



**ATHENAEUM CENTER**  
FOR THOUGHT AND CULTURE

For Immediate Release  
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The Athenaeum Center for Thought and Culture presents *Lucas Reiner's The Stations*  
February 22- April 2023

(Chicago, Illinois, February 2023) The Athenaeum Center for Thought and Culture is proud to announce its inaugural exhibition with Lucas Reiner's *The Stations*. Since 2001, Los Angeles and Berlin based artist Lucas Reiner has had a deep interest in the unobserved urban tree, focusing his paintings and exhibitions on portraits devoted to trees from his native Los Angeles and beyond. In *The Stations*, Reiner's trees follow a traditional medieval devotional narrative, recounting Christ's ultimate passage through death to redemption. *The Stations* include 15 paintings and 15 etchings, enhanced by film, music, and audio narration by the artist.

"We're thrilled to be partnering with Lucas for the world premier of his *Stations* paintings," says Lawrence Daufenbach, Executive Director and Founder of the Athenaeum Center for Thought and Culture. "We recognize in Reiner's work the transformative power of art and its power to help us build bridges of understanding and communion across a milieu of artistic disciplines, cultural backgrounds and worldviews. This deeply resonates with our mission at the Athenaeum."

Reiner was invited to create a *Stations* for Saint Augustine's Episcopal Church in Washington, D.C. in 2008. Deep in mourning for his adored mother, Reiner worked with Master Printmaker Clemens Büntig in Mooseurach, Germany, making his first iteration of the *Stations*. After an initial printing Büntig commented, "Okay, I see what you're doing. Nature is on the cross now." The etchings led to numerous color studies and finally to 15 works on canvas composed of layers of raw tempera pigment, marble dust, dispersion, water, and wax. The entire project was completed in 2016.

Michael Duncan, curator of *Another World*, the Transcendental Painting Group, LACMA 2023, writes in an essay on *The Stations* project: "The isolated, disaffected trees of Los Angeles seem appropriate subject matter for paintings that are far away from the quick hype of the contemporary art market. They speak of unacknowledged beauty, irrepressible life, and quiet determination – all marks of the underground efforts that are

keeping real art alive in this horrible political and cultural era. The spiritual has long been a taboo topic in the art world, rejected by formalist critics and those repulsed by the narrowing beliefs of the religious right. But painting continues to tap feelings of awe and wonder. For those willing to cast aside the cynicism of our age, the downtrodden journey depicted in Reiner's Stations offers a destination, one of hard-earned, undeterred enlightenment against all odds."

Additionally, the exhibition will include a film Reiner made at the invitation of The Silverlake Film Festival. *Trees in Los Angeles*, shot in 8-millimeter black and white, was filmed and edited by camerawoman Heather Seybolt. The static camera focuses on and creates portraits of single Los Angeles street trees. A musical component, made with Leo Major, and Reiner's daughters' Livia and Rose Reiner, will be composed especially for this exhibition.

Lucas Reiner's The Stations allow for a dialogue between artist and viewer as they both contemplate the fate of nature within a stirring mythology. Programming for the exhibition will be announced on the website.

#### About the Artist:

Lucas Reiner has widely exhibited internationally and his work is represented in public and private collections, including the permanent collections of the Los Angeles County Museum of Art (LACMA); the Santa Barbara Museum of Art; the West Collection (Oaks, Pennsylvania, USA); Staatlichen Graphischen Sammlung (Munich, Germany); the Diözesan Museum (Freising, Germany); Colección Jumex (Mexico City, Mexico); the American Embassy Collection (Riga, Latvia); and Kunstmuseum Magdeburg Kloster Unser Lieben Frauen (Magdeburg, Germany)

#### About the Athenaeum Center for Thought and Culture:

The mission of ACTC is to invite people into encounters with beauty and to revitalize the great Catholic tradition of the arts from our location in one of Chicago's most unique religious, artistic, and civic buildings. At the Athenaeum Center for Thought and Culture, we believe that Beauty has the capacity to build up culture, transform society, and change lives. We are committed to thoughtfully and joyfully engaging the community, creating and promoting beauty in its diversity of forms, and inspiring people to seek answers to life's deepest questions.

For more information:

<https://athenaeumcenter.org/events/>