

Brent Wadden

ASLSP

September 13 – November 16, 2024

Opening Friday, September 13, 6–9PM

Peres Projects is pleased to present *ASLSP*, Brent Wadden's (b.1979 in Nova Scotia, CA) sixth solo exhibition with the gallery, and his fourth in Berlin.

As slow as possible. This is how avant-garde composer John Cage intended for his 1985 piece *ASLSP* to be played, somehow weaving sound to silence by stretching time endlessly between notes. Brent Wadden's *ASLSP* swaps musical chords for wool, cotton and acrylic threads, woven into large-scale, geometric abstractions. If not as slow as possible, Wadden's process is still measured and meticulous, starting way before sitting down at the loom. First, some second-hand, used and old yarn is hunted and found over Craigslist, eBay or Facebook market, turning the material sourcing into an integral part of the practice and a quest of its own. This ritual is time-intensive, further increasing the distance between the inception of an idea and its completion. Slowness is deliberate, necessary, and in Wadden's practice, it becomes an essential medium used to compose the image.

Brent Wadden constructs the surface like a weaver, yet approaches it like a painter and refers to his weavings as paintings. He started out in oil, the materiality of his early painted works somehow reminiscent of textiles, and it is this similarity that ignited his departure into the realm of fibres. Intricate weaving panels are sewn and mounted on canvas, then stretched and framed, as one would a painting. The way form and colour emerge and take up space in the composition is similar to large swathes of paint or well blended brushstrokes, but singular in that the physical structure of his works is at once the surface, as well as the material that covers it. Boundaries between mediums are blurred, and hierarchies among disciplines are dismantled. Brent Wadden's woven paintings seem to reconcile a formally trained hand with a hand that touches out of curiosity.

Weaving and painting are caught in an even deeper dialogue upon noticing minute imperfections throughout the composition, a slightly crooked row resembling a freehand line drawn on paper, bending in a subtle curve to further reveal the handmade quality of the works. Brent Wadden taught himself how to weave and changes looms every other year to deepen his relationship with the craft, while preserving a beginner's mind. It's with this curious approach that Wadden embraces the imperfect and conspires with the unforeseen, welcoming an element of surprise through unexpected occurrences to inform his works. In the musical *ASLSP*, if the slowness is thoughtful and calculated, the exaggeration of it seems somewhat unserious, obnoxious perhaps, or at least facetious, like a joke told to amuse and bother, confuse the listener, or trigger a reaction. Similar qualities are found in Wadden's woven rendition, the composition painterly, clear and even from a distance, but upon closer inspection, the weaving is irregular, presenting a slight contrast between sinuous, twisted lines and perfectly straight ones, the textile exposing bumps, bulges and knots.

Those inconsistencies are never undone nor "fixed"; there is no going back in time, only forward. As Brent Wadden weaves, he can only see the few meters currently ahead of him, the finished work getting progressively rolled up at the back of the loom. And if threads of a certain colour begin to run out, he'll simply add something else, just to keep going. It's not until the panel is complete and the entire weaving unrolled, that the shifts in shapes, tones, shades, and ultimately, the entire composition become visible. Weaving this way, there is no clear concept of the future, which is only revealed as the present unfolds. Here we are again, meeting Cage's music, in which the listener as well as the player are forced to remain tight and bound to the present moment wherein the note emerges and lingers. Whether in sound or in thread, as slow as possible simply could mean right here, right now.

This is Brent's Wadden sixth exhibition with the gallery, and his fourth in Berlin. Recent solo exhibitions include Pace, Los Angeles (2023), Mitchell-Innes & Nash, New York (2023), Pace, Seoul (2022), Almine Rech, Paris (2022), Peres Projects, Berlin (2021), Pace, Geneva (2021), Almine Rech, Brussels (2019), and the Contemporary Art Gallery, Vancouver, curated by Kimberly Phillips (2018). His numerous group exhibitions include the X Museum, Beijing (2023), Pace, Palm Beach (2023), Collegium Hungaricum, Berlin (2023), Whitechapel Gallery, London (2021), the Rubell Museum, Miami (2017), and the Museum of Modern Art, Gunma (2017). His work has entered several collections, including the Rubell Museum, Miami, the Marciano Art Foundation, Los Angeles, the LVMH Foundation, Paris, and the Taguchi Art Collection, Museum of Modern Art, Gunma.

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