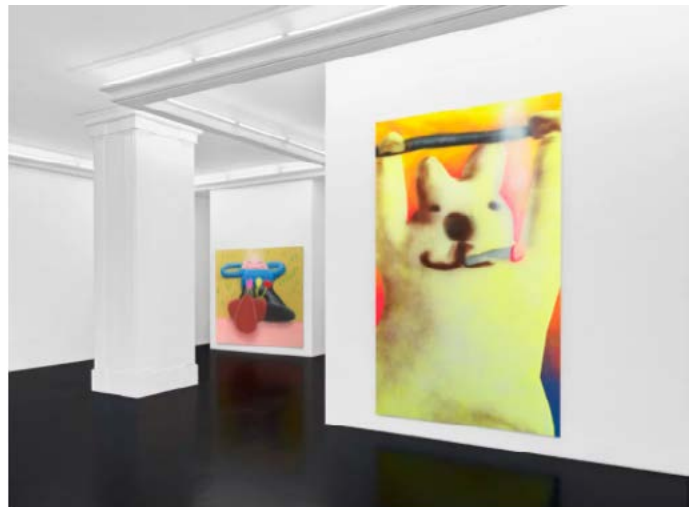
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Installation view of Austin Lee's *Tomato Can* at Peres Projects, Berlin. Photo: Matthias Kolb. Courtesy Peres Projects, Berlin.



Austin Lee's *Lean* (2018). Courtesy Peres Projects, Berlin.



Installation view of Austin Lee's *Tomato Can* at Peres Projects, Berlin. Photo: Matthias Kolb. Courtesy Peres Projects, Berlin.

"Tomato Can" by Austin Lee is on view at Peres Projects, Berlin through March 2, 2018.

Peres Projects is located at Karl-Marx-Allee 82, 10243 Berlin.

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