

Press release

Urban Zellweger

15 January - 28 February 2026
Opening 14 January, 6 - 8 pm

Chameleons suggest the alien with their ability to change appearance, dual vision and long quick tongues that devour instantly and invisibly. It's logical that Urban Zellweger alights on this animal straddling the exotic and the familiar. Their biological characteristics match his artistic interests: camouflage layering, multi-imagery revolving the figurative and abstract, a fast and fluid digestion of painterly conversations. For over a decade he has recognized the organic bizarreness of the world and reflected, amped up and warped it as a warrant for his own pictorial experimentation. Here, Zellweger extends his negotiations of chaos and control, complexity through superimposing and the performative evidence of his processes. Within and across each of these approaches, ones he blurs together or freely skips between, is a distinctive visual ebullience playing against expected levels of subject and taste. With his overlaying of negative reptilian silhouettes over dense abstract paintings which he further incorporates figurative details within, he confuses legibility. The line between creation and erasure is as ambiguous as the visual stimulations created. These grand, yet intimate, portraits work on emotional, as well as art historical, levels as they depict something alien, as in the creation of the new. The title of this exhibition, combining the name of the gallery with the dominant motif of the show, feels, as with his paintings, like an inevitability more than word play. Speaking of that 1983 hit song, "Karma Chameleon", singer Boy George has said the title refers to those with a "terrible fear of alienation". In Zellweger's paintings which cultivate their alternating personalities, forms and objectives we find a surprisingly fearless confidence and cohesion where contradictions come and go, come and go.

-Mitchell Anderson