



IMANTS TILLERS

FROM THE STUDIO

18 APRIL – 26 MAY 2018

Since 1981, Imants Tillers has been using his 'canvasboard system', in which multiple painted boards are arranged in grids to form large-scale paintings. Also known as the *Book of Power*, the project was inspired by Stéphane Mallarmé's idea that 'everything in the world exists to end up a book'. Through this system, Tillers' aims to accommodate of 'all modes of expression: from the trivial to the serious, the banal to the profound'. Using predominately appropriated imagery, Tillers combines existing artworks and texts to address a wide range of themes. Each canvasboard is numbered on the reverse, beginning at the number one, in November 1981, and ascending methodically towards the goal of infinity. The present count has exceeded 108,000.

From the Studio presents 10 paintings made up of approximately 840 of these panels. The works are drawn from Tillers' personal collection and span four decades of his career, from the 1980s to the present. They address issues of power, identity and diaspora and also chronicle a shift in Tillers' practice towards increasing layers of imagery and text. In the early 1990s, textual references such as poetry and place names gradually made their way into Tillers' vortex, becoming crucial elements of the work. Around this time his technique also changed from a more painterly style to his now distinctive method of masking, cutting and layering. *From the Studio* underlines the scope, continuity and cumulative power of the 'canvasboard system'.

A University Gallery Project – curated by Olivia Sophia

IMAGE: Imants Tillers, *Tomb* 1987, oilstick, gouache, synthetic polymer paint on 48 canvasboards, nos. 17665–17712, 229 x 203 cm
Courtesy of the artist

**PLEASE JOIN THE ARTIST FOR THE EXHIBITION OPENING AT
THE UNIVERSITY GALLERY
SATURDAY 21 APRIL AT 2PM**



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OPENING HOURS

Wednesdays – Fridays 10am – 5pm

Saturdays 12 noon – 4pm, or by appointment

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