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Rochelle Feinstein

June 9 – September 29, 2016
Opening: June 8, 6–8pm

Galerie Francesca Pia is pleased to present Rochelle Feinstein's first solo gallery exhibition in Europe. In over thirty years of continuous practice, Feinstein's work has explored the points of contact between popular, everyday themes, or what she calls "normal stupid life", and radical abstract painting. Trained as a fashion illustrator before turning to painting, her work still bears traces of the vocabulary of advertising. Newspaper cuttings, archives and slogan words are all brought into an interrogation of the proper subject of painting, mixed with vernacular photographic styles, like autographed celebrity pictures and tourist photographs sourced from Kodak home photo-development kits, as in her 2001-2003 series of slogan paintings *Yes, Love, Stop, Wrong* etc.

Feinstein works in series, eschewing a signature style and grouping works into thematic clusters instead. Within these groups, she divides works into diptychs and triptychs, staging each component strand of thought in a separate arena. In *The Little Engine* (2005-08), for instance, each individual piece approaches the idea of failure: reading from left to right, she shows the failure (on the part of a New York signmaker) to correctly transcribe the name of the South African artist Zwelethu Mthethwa; the second presents an obstacle to the easy reading of a political statement; in the third, a shot-up car window shows the failure to create an abstract painting that would adequately depict war and, finally, in the large panel, the failure to create a properly abstract painting. Similarly, in her series *How Was Africa?* (2013), Feinstein uses separate panels to contrast the tourist view of Ghana from the *New York Times* with historical views and perspectives from inside the country. *El Bronco* (1994) uses the myths of the OJ Simpson court case to provide two occasions for painting in two separate, though formally almost-identical canvases. Every set of works poses a multi-pronged attack on the concept of formally self-sufficient Modernist painting and the ideas of authorship and authority it represents.

Rochelle Feinstein, (b. 1947, New York), has recently mounted a major retrospective at the Centre d'Art Contemporain, Geneva, which has now traveled to the Lenbachhaus, Munich, and will go to the Kestnergesellschaft, Hanover, later this year, and to the Bronx Museum of Art in 2018. Her work has exhibited in the Blanton Museum of Art, Austin; or the Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, amongst many more. She has taught painting at Yale University since 1994.