

Lulu is pleased to present a solo exhibition by the Canadian, Berlin-based painter Ambera Wellmann.

Ambera Wellmann's recent figurative works are largely compelled by, to quote the artist, “a search to pictorially structure female desire.” Aware that this primal human drive— desire— is almost always depicted from the point of view of the male gaze, Wellmann seeks to portray it from a female perspective in all its complexity, perversity and messiness. Thus, bodies tend to forfeit their singularity, blurring, blending and dissolving into one another as well as with their surroundings. Ostensibly consumed by erotic bliss, they are nonetheless aware of performing for a viewer. What is more, Wellmann’s portrayal of her subject matter is as optical as it is phenomenological; her expressive application of paint as well as her apparent dismemberment of the body reflects and embodies the feeling of desire that she portrays. Indeed, the voluptuous gesturality of her mark making speaks to the action-filled subject matter of her paintings being without beginning or end, or to put it another way, always in medias res— in the thick of things. In Wellmann’s painterly universe, desire is, at times, tender, entirely straightforward and unambiguous, and at others, strange, unsettling, and violent, as if beleaguered by its own excess. And although, or, precisely because she is deliberately painting from the perspective of a woman, she manages to tap into and convey the fundamentally unwieldy, multidimensional, even infernal, and ultimately incomprehensible quality of this human experience, thereby touching upon its universality. All that said, while the primary subject is the body, space also plays a prominent role here, becoming something that is both created by and in-between the bodies Wellmann paints. Art historically, the work shrewdly invokes a broad legacy of human coupling which brings to mind everything from Greco-Roman erotica to Hieronymus Bosch to Picasso to Francis Bacon. Nevertheless, Wellmann’s specific approach to the subject of desire, which is at once timely and timeless, makes her a unique, much-needed and eloquent voice in the history of painting and human sexuality.

Ambera Wellmann (b. 1982 in Lunenburg, Canada; lives and works in Berlin) Recent solo exhibitions and presentations include (2018) a solo presentation with Lulu at FIAC, Paris; Projet Pangée, Montreal, TrepanierBaer Gallery, Calgary (2016) TrépanierBaer Gallery, Calgary Clay Pigeon, Dupont Projects, Toronto. A selection of recent group exhibitions includes (2018) An Assembly of Shapes, Oakville Galleries, Oakville; Chthonic Rift, Kraupa-Tuskany Zeidler, Berlin; Above the Tree Line, Office Baroque, Brussels; SEED, Paul Kasmin Gallery, New York; Mademoiselle, Centre Régional d’Art Contemporain Occitanie, Sète; I’m Yer Virgil / Super Dutchess / Kyle Hittmeier and Amanda Nedham, New York; Eye to Eye: An exhibition benefiting Sanctuary for Families, Arsenal Contemporary, New York; Bio-perversity, Nicodim Gallery, Los Angeles.

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