



TIME'S WAN WAVE

An exhibition of new works by **Loïc Raguénès**

January 10 - February 24, 2019

The burrow is my own design, and I'm happy with the way it's turned out. The only visible trace of it from outside is a big hole, but that in fact goes nowhere; after a couple of feet you encounter bedrock. I don't want to claim it was done that way on purpose, it's just what was left over from one of my many false starts, but in the end I thought it would be a good ruse to leave this one hole unfilled. Many ruses are so obvious that they are self-defeating, that's something I know better than most, and it's certainly a bold stroke to leave the hole to indicate that there may be something worth investigating in the vicinity. But anyone who suspects me of cowardice and my burrow of being a monument to my cowardice misunderstands me. Perhaps a thousand paces from that hole, concealed under a removable flap of moss is the actual entrance to the burrow, it's as secure as anything in this world can be; of course, someone can happen to tread on the moss or push through it, and then my burrow is wide open, and whoever wants to can walk in and destroy it for all time—though it should be pointed out that this requires certain rather rare aptitudes. I understand all that and even now I at its zenith, my life enjoys hardly a single hour of complete quiet; in that place in the dark moss I feel myself mortal, and in dreams there is often a greedy snout rooting persistently around in it.

— excerpt from *The Burrow*, Franz Kafka (translation Michael Hofmann)

Time's Wan Wave is an exhibition of new works by Loïc Raguénès, his sixth one-person exhibition with C L E A R I N G. Born in Besançon, France, in 1968, Raguénès now lives and works in the coastal region of Brittany, an area that continues to make an impression on the artist's practice. Bringing together a group of new tempera works on canvas with two wall paintings, *Time's Wan Wave* explores the elemental devices of painting, an activity the artist scrutinizes through quietly poignant works about painterly space and color. Raguénès's newest works are also about the sensation of time.

The word LIP is painted large on the left wall of the rear room. LIP is a watch-making company based in the artist's native town of Besançon; it was the site of several major labor strikes in the 1970s and 1980s that still resonate in the area. The collective memory of labor unrest at LIP imbues Raguénès's images with a historical ambience, a feeling of memories waxing and waning into view. On the facing wall is a group of Raguénès's "marines", paintings of waveforms contrasted with softly muted fields of color. A new feature of these sea-inspired paintings are their rounded borders; they call to mind the windows of a train or the rounded frames of celluloid and photographic film. These paintings blur lyricism and formalism, a distinction challenged by Raguénès's sensibility. Other works in the show introduce new paintings of graphic facial features (eyes, cheeks) joined with hazy, Cézanne-like backgrounds. Raguénès calls these paintings "heads" for short. They are similar to the "marines" and earlier paintings of rows of dots, which foregrounded patterned forms with solid or blended backgrounds.

Loïc Raguénès's practice speaks to a formulation of painting as an imperfect but adequately sustaining pursuit. Like the burrower in Kafka's parable, the artist maintains this private activity as a positive response to old, unsolvable problems. *The burrow is my own design, and I'm happy with the way it's turned out.*

Loïc Raguénès (born 1968 in Besançon, FR) lives and works in Douarnenez, FR. Solo exhibitions of his work have been held at Musée des Beaux Arts, Dole, FR; Musée François Pompon, Saulieu, FR; Circuit, Lausanne, CH; Galeria Zero, Milan; C L E A R I N G New York and Brussels. His work has been featured in group exhibitions, including Le Consortium, Dijon; de Appel, Amsterdam; Musée des Beaux Arts de Rennes; Villa Arson, Nice; CAN, Neuchâtel; Casino Luxembourg; FRAC Ile de France, Paris and FRAC Aquitaine, Bordeaux; and Galerie Thaddaeus Ropac, Salzburg. Loïc Raguénès' work is part of the collections of Fonds national d'art contemporain, Paris; FRAC Ile de France; FRAC Champagne-Ardenne; and FRAC Bourgogne.