

# *Althuis Hofland Fine Arts*

## ***Sun Paintings***

### **Henry Baker**

Althuis Hofland is pleased to announce Sun Paintings, the first solo exhibition of London-based artist Henry Baker. Born in New York, Baker moved to London in 2021 and earned his MA from the Royal College of Art in 2023. Featuring new paintings and works on paper, the exhibition is on view starting June 1st, 2024.

At the heart of Baker's work is the relationship between chaos and structure. Broad bands of horizontal and vertical color create stable foundations against thick, dripping whites, charcoal crushed and dragged across the canvas, and glazes that further complicate surfaces. Both sides are considered. There is structure, peace and control on one front, and chaos with its life-giving, or perhaps more importantly life-taking, powers on the other. Amidst this tension, there sits an unanswered question, an undecided presence: a sun. Sometimes rendered in simple yellows, other times only discernible by its circular shape, the sun is an ever-present motif and can be viewed as a stand-in for the artist themselves — the witness and originator of all this chaos and structure. In each painting, the sun has the ability to take on new meanings.

This approach reflects Baker's reluctance to offer any premature resolutions, formally or conceptually. The difficulty explored is how best to convey the profound variety of human experience without reducing the power of its inherent paradoxes. The artist finds these in everything from the miscommunications present in our day-to-day lives to the dissonances of history.

Beyond conflict, the sun serves as a testament to the enduring parts of ourselves that we leave behind. After all, the human survives even if they lose control and embrace their primitive nature, and the sun continues burning even if our industrial structures destroy the planet. We can see the sun as arbiter in both cases – the watcher that transcends the war by virtue of surviving no matter who wins.

*Henry Baker (b. 1994, NYC) is an American artist currently living and working in London. He received his painting MA from the Royal College of Art in London in 2023, and a BS from Cornell University in 2017. Henry has exhibited in the UK and internationally. Recent exhibitions include: The Road of Excess, Safehouse, London 2023, RCA Degree Show, London 2023, and Unfathomable, Althuis Hofland, Amsterdam 2023. He is a recipient of the Royal College of Art Hine Prize (2023).*