



**LANCE RAUTZHAN**  
*Specter Spectre Specter*

April 17th - May 16th

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**Arts + Leisure** is thrilled to announce ***Specter Spectre Specter***, an exhibition of recent work by **Lance Rautzhan**. While he is a multidisciplinary artist, often working with sound collages, his primary praxis is painting, with his unique eye for layered, object-like paintings taking the fore. Comprising works depicting candy dispensers, plastic masks, and other peripheral ephemera, *Specter Spectre Specter* injects these objects with a tenor of anxiety, distorting their morphology with frenzied linework and the incorporation of discordant iconography. Interestingly, several paintings depict tools of perception, such as *Untitled (View Master)*, *Untitled (Kaleidoscope)*, and *Untitled (Push-Button Telephone)*, with Rautzhan's formal manipulations calling attention to the constant slippage between perception and mis-perception.

The found fabric Rautzhan uses as grounds complicate the identity of his paintings, and his frequently cropped compositions further flatten the divisions between image and object. Thickly applied enamel lends a rough-hewn dimensionality, paralleling the vintage of his source memorabilia. At once hyper-specific and thoroughly ambiguous, subtle details such as hat embroidery and album titles establish a haze of temporality; while immediately reminiscent of dusty childhood memories, these details often appear as scrawls, blurred beyond total comprehension.

In *Untitled (Roller Skates)*, Rautzhan portrays the object with a flabby corpulence, recalling both the "soft sculptures" of Claes Oldenburg and the biomorphic forms of Surrealism. By suggesting the rhythms of some strange inner life, *Specter Spectre Specter* forces the viewer into a dialogue of empathy with its cast-off objects, interrogating questions of memory and obsolescence. Indeed, in *Untitled (View-Master)*, one can make out the contours of a human face in the mechanism of the View-Master, a ghost trapped in a machine of odd provenance. Rautzhan's series of candy dispensers further complicate the boundaries of memory and image/object; fusing strikingly disjointed imagery of a blackbird, Native American, and winged skull with the mundane form of a Pez-dispenser, they channel the weird, dark currents of American society, a veritable menagerie of late-twentieth century TV culture. Evoking memories of family gatherings, yard sales, and musty basement and attic realms, *Specter Spectre Specter* fuses nostalgia and a sense of gnawing disquiet, reveling in an almost grotesque deconstruction of familiar objects.

**Lance Rautzhan (b. 1974 in Pottsville, PA)** is a multidisciplinary artist and educator. His praxes include painting, video, Internet based temporal projects, installation and sound. He holds a Master of Professional Studies in Art Education (New Media) from the Pennsylvania State University and a Bachelor of Arts in Sociology from Indiana University of Pennsylvania. He moved to Long Island City, Queens in 1997 to study acting and made small, illustrative works on paper. After relocating to Baltimore MD in 1999, Rautzhan developed a rigorous abstract painting practice resulting in a significant body of work and an extensive exhibition history. After a return to New York, this time Bushwick in 2006, he shifted to a remixed, socially conscious narrative approach to painting and video that offered some critical success.

Contemporaneously, Rautzhan had been cultivating an auxiliary gig as a vinyl- only D.J. In 2013, his sound art project, *Those Meddling Punk Kids* emerged after a well-received improvisational performance conceived for vinyl comic book records and designed to appropriate and reposition existing narratives through a socially critical lens. Later, Rautzhan would pursue these audible explorations as an educational project and receive the 2019-2020 Professional Master's Excellence Award from the Graduate School at Penn State for his research focused on the Beuysian pedagogical of a sound art creative process.

Rautzhan's work has been exhibited at **Freight+Volume** and **Arts+Leisure (NY)**, Present Co. (BK), DNA Gallery (Provincetown), Index Art Center/Newark Museum of Art (NJ) and Spacecamp (Baltimore) to name a few. In 2019, Freight+Volume presented his installation Happy Meal as a solo booth at Satellite Art Fair (BK). His work has been published internationally including ITCHJournal of Creative Expression (University of the Witwatersrand, South Africa) and Pickled Matter: New Faces of Contemporary Art (Nippon Publishing, Tokyo) among others. Rautzhan is a regular resident at the DNA Artist Residency Program in Provincetown, MA. He lives on a farm in the Appalachian mountains of east central Pennsylvania where he continues to expand his multidisciplinary approach.