Hans Goodrich

Who's Afraid of ________?

Zaid Arshad
Anna-Sophie Berger
KP Brehmer
David Diao
Andrea Fraser
Joseph Grigely
Ronald Jones
Ghislaine Leung
Puppies Puppies (Jade Guanaro Kuriki-Olivo)

April 8 - May 31, 2026

Hans Goodrich is proud to present the group exhibition *Who's Afraid of ________?*, a collaborative endeavor with Turquoise, New York, featuring two different constellations of artworks by thirteen artists spread across the galleries' two venues. The exhibition at Hans Goodrich comprises of eleven artworks by nine artists.

Borrowing their titles and conceit from two canonical works of American abstraction—Barnett Newman's *Who's Afraid of Red, Yellow, and Blue?* from 1966-1970 and the 1988 work *Forbidden Colors* by Felix Gonzalez Torres—the two presentations attempt to trace a lineage of artists deploying various strategies of abstraction to analyze, explicate, or describe various systems of power.
While Barnett Newman's iconic series of color field paintings remained politically impartial, the paintings were nonetheless the subject of two slashing attacks. The perpetrator of the second defacement in 1982 was motivated by his erroneous assumption of the painting's supposed "perversion of the German flag". The four monochrome panels painted red, black, green, and white in Gonzalez Torres's *Forbidden Colors* appear to speak the same modernist language as Newman's color fields, however, they *do* represent a national flag. Gonzalez Torres wrote of this work, "it is a fact that four colors red, black, green and white placed next to each other in any form are strictly forbidden by the Israeli army in the occupied Palestinian territories. This color combination can cause an arrest, a beating, a curfew, a shooting, or a news photograph."

The show's title seeks to expand Gonzalez Torres's critical gesture outward, generating a dialogue with artists whose approach to abstraction is fraught with latent meaning. By challenging the assumption that that which is abstract is by nature neutralized or apolitical, the artworks in this exhibition illustrate that formalism (and image-making at large), is anything but innocent, and in fact, more often implicated in regimes beyond our immediate field of view.

In every instance, the tension between what is perceptible and what is invisible, what is historically imposed and what is available for revision, governs these artworks' production and reception. Far from 'non-objective', each artist's differing approach to abstraction carries meaning beyond their form like a Trojan Horse. In each work, form, color, and language harbor an ulterior motive and ideological directive. Abstraction's power to obfuscate becomes a strategy unto itself.