



University Art Gallery  
712 Arts Plaza  
Claire Trevor School of the Arts  
University of California, Irvine  
Irvine, CA 92697-2775  
(949) 824 9854  
gallery@uci.edu  
uag.arts.uci.edu  
Tues.–Sat., 12–6 p.m.

## PRESS PREVIEW KIT



### **Katherina Olschbaur** ***Dirty Elements***

**Curated by Allyson Unzicker**  
**Contemporary Arts Center (CAC) Gallery**  
**On View: January 11 – March 14, 2020**  
**Opening Reception: January 11, 2:00 pm – 5:00 pm**

**IRVINE, Calif.** – UC Irvine’s University Art Gallery is pleased to present a series of new paintings by Austrian-born, Los Angeles based artist Katherina Olschbaur in *Dirty Elements*, her first solo institutional exhibition in the U.S. On view in the Contemporary Arts Center Gallery January 11th through March 14th, 2020, the opening reception will be held on Saturday, January 11th from 2:00 pm until 5:00 pm.

Media Contacts: Jaime DeJong, Director of Marketing and Communications, (949) 824-2189 / jdejong@uci.edu  
Allyson Unzicker, UAG Associate Director, (949) 824-9854 / aunzicke@uci.edu



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The law is not patriarchal because it denies the existence, even the power, of women...The law is patriarchal because it denies the bodies, sexualities of women. In patriarchy, there is no menstrual blood.  
–Kathy Acker

Olschbaur provides a female perspective to a history of canonized male painters, whose work simultaneously inspires her. Although traces of matriarchal order in Western thought typically appear as a mythological apparition, Olschbaur paints a narrative that subverts our expectations under the normative language of patriarchy. For Olschbaur, art historical tropes are appropriated and used like garments, worn then cast aside in a process that is ever changing and moving within each work. In this way, *Dirty Elements* investigates the power dynamics of patriarchal order and its violent denial of female sexuality. Referencing a wide spectrum of thought, Olschbaur's practice takes root in mythology, religious and historical paintings, the subcultures of S/M, and film. Embracing Georges Bataille's concept of the formless, the paintings explore the *dirty* elements of our carnal nature. In so doing, they feature provocative and erotically charged scenes that are at times humorous and disturbing.

Olschbaur's practice involves a process of fervently sketching out these scenes before painting them. Working in a wet-on-wet process, she paints on a malleable surface that is in a constant state of disruption, where scenes formulate out of an amalgam of autobiographical, historical and imaginary narratives. In this layered process, her paintings elicit the expressive freedom to create order that only leads to disorder. By creating angular compositions, tension builds between the narratives by disallowing any singular perspective. This dense and meditative space is reflected by focusing on representations of the body as a site of repressed desire. Placing gender constructs into question, figures are seen bound, trampled or falling into animated plasticity. The backdrops are dark and ominous landscapes formed through a mirage of artificial colors, while the foregrounds are pregnant with smooth glossy bodies that sometimes transpose into animals. Without relying on meaning alone, the works contemplate a space between seduction and malaise, moving beyond the silent surface of the canvas.

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### About the Artist and Curator:

#### **Olschbaur Bio:**

Katherina Olschbaur (b.1983, Austria; lives and works in Los Angeles) has been the subject of solo exhibitions at Gnyp Gallery, Berlin (2019), Nicodim Gallery, Los Angeles (2018), OOF Books, Los Angeles (2018), PØST, Los Angeles (2018), Galerie Werkstatt Graz (2016), Museum Spoerri, Austria (2011), MUSA Vienna (2011). Recent group exhibitions include Paul Kasmin Gallery, New York, Nicodim Gallery, Los Angeles and Bucharest, Christine König Galerie Vienna, PG Art Gallery, Istanbul, Museum Gironcoli, Austria, Salzburger Kunstverein, Kunsthalle Krems, and at Symbiosis - XI Biennale de la Mediterranée, Thessaloniki. Awards and residencies include IBK Painting Prize (2018), Red Gate Residency, Beijing (2017), Theodor Körner Prize (2009).

