

ARTFORUM

Ivan Seal

Raebervonstenglin, Zurich
August 27–September 30, 2016



Ivan Seal, vulch grinning, 2016, oil on canvas, 59 x 59".

The memory of a childhood event—a car accident Ivan Seal survived with his family, riding in a yellow Chevette—is the genesis for his third solo show here. The gallery, located in a former garage, is an ideal stage for the revival of this memory. These oil paintings, on display for the first time, are complex constructions whose point of departure is the dismembering of cars with vibrantly colored, crystal-shaped excrescences that provide a visual balance. Six large pieces in a first room seem to suggest they are a body, with two works in the second room making up its heart and brain. The paintings reveal the artist's memories in an equilibrium between what is resolved and what is yet to be understood. Vague backgrounds uphold wavering, impossible structures, sometimes defined by motifs such as keys or tree-shaped air fresheners.

Abstraction goes out of control in the second room, where the two canvases vulch grinning and vavet grinning (all works 2016) have stable appearances giving way to a free representation of impossible engines. Flowers and vegetation seem to sprout from the ferrous masses. These works inspired the artist's musical composition "chevette in dub," which gives the show its title. Like the paintings, this recording of metallic noises, engine rumblings, creaking, and belches brings into the present the resonances of moments impressed in the artist's mind.

Translated from Italian by Marguerite Shore.

— Maria Chiara Valacchi