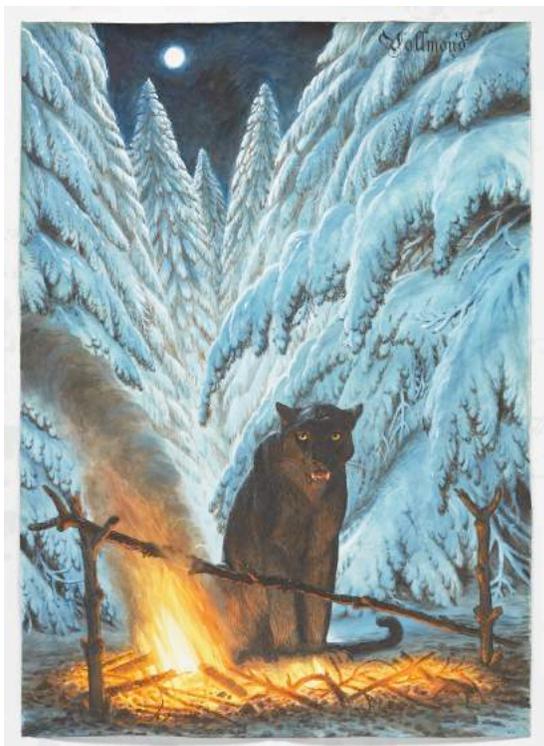


PAUL KASMIN GALLERY

Walton Ford at Frieze New York
Stand C16, Randall's Island, May 5-8, 2016



For Frieze New York Paul Kasmin Gallery will present a solo exhibition by the painter Walton Ford, known for his grand scale watercolors of animals in which he expands upon the visual language of traditional natural history painting. This presentation at Frieze will be the first since his highly acclaimed recent exhibition at the Musée de la Chasse et de la Nature, Paris.

In this series of six new paintings Ford was inspired by the historical account of a female black panther who escaped from the Zürich Zoo in 1933. The big tropical cat, who broke free from her abusive mate through a ventilator opening in the roof of her cage, was able to allude capture for over two months in the midst of the Swiss winter. The director of the Zürich Zoo, Dr Heini Hediger, related the story of the panther's disappearance in his book *Wild Animals in Captivity*:

"Nearly ten weeks after the escape, that is not until the middle of December, a casual labourer on the boundary between Zürich Oberland and St. Gallen discovered the panther under a barn, and killed it for food. Before that, the information was often received that the panther had been seen here, there and everywhere, yet the whereabouts of the great cat could never be pointed out with certainty, suspicious tracks always turning out to be those of dogs. The most incredible suggestions were made by the public to the zoo authorities; for example, the help of a clairvoyant should be sought to search for the escaped animal, or that it should be exorcized by the representative of a certain religious sect. In the Swiss press alone, about eight hundred articles on the "panther case" appeared. At all events, the Zürich Zoo, then in its early days, sprang to fame overnight thanks to this incident. The propaganda value of the escape was incalculable."

Using this primary source material as his starting point, Ford has created a sequence of haunting moonlit nocturnes in which the doomed fugitive cat assumes an increasingly ghostly and supernatural presence. Says Ford, "A powerful alien creature, seemingly invisible, passing though snowbound European landscapes on the eve of war - I have to paint about that."

Image: *Vollmond*, 2016. Watercolor, gouache and ink on paper, 84 x 60 inches. Courtesy the artist and Paul Kasmin Gallery

Media Contact: ART Communication + Consultancy Anna Rosa Thomae, ART@annarosathomae.com