

Jennifer Steinkamp

Still-Life

September 19–October 26, 2019

Pedder Building, Hong Kong

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Opening reception: Thursday, September 19, 6–8 PM



Hong Kong, August 27, 19—Lehmann Maupin is pleased to announce *Still-Life*, an exhibition featuring three recent video installations by Los Angeles-based artist Jennifer Steinkamp. A pioneer in the field of 3-D animation, Steinkamp works exclusively in digital media, using

computer technology to render organic and abstract forms in motion. These immersive installations are projected at a large scale in response to the architectural interiors in which they appear. Each work alters the viewer's typical experience of an object within a gallery and invites a more comprehensive understanding of space and time. The gallery will host an opening reception on Thursday, September 19, from 6–8 PM at 407 Pedder Building, 12 Pedder Street, Hong Kong.

The centerpiece of the exhibition is *Still-Life*, which is part of a larger series the artist began in 2016. This body of work is a critical nod to the 16th century genre of Dutch and Flemish still life painting, in which still life paintings offered visual allegories about the fragility of life and the passage of time. Composed through the careful orientation of everyday objects such as food, flowers, dead animals, and plants, these historical works were often notable for their static quality and macabre representation of death. In Steinkamp's reimagination of the still life, she animates this genre through the representation of fruit bearing plants that move and collide in a poetic dance that celebrates life and regeneration through the natural environment.

Also featured in this exhibition is *Blind Eye 2* (2019). One of a suite of animations inspired by the landscape that surrounds the Clark Art Institute in Williamstown, MA—the site of a major exhibition of Steinkamp's work in 2018—this larger-than-life size projection depicts a frontal view of a pair of birch trees. The title references the characteristic dark spots that punctuate the pale bark of these trees, which for Steinkamp resemble blank, staring eyes. As the trees sway—sometimes quite violently—the leaves fall like a gentle rain. However, as is the case in all Steinkamp's works, this process unfolds without beginning or end. While the allusion to the changing seasons is clear, *Blind Eye 2* exists outside linear narrative—it is a moment removed from its temporal context.

The third work, *Retinal 2* (2018), was made in direct response to architect Steven J. Holl's design for an addition to the Bloch Building of the Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art in Kansas City, MO (it was featured in "Open Spaces," an exhibition curated for the museum and surrounding Swope Park by Dan Cameron in 2018). Discovering that Holl refers to the structure's windows as "lenses," Steinkamp produced an animation, shown only after dark, that mimics the translucent, refractive appearance of optical veins. The work's drifting clusters of green, pink, and purple forms have the slick look and acidic coloration of candy, while the

amorphous shapes and busy, all-over composition forge links to biomorphic and expressionist abstraction.

The exhibition *Still-Life* offers a garden sanctuary that draws inspiration from Steinkamp's art historical predecessors and provides a valuable reminder of the breadth and ambition of her practice. These works exemplify the important historical position she holds as a leader in digital animation and the first to experiment with constructing imagery—including color, texture, and movement—by wholly digital means. By simulating natural movement in cycles that are at once familiar-seeming and entirely unique, Steinkamp conjures the uncanny impression of artificial life that is both rooted in past modes of representation while looking, with optimism, towards the future.

About the artist

Jennifer Steinkamp (b. 1958, Denver, CO; lives and works in Los Angeles) received her BFA and MFA from Art Center College of Design, Pasadena, California in 1989 and 1991, respectively, and an honorary PhD in 2011. Solo exhibitions of her work have been organized at The Clark Art Institute, Williamstown, MA (2018); Colorado Springs Fine Arts Center, CO (2017); Portland Art Museum, OR (2017); Museum of Contemporary Art, San Diego, CA (2016 and 2011); McNay Art Museum, San Antonio, TX (2016); Museum of Fine Arts Houston, TX (2012 and 2014); Contemporary Art Museum St. Louis, MO (2013); the Joslyn Art Museum in Omaha, NE (2013); Centro de Arte Contemporáneo de Málaga, Spain (2009); Albright-Knox Gallery, Buffalo, NY (2008); and San Jose Museum of Contemporary Art, San Jose, CA (which traveled to the Kemper Museum in Kansas City, MO and Albright-Knox Gallery in Buffalo, NY) (2006). Select group exhibitions and biennials featuring her work include *Virtual Views: Digital Art from the Thoma Foundation*, Knoxville Museum of Art, Knoxville, TN (2017); *Nature Morte: contemporary artists reinvigorate the still-life tradition*, Bohusläns Museum, Uddevalla, Sweden (2016); *Momentum: An Experiment in the Unexpected*, San Jose Museum of Art, San Jose, CA (2014); *Turning Inside Out: Video Art by Nam June Paik, Joan Jonas, and Jennifer Steinkamp*, Sheldon Museum of Art, Lincoln, NE (2012); *Blink! Light, Sound and the Moving Image*, Denver Art Museum, Denver, CO (2011); *The Artist's Museum*, The Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles, CA (2010); and *California Video*, The J. Paul Getty Museum, Los Angeles, CA (2008). Steinkamp has participated in multiple biennials, including the 11th Cairo International Biennial (2008) and the 8th Istanbul Biennial (2003). Her work can be found in numerous public and private collections internationally, including the Chrysler Museum of Art, Norfolk, VA; The National Gallery, Washington, D.C.; Hammer Museum, Los Angeles, CA; Istanbul

Museum, Turkey; Los Angeles County Museum of Art, CA; Minneapolis Institute of Arts, MN; Museum of Contemporary Art, North Miami, FL; and the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, TX.

About Lehmann Maupin

Rachel Lehmann and David Maupin founded Lehmann Maupin in 1996. The gallery represents a diverse range of contemporary artists and estates from around the world. Since inception, Lehmann Maupin has been instrumental in introducing international artists in new geographies. This mission has resulted in historic first exhibitions in New York, Hong Kong, and Seoul. For more information on the gallery and its artists, visit www.lehmannmaupin.com

Current & Upcoming Exhibitions

Alex Prager, *Play the Wind*, September 5–October 26, 536 West 22nd Street, NEW YORK
Kader Attia, *Mirrors of Emotion*, September 10–October 26, 501 West 24th Street, NEW YORK
Liza Lou, *The River and The Raft*, September 26–November 9, 2019, SEOUL
Hernan Bas, November 7–January 4, 501 West 24th Street, NEW YORK
Lee Bul, November 7–January 18, 536 West 22nd Street, NEW YORK

For more information on Jennifer Steinkamp or other Lehmann Maupin artists, please contact Kathryn McKinney at +1 212 255 2923 or kathryn@lehmannmaupin.com.

IMAGE: *Retinal 2*, 2019, video installation, dimensions variable. Courtesy the artist and Lehmann Maupin, New York, Hong Kong, and Seoul. Photo: Matthew Herrmann.