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**MATTHEW MEINHARDT OPENS “WHAT GATHERS” EXHIBIT,
DURING JUNE FREE FIRST FRIDAY RECEPTION
AT OCEAN CITY CENTER FOR THE ARTS**

OCEAN CITY, MD — May 14, 2026 — The Art League of Ocean City, 94th Street bayside, is pleased to present “What Gathers,” a new exhibition by Matthew Meinhardt, on view June 5 through June 27. Centered in the Thaler Gallery, the exhibition debuts with a free First Friday reception on Friday, June 5, from 5:00 to 8:00 PM. This extended time frame accommodates the evolving audience drawn to Meinhardt’s work, allowing for a more fluid and leisurely experience throughout the evening.

Originally from Ocean City and now residing and exhibiting in Los Angeles, and beyond, Meinhardt chose the Art League of Ocean City in his hometown to unveil “What Gathers.” Expanding on Meinhardt’s ongoing interest in perception, reality, and media, the paintings in this show traverse themes of sight, interpretation, and belief, inviting viewers to reflect on how visuals and narratives shape our sense of truth. An artist talk is planned for Tuesday, June 9, from 5:00 to 7:00 p.m. at the Art League for those who are interested to learn more about Meinhardt’s motivations, inspirations, and methods.

As described by Meinhardt, “What Gathers, invites viewers into a sky that functions as a theater of the uncanny.” The exhibition features a series of paintings in acrylic and oil, examining the visual language of “sightings”—glimpses of rare, uncertain, or strange things or occurrences—through a study in simulacra and simulation. Paintings will be available for purchase during the length of the show ranging from \$1500-\$2500.

Meinhardt employs recognizable paraphernalia of entertainment and insect-like silhouettes set against atmospheric backdrops. These aerial anomalies are paired with portraits of “witnesses,” folkish figures whose expressions of bewilderment or undiscerning gaze act as a feedback loop for a pseudological narrative.

“What Gathers” speaks to us more than the objects within this world; it captures the collective tension of a society negotiating the schizophrenia of media and truth. By stripping subjects of their everyday context, Meinhardt invites the audience into a fantasy where belief, doubt, and fascination collide, echoing the deep-seated suspicion of our own reality,” reflects Kacie Neeb, Gallery Manager.

While Meinhardt's collection takes center stage, the building will be fully activated, with new exhibits and activities—including Clay-a-palooza—spanning the studios, classrooms, and courtyard.

The Art League of Ocean City is a non-profit organization dedicated to bringing the visual arts to the community through education, exhibits, scholarship, programs, and community art projects.

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