



### LOS ANGELES

#### Guy Yanai: "Accident Nothing" at Aran Cravey Gallery

Guy Yanai's first solo exhibition of paintings at the recently relocated Aran Cravey Gallery (now in an expansive Hollywood location) combined traditional and not-so-traditional subject matter with a high-keyed color palette and rhythmic style of brushwork. At first glance, it seemed that Yanai's formal strategies of color and brushwork united a relatively disparate source of imagery: still-lives, residential landscapes, a soccer match, the pyramids of Egypt, and the podium of the US president, which stands empty. A longer look, however, finds a similar mood in each as the Israeli artist seems intent on capturing the easily overlooked, in-between moments that are often lost beneath the surface of the frantic pace of contemporary living.

While the subject matter reaches back to the earliest traditions of Western art, their treatment hearkens to a diverse array of modernist influences. Cézanne in the broken horizon of *Torino*; Edward Hopper meets David Hockney in the lonely vistas of desert suburbia; Pop Art in the commercial icons found in the singular painting with a human presence, *I'm Loving It (Italy Losing)*; and a series of small, square architectural renderings that seems to dwell just outside the neighborhood of Ellsworth Kelly. This series of intimately scaled, cropped views of larger urban settings exude a sense of mystery, leaving the viewer only a small clue from which to envision the rest of the building. These missing bits of information are at once frustrating and engaging,

demanding more from the viewer than the candy-colored scheme first suggests.

Throughout the exhibition, Yanai maintains a hypnotic, rhythmic style of brushwork, pulling richly saturated pigment across the canvas in parallel horizontal paths. Though it must also be noted that a selection of the paintings were hung sideways, causing a slight rift in the viewing experience. This deliberate move reminds the viewer of the mediated experience between the depicted scene and the experience of it. But it is the persistent brushwork, the sense of consistent movement across the canvas—both horizontal and vertical—that creates an underlying sense of anxiety that permeates the overall mood of the exhibition. That initial moment of quiet becomes a pregnant pause, a moment of anticipation, as Yanai subverts the calm and stability associated with the lull of the horizontal line turned here on its head. Instead, we are left to wonder: what will happen next in that empty room, on that soccer field, or when the president next speaks?

—MOLLY ENHOLM

#### "ANOTHER SPLASH," 2013

Guy Yanai

OIL ON LINEN, 29" x 23½"

PHOTO: COURTESY ARAN CRAVEY GALLERY