Press Release

Eckart Hahn: *Silence*
Exhibition Dates: September 5 – October 10, 2025

Pablo's Birthday is pleased to present *Silence*, an exhibition by German painter Eckart Hahn. After two decades of collaboration, this is the artist's eighth solo exhibition with the gallery. Hahn's practice combines elements of narrative and physical tension to explore paradoxical relationships and power dynamics, such as freedom/control, authenticity/artificiality, or isolation/connection. Through the representation of materiality, pressure, gravity, and restriction, he creates a synergy of form and semantics that aid in exploring these binaries.

"Sight is effortless; sight requires spatial distance; sight can be turned off." – Susan Sontag

Closed eyes link the cast of characters that Hahn brings to life; apes meditating with apples balanced on their heads and bullets between their toes, while Kermit raises up a skull, and a bird perches on a tower of stacked stones. The profile of a parrot faces us with its eyelids closed. In these contemplative poses, the gesture of looking away evokes both inner stillness and emotional retreat, while the precariousness of balanced objects becomes a metaphor for weight, gravity, strain. In these visual cues, Hahn uncovers a deeper psychological tension: the burden of moral ambiguity and the delicate negotiation between personal preservation and collective responsibility.

Susan Sontag writes, "In a modern life–a life in which there is a superfluity of things to which we are invited to pay attention–it seems normal to turn away from images that simply make us feel bad." Sontag emphasizes the human reaction to a constant carousel of thoughts displayed through the everyday, unceasing newsreel. Hahn unveils this tension: When does self-care become neglect? When does self-care shield us not only from harm but from responsibility, connection, and empathy? In reverse, when does a lack of self-care contribute to a deadening of feeling resulting in cynicism or apathy?

In Hahn's paintings, we see both a coping mechanism and disengagement, a focus on the self and a shutting out from the world. Hahn raises the question of whether, in shielding ourselves, we risk severing the very qualities that make us human. But Hahn doesn't offer resolution; rather, he sustains contradiction. He asks us to sit with it, to feel its pull, and its discomfort.

Hahn attended Eberhardt Karl University and the Johannes Gutenberg School in Stuttgart. His works have been represented in solo and group institutional exhibitions and are featured in numerous collections worldwide. Accompanying the publication of his monograph, "Der schwarze Hund trägt bunt" 2018, were three museum exhibitions at Haus am Lützowplatz, Berlin; Neue Galerie Gladbeck, Gladbeck; and Museum Villa Rot, Burgrieden. In summer 2025, Hahn will present a retrospective of over 50 works at the Museum Villa Zanders, Bergisch Gladbach, Germany. He currently lives and works near Stuttgart, Germany.