

David Nolan Gallery is pleased to present *Recent Terrestrials*, an exhibition of new work by Alexander Ross. On view from October 30 through December 6, this will be Ross's third solo show with the gallery. Bringing together a series of large-scale paintings and a group of smaller drawings, the exhibition signifies a variety of recent formal and thematic innovations for the artist.

Ross is best known for his biomorphic imagery, wherein modeled forms suggest molecular ecosystems as viewed through a microscope, or surreal landscapes inspired by Max Ernst. In recent years, the artist has developed a distinctive color palette that includes occasional flashes of red and yellow emerging within multiple shades of green. Ross's characteristic handling of paint – through which shapes are given dimensionality in incremental bands of shading – might suggest a photorealistic endeavor. However, viewed as a whole, his compositions can be understood more accurately as abstractions, where the interplay of color and form, highlight and shadow become the focus.

With *Recent Terrestrials*, Ross redirects his emphasis toward imagery recalling “grotesques”, a style of architectural ornament found throughout Europe that incorporates ugly or playfully contorted faces. These sneering faces also have a political dimension, conveying the artist's restlessness in response to what he perceives to be disquieting geological and social changes in civil life.

Another group of paintings finds the artist un-mounted from his established vantage point, in which a clear blue sky serves as a neutral backdrop. Radically shifting this familiar perspective, a number of Ross's new works comprise intricately worked lattices or cellular matrixes, appearing both luminous and translucent. In an alternative reading, these can also be seen as cross-sections of the earth where unusual concave forms suggest subterranean excavations.

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