

Grace Weaver

Flowers

First Floor, 41 Dover Street, London W1S 4NS

29 August – 28 September 2024

Opening: Thursday, 29 August, 6 – 8 pm

*I was always painting flowers
Though before, they had faces,
Limbs and ponytails.*

Grace Weaver, 2024¹

Galerie Max Hetzler, London, is pleased to present *Flowers*, an exhibition of new paintings by **Grace Weaver**. This is the artist's fourth solo exhibition with the gallery, and her second in the London space.

Painted in 2024 in Rangsdorf, Germany, Weaver's latest body of sixteen large-scale canvases takes as its focal point one of the most enduring motifs of art history: the flower. Rendered in acrylic on canvas, a medium shift for the artist, the 'Flower Paintings' stand as both a counterpoint and continuation of Weaver's oil paintings and watercolours of the human subject. Indeed, while impressive in size, the paintings are imbued with a profound intimacy. Upright, drooping, or entwined in a tangle of stems, the brightly coloured flowers appear highly charged, as if resonating with a full spectrum of emotion.

In her painting practice, Weaver employs a distinctive process of layering. These new works are no exception: each surface comprises many coats of thinned matte acrylic paint, heavily watered down so as to slow the drying process and encourage a sense of fluidity. Working directly on the floor, as in the tradition of Abstract Expressionism, Weaver applies swathes of acrylic paint to her canvases with large, industrial-scale brushes affixed to broom handles. This close proximity to the works enables Weaver to paint more abstractly. Freed from the confines of content and orientation, the focus lies on colour, gesture and form. 'I don't see the final composition until the end,' she notes. 'It's a way of temporarily undermining my own hold on the picture.'² Her technique of painting wet-into-wet produces tactile and translucent surfaces marked with haptic brushstrokes and drip marks. Harnessing an element of chance, the colours bleed into one another at times, taking on the qualities of watercolour.

The series is divided into light and dark paintings, each similarly executed. For the lighter works, Weaver applies a final base layer of black, followed by a thinner layer of semi-translucent acrylic in white, cream or beige. In the black paintings, a light opaque layer of blue or white is covered with a thin, transparent wash of black in long



The artist's studio, Rangsdorf, 2024
Photo: Eric P.S. Degenhardt

¹ G. Weaver, excerpt from the poem *I was always painting flowers*, 2024.

² G. Weaver, conversation with artist and author, 2024.

overlapping strokes. The colours appear through the cracks like light, with layered markings and brushstrokes rendered visible like a palimpsest. Finally, the flowers are added, each broad, sweeping stem dictated by the artist's arm span; each head ablaze in vibrant hues of yellow, purple, pink, red, white and blue. 'I begin one-by-one laying in flowers,' Weaver explains, 'often erasing as I go, stem and then bloom, stem and then bloom. A little like a dance.'³

Weaver has previously described her figurative works as 'monumental-scale paintings of non-monumental moments, ambivalent emotions, ordinary scenarios...'⁴ Wilting or alert, bending or blooming, the flowers conjure an analogous sense of the beauty found in the quiet mundanity of life. Facing towards or away from one another, they appear at times solitary, at others connected, as if performing the rituals of human interaction. The flowers are composed from a line for stem and strokes for petals, offering a reductive and archetypal version of the motif that teeters towards abstraction. One of the artist's influences for this series was grocery store tulips, that not-quite universal but common commodity marking the start of spring. Symbol of hope eternal, the changing of the seasons, cheap and cheerful, marred with a kind of drooping pathos. Thus intimating a complex and contradictory range of mood, energy and posture, the flowers present a renewed and stripped back exploration into the most poignant and pervasive themes of Weaver's practice.

Grace Weaver (b. 1989, Vermont) lives and works between New York and Berlin. Solo exhibitions of the artist's work have been held in international institutions including Yuz Museum, Shanghai; Neues Museum, Nuremberg (both 2023–2024); Oldenburger Kunstverein; Kunstpalais Erlangen (both 2019); Kunstverein Reutlingen (2017); and Dakshina Chitra, Chennai (2012). Weaver's work has also been exhibited in group exhibitions including Braunsfelder, Cologne; Wilhelm Hallen, Berlin; Miettinen Collection, Berlin; Neue Galerie, Gladbeck; Villa Merkel, Esslingen (all 2022); Kunstmuseum Ravensburg (2021); Galerie Wedding, Berlin (2018); ARoS Aarhus Art Museum (2016); University of Georgia (2015); Burlington City Arts (2013); Flynn Center for the Performing Arts, Burlington (2012); Colburn Gallery, University of Vermont, Burlington (2011); and Newcastle University, Newcastle upon Tyne (2010).

Weaver's works are in the collections of ARoS Aarhus Art Museum; Chrysler Museum of Art, Norfolk; FRAC des Pays de la Loire, Carquefou; Museum Kunstpalast, Düsseldorf; Pizzuti Collection of the Columbus Museum of Art; Sammlung Philara, Düsseldorf; Yuz Foundation; and 8smička Collection, Humpolec.

³ *Ibid.*

⁴ G. Weaver, 'Grace Weaver', in *The Art-Form*, Issue 06, 2022, p. 90.

Further exhibitions and events

Berlin:

30 August – 1 September 2024

Beginner's Mind

Zum 75. Geburtstag von Walter Zimmermann

Goethestraße 2/3, 10623

7 September – 26 October 2024

Friedrich Kunath

One Day I'll Follow the Byrds (Tutto Pasta)

Goethestraße 2/3, 10623

7 September – 26 October 2024

Danielle Mckinney

Haven

Bleibtreustraße 45 & 15/16, 10623

14 September – 2 November 2024

Albert Oehlen

Schweinekubismus

Potsdamer Straße 77-87, 10785

Paris:

7 September – 5 October 2024

Rinus Van de Velde

46 & 57, rue du Temple, 75004

London:

3 October – 14 December 2024

André Butzer

41 Dover Street, W1S 4NS

Marfa:

9 May – 8 December 2024

Katharina Grosse

The Super Eight

1976 Antelope Hills Road

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