#### **Unzicker Bio:**

Allyson Unzicker is the Associate Director and Curator for the University Art Galleries (UAG) at UC Irvine. She received her MFA in Critical & Curatorial Studies with an emphasis in both Visual Studies and Critical Theory in the School of Humanities at UC Irvine. She has curated numerous exhibitions at the UAG focusing on international emerging and mid-career artists who identify as female. Previously, Unzicker has held curatorial roles for institutions across Los Angeles including the Frank Lloyd Wright Hollyhock House, the Vincent Price Art Museum, and the UCLA Chicano Studies Research Center where she was the Curatorial Assistant for both Getty Pacific Standard Time Initiatives in 2011 and 2017 on exhibitions at the Watts Towers Arts Center, the Los Angeles Municipal Art Gallery, the Autry National Center, the Fowler Museum at UCLA, and the Los Angeles County Museum of Art. Unzicker currently lives and works between Los Angeles and Irvine, CA.



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### Katherina Olschbaur *Dirty Elements*

#### Fact Sheet

##### Exhibition:

Exhibition Dates: January 11 – March 14, 2020  
Curated by Allyson Unzicker

##### Events:

Opening Reception: January 11, 2020, 2–5 p.m.  
Visiting Artist Lecture Series: January 23, 6:30 p.m.

##### Locations:

Contemporary Art Center (CAC) Gallery  
Bldg 721

##### Gallery Hours:

Tues. – Sat. 12-6 p.m.  
Free admission

##### Parking:

UC Irvine [Mesa Parking Structure](#), 4000 Mesa Rd., Irvine, CA 92617

##### More Info:

<https://uag.arts.uci.edu>

<https://uag.arts.uci.edu/exhibit/katherina-olschbaur-dirty-elements>

##### Note to editors:

Selected high-resolution images for publicity only may be downloaded from  
Google Drive: <http://bit.ly/37KNBXU>  
(Key to images attached)

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## PRESS PREVIEW KIT IMAGE KEY

Contemporary Arts Center (CAC) Gallery, Claire Trevor School of the Arts

**Katherina Olschbaur**  
***Dirty Elements***

Press Images:



(1)



(2)



(3)

Photo credits:

(1) *Dirty Elements*, 2019, Oil on Linen, Diptych 78.75 x 157.5 inches (200 x 400 cm)

(2) *Ecstasy*, 2019, Oil on Linen, 78.75 x 157.5 inches (200 x 200 cm)

(3) *Into the Open*, 2019, Oil on Linen, Diptych 78.75 x 137.8 inches (200 x 350 cm)

The images are approved only for publication in conjunction with promotion of the exhibition. Reproductions must include the full caption information, and images may not be cropped or altered in any way or superimposed with any printing.

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### About the UAG

The University Art Galleries are committed to promoting an inter-generational dialogue between 60s/70s neo-avant-garde art and contemporary visual culture. Accordingly, the curatorial mission is to keep an eye on the modernist past while promoting the most innovative aesthetic and political debates of the post-modern present. From this vantage, the projects commissioned provoke intelligent debate on the subject of art in its most expansive poetic definition. What distinguishes the program is its unwavering commitment to publishing scholarly texts in catalogue/book form in order to disseminate research-based information into the community, providing a venue for the promotion of innovative discourse surrounding mixed media production today. The UAG program provides several exhibition platforms for inter-generational and interdisciplinary dialogue. The Major Works of Art Series commissions original projects by canonical artists working today. The Emerging Artist Series features solo projects by a set of younger artists informed by the legacies showcased in the Major Works series. The Critical Aesthetics Program commissions new work by internationally renowned mid-career artists. Augmenting this inter-generational dialogue, UAG also produces larger thematic group exhibitions alternately showcasing historical and contemporary art and film projects. UAG further promotes an active dialogue between UCI residents and the local and international art communities through colloquia, conferences, visiting artist lectures and theme-based films series, all of which are open to the public. As the galleries continue to mature, they stand committed to being an experimental exhibition space different from the current - but largely traditional - art biennial and film festival platforms.

### About UCI Claire Trevor School of the Arts

As UCI's creative laboratory, the Claire Trevor School of the Arts explores and presents the arts as the essence of human experience and expression, through art forms ranging from the most traditional to the radically new. The international faculty works across a wide variety of disciplines, partnering with others across the campus. National-ranked programs in art, dance, drama, and music begin with training but end in original invention. Students come to UCI to learn to be citizen-artists, to sharpen their skills and talents, and to become the molders and leaders of world culture. For more information, please visit [www.arts.uci.edu](http://www.arts.uci.edu).