

Nicole Wittenberg

We've got forever

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MASSIMODECARLO is delighted to present *We've got forever*, a solo exhibition featuring the works of American artist Nicole Wittenberg. Making her debut in Italy, Wittenberg presents her latest series of electric-hued flower and windswept landscape paintings inspired by the coastal Maine region.

*I'll plant you a garden
Of laughter and tears
With rain and with sunshine
Love will grow through the years
The dreams that we're dreaming
Have time to come true
'Cause we've got forever
And forever is meant for so very few.*

We've got forever, as sung by Michael Jackson at the tender age of 15, takes on a humorous twist in Wittenberg's perspective. "When you're young, you think you've got forever, and it feels like everything takes forever... and learning to paint also takes forever." This sentiment resonates deeply with the essence of her exhibited works. Through glowing and intuitively quick brushstrokes, Wittenberg captures natural scenes and tufts of flowers – ephemeral yet immortalised in her works.

We've got forever unfolds at night, when the light dims and the sky adopts hues of pink and purple. The landscapes, such as *as 7 PM*, *Broken Moon 2*, and *Big Deep*, convey the intensity of an expanse of water bordered by forests and cliffs. Wittenberg's works expertly navigate the transition from foreground to distant vistas, capturing the specificity of a moment that feels suspended in time, ready to change at any second.

As night gives way today, Wittenberg's floral compositions offer a glimpse of the intensely electric color of a flower in daylight. She describes these works as "a group of interlocking forms that overlay to create a massing of stems, flowers and leaves - in that way, I see it as a Baroque image, as the 'parts' of the painting fit together and spiral upwards."

A couple of years ago, Wittenberg stumbled upon Himalayan Balsam growing in a Maine field, alongside Queen Anne's Lace and Gloriosa Daisies. This encounter inspired a series of quick pastel

sketches exploring the language of colour found in their blooms reaching towards the sun. Reflecting on this experience, Wittenberg says, "Wildflowers like Himalayan Balsam grow on the side of the road, they seem to portray the feeling of our time, a flower that grows without tending and returns year after year despite our best efforts to contain them or weed them out."

In *We've got forever*, we contemplate the enigmatic essence of eternity - a theme woven with Michael Jackson's teenage voice and Wittenberg's transient brushstrokes. When discussing her anticipation for her inaugural exhibition in Italy, Wittenberg expresses her admiration for the Venetian masterpieces of the 15th and 16th centuries. She acknowledges, "the power and space in Venetian painting has dominated my vision and helped me to realize what a painting can do." Wittenberg captures the fleeting beauty of nature, inviting viewers to immerse themselves in the timeless allure of the present moment - a moment suspended in the here and now, extending perhaps into *forever*.

Nicole Wittenberg

Nicole Wittenberg was born in 1979. She is a painter, writer, professor and curator based in New York City.

Wittenberg was born in San Francisco, CA, and received her BFA from the San Francisco Art Institute in 2003. She received the American Academy of Arts and Letters coveted John Koch Award for Best Young Figurative Painter in 2012. From 2011–2014 she served as a teacher at the New York Studio School of Drawing, Painting and Sculpture, and the Bruce High Quality Foundation University, and in 2017 she was a professor in the Critical Theory Department at the School of Visual Arts in New York City.

Wittenberg's works are included in many prominent collections, including the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York, NY; The Albertina, Vienna, Austria; the Boston Museum of Fine Art, Boston, MA; Aishti Foundation, Beirut, Lebanon; Portland Museum of Art; The Farnsworth Museum in Rockland, ME; The Colby College Museum of Art, Waterville, ME; The Columbus Museum of Art in Columbus, OH, The High Museum of Art in Atlanta, GA; Bowdoin College Museum of Art, MA, and others.