

CARMEN NEELY LIFELINES

12 January – 9 February 2019

Opening: 11 January 2019, 7 pm

With Lifelines SETAREH GALLERY presents American artist Carmen Neely's (*1987 in Charlotte, NC, US) first solo exhibition in Europe, yielding insight into her expressive artistic practice. Neely's newest series, focusing on a collection of intimate memories and moments she shares with a community of powerful and influential women, is characterised by a referential yet abstract painterly approach.

The pictures of the exhibition reflect Neely's visual language expressing said personal relationships. In fact, the titles of the works refer to extracts from significant conversations that provided the artist with an enlightened outlook on experience, relationships and what it means to be present in different aspects of life. On the one hand, the integration of her own life creates an intimacy that is opaque for the viewer, on the other hand, the works are open to individual projections.

What Neely brings to the canvas is created from moods and memories that she intuitively presents in gestural abstraction. This is expressed in reworked areas of colour, fluid lines, scratches and dynamic, often type-like settings ranging from delicate contours to self-confident strokes reminiscent of graffiti. She integrates nontraditional objects, like thin linked chains adorned to the canvas, or childhood hair accessories woven onto the painted surface. Every extension of this creative process provides a recorded gesture and physical expression. The individual markings potentially generate emotional impressions and even synaesthetic perceptions to the viewer.

Lifelines features a selection of large-scale compositions with a focus on continuous gestural forms, intuitive mark-making and a spectrum of expressive referential colours. Carmen Neely's paintings clearly stand in the tradition of American painting and are reminiscent of art historical predecessors from Cy Twombly to Jean-Michel Basquiat. Her work marks a fresh and self-confident position of a contemporary artist.