



Resurrection

An exhibition of new paintings by

Robert Zehnder

CLEARING New York

March 12 - April 26, 2025

CLEARING is pleased to present *Resurrection*, Robert Zehnder's second solo exhibition with CLEARING and his first at the gallery's New York location. Expanding on the themes explored in his 2023 debut at CLEARING Los Angeles, Zehnder presents a body of work that meditates on transformation—both personal and artistic—through a lens that merges historical painting traditions, digital landscapes, and self-mythology.

The works in *Resurrection* unfold like shifting terrains, where landscapes are at once real and imagined, rooted in memory yet tinged with the aesthetics of simulated worlds. Zehnder's paintings recall the American Regionalists, with their expansive horizons and stylized forms, yet his approach is less about documentation and more about perception—how landscapes function as metaphors for the mind, for consumption, for the process of constructing and deconstructing meaning. His compositions feel immersive, almost hallucinatory, as if the land itself is in flux, morphing between abstraction and representation.

This sense of flux is particularly evident in *Fall Plowing, 2025*, where a rolling agricultural landscape is reimagined as a biomorphic, undulating environment. The warm yellows and greens suggest seasonal transition, while the hyper-stylized trees and neatly sculpted forms recall both early 20th-century Regionalist painting and digital rendering techniques. A crimson wedge of exposed earth in the distance hints at human intervention, positioning the act of cultivation as both a renewal and a disruption.

The idea of resurrection in Zehnder's work is not an endpoint, but an ongoing process—one shaped by metabolism, decay, and renewal. These themes manifest in his recurring topiary forms, which appear as controlled, cultivated structures yet teem with an underlying tension, suggesting the pull between order and the organic chaos beneath. In *Wet Pine Family, 2025*, three towering conifers take on an almost fluid quality, their dense green foliage appearing to drip downward, as if caught in perpetual transformation. Their massive, intertwining roots seem both deeply anchored and precariously exposed, reinforcing Zehnder's engagement with landscapes as spaces of both stability and slippage. The sky above, awash with swirling greens and fiery oranges, further emphasizes the sense of an environment in transition.

Zehnder's influences extend beyond physical landscapes into digital realms. The artist's engagement with gaming and digital escapism introduces a new kind of cartography—one shaped by constructed environments, boundless in their illusion yet governed by hidden parameters. His paintings often evoke this sensation: a world that appears vast and infinite, yet operates under invisible constraints. The landscapes in *Resurrection* are not just physical places but psychological and ideological terrains, spaces where personal history and collective narratives intertwine.

This interplay of natural and synthetic forms reaches its most ambitious scale in *Raven Tree Topiary, 2025*, the largest painting in the exhibition. Here, two sprawling trees, their branches meticulously woven into perfect ovoid canopies, become architectural constructs as much as organic forms. Suspended within their latticed limbs are gleaming red orbs—suggestive of fruit, artificial nodes, or celestial bodies—heightening the tension between natural growth and imposed order. Beneath them, their gnarled roots stretch across rolling green hills, a reminder of both lineage and entropy. The sky, a restless mix of pink, blue, and ochre, situates the scene in a liminal time, as if caught between dawn and dusk, past and future.

The exhibition also reflects a deeply personal transformation for Zehnder. Over the past year, he underwent a period of self-imposed restrictions—experimenting with fasting, eliminating certain habits, and engaging in acts of restraint as a way of regaining control over his sense of self. These experiences inform the meticulous, almost ritualistic nature of his mark-making, as well as the presence of objects from his past. Among them is a sculpture of a childhood toy, a relic of innocence that, in its excavation, becomes a kind of self-portrait—a testament to continuity through change.

Throughout *Resurrection*, Zehnder moves fluidly between influences—between history and contemporary digital culture, between painterly tradition and personal mythology. His works exist in a state of slippage, where meaning is never fixed but continuously evolving. This exhibition invites viewers to consider the landscapes—both literal and figurative—that shape their own experiences and to question whether resurrection is a return to something lost or the creation of something entirely new.

Resurrection will be on view at C L E A R I N G, New York, from March 12 to April 26, 2025.

For press inquiries and further information, please contact C L E A R I N G at [sales@c-l-e-a-r-i-n-g.com].