

## ALEX KATZ

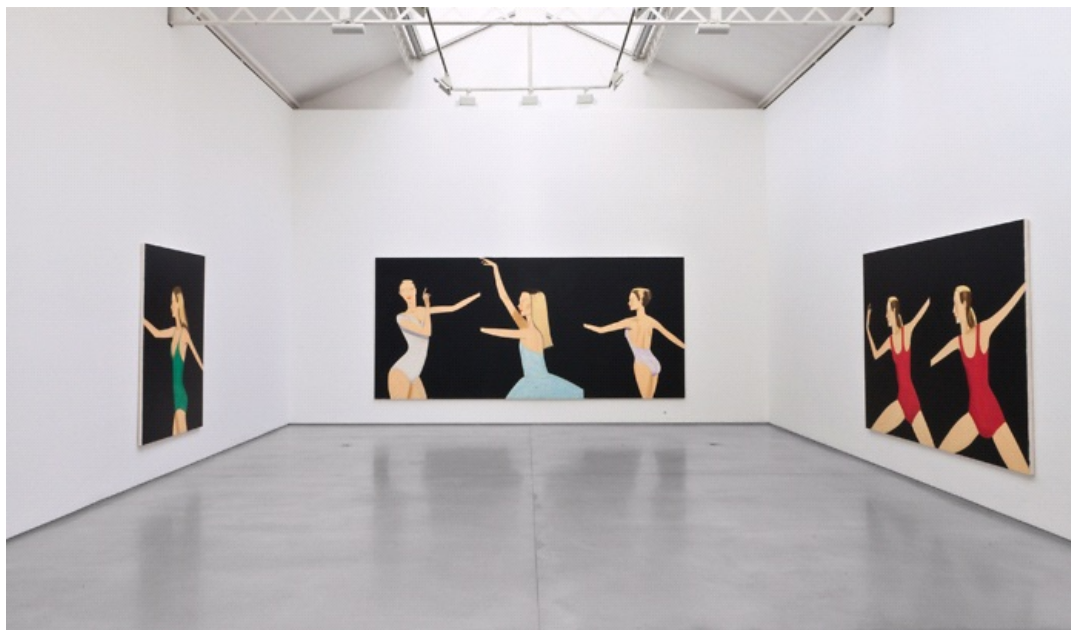
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### FACE THE MUSIC

PARIS DEBELLEYME

20 Thursday - 19 Saturday

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Galerie Thaddaeus Ropac is showing the latest series of works by Alex Katz (b 1927) under the title Face The Music.

The American artist will present a new sequence of canvases, studies in oil, cartoons and drawings, all pertaining to dance. One of the undisputed key figures of American pop art, since the early 1950s - inspired by American billboards, the principle of seriality, and human representations, free of any kind of psychology - he was already preparing the way for pop art. Although Alex Katz belongs to the pop generation of Andy Warhol, Robert Rauschenberg and Jasper Johns, it was not until the 1970s that his paintings were exhibited internationally.

Since the 1980s, Katz has been a protagonist of Cool Painting, and one of the most influential painters worldwide. He came to be a regular father figure for an entire generation of young contemporary painters. Birth of the Cool was the title of an exhibition held in Zurich and Hamburg in 1997; it examined the way the musical coolness of American post-War jazz performed by musicians such as Stan Getz or Miles Davis became a new category in American painting. Our exhibition also deals with the manifestation of music (and dance) in the media of painting and drawing.

During the 1960s, Alex Katz collaborated for the first time with a dance ensemble. He created stage-sets for the legendary Paul Taylor Dance Company, and painted portraits of dancers and dance formations that were completely in tune with its time. In 2010 he returned to this theme, and painted portraits of the protagonists of the New York dance scene. With his figurative pictures, Alex Katz has always been somewhere on the border between abstraction and realism. He was doing figurative paintings in American billboard format when the whole of American art had turned vehemently away from representation. Some painters persisted in their impulsive individual style or in the presentation of hardly perceptible differences; Katz countered these with his dry treatment of a visible, verifiable world. He was, he says, defending himself against abstract expressionism and the fervid self-representation of artists like Jackson Pollock.

Werner Spies remarked in 2004 that the young painter was harking back, without any great detours, to America's usable past - to Georgia O'Keeffe, Fairfield Porter, Ralston Crawford and Edward Hopper. Katz's works are divided almost equally into the genres of portraiture and landscape. Since the 1960s he has painted views of New York (especially his immediate surroundings in Soho), the landscapes of Maine, where he spends several months every year, as well as portraits of family members, artists, writers and New York society protagonists.

His work has been exhibited worldwide, in solo shows and retrospectives, and is included in the collections of many major museums, including the Museum of Modern Art/New York, Metropolitan Museum of Art/Tokyo, Tate Modern/London, Centre Georges Pompidou/Paris, Nationalgalerie/Berlin and Reina Sofia/Madrid. On the evening of the opening at 8:30pm, the French choreographer Hervé Robbe will do a dance performance with Johanna Lemarchand with music composed by Romain Kronenberg. A book will accompany the exhibition with texts by Mark Rappolt, editor-in-chief of the British magazine Art Review, and Charles Reinhart, director of the American Dance Festival.