

rodolphe janssen

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Gina Beavers

Florid

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rodolphe janssen is pleased to announce *Florid*, the first solo exhibition of **Gina Beavers** at the gallery, which will take place from September **7th to October 14th, 2023**.

Finding an accurate translation of the word 'florid' is hardly feasible, as its meanings in English are numerous. It can refer to a flushed or rosy complexion — the blush of shyness, or the red of the bon-vivant. It could also refer to language; a 'florid' language is somewhat elaborated, full of ornaments. 'Florid' also alludes to things that are overloaded, too ornamented, excessive. 'Florid' also just recalls floral, flowers. By playing with this word, Gina Beavers creates a tension between the beautiful and the grotesque. Where is the thin line that separates them and is there such a thing as 'too much beauty'?

From those reflections, Gina Beavers has unfolded a new series of paintings that almost seem to be shouting. Her images are exaggerated, exuberant, and somehow shameless, and in that sense reminiscent of our relationship with the digital sphere. In the past, revealing one's privacy was incongruous. Today, selfies have become the norm across all generations. Combining these trends on the internet, and more particularly those of make-up and nail tutorials, Gina Beavers treats the body as a still life. There, she finds a metaphor for the way we express ourselves online, questions how our attitude has changed, and our relationship with the world. Her paintings recall the fragility of man in the flood of millions of images that overwhelm us.

Among these images, some will be eternally recognizable. The wide distribution of images in the digital sphere also plays a role in the creation of icons, in anchoring them in the collective imagination. Thus, Gina draws references from art history and those icons from the past that everyone recognizes. She alludes to Van Gogh or O'Keefe, to the pottery of Delft. She ultimately breaches high- and low-culture. As Starry Night lip designs proliferate online, Gina Beavers offers a popular reading of art. In a style alluding to photorealism, her exuberant relief paintings contrast with the flatness of digital screens and images. Rather than a nod to art history, Gina inquires about the world we live in — that of images, and photography, which govern our relationship to social media. These perfectly recognizable images, ultimately, are not O'Keefe, but rather a photo of O'Keefe, and deeply Gina Beavers.

About the artist:

Gina Beavers (b. 1974 in Athens, Greece. Lives and works in The Oranges, NJ USA)

Gina Beavers first gained attention in the early 2010s for thickly painted, relief-like acrylic images of food, cosmetics techniques and bodybuilders appropriated from Instagram snapshots and selfies found using hashtags such as #foodporn, #sixpack and #makeuptutorial. Her later work has continued to recombine these recurrent subjects, as well as explore memes, irreverent connotations of genres or art history and kitsch, identity, fandom and celebrity-worship. In 2019, New York Times critic Martha Schwendener described her paintings as "canny statements on contemporary bodies, beauty and culture ... [that] tackle the weirdness of immaterial images floating through the ether, building them up into something monumental, rather than dismissing them."

Beavers has exhibited at institutions including MoMA PS1, New York, NY USA, Neuer Essener Kunstverein, Essen, Germany; the Frans Hals Museum, Haarlem, The Netherlands, Nassau County Museum of Art, Roslyn, NY USA; and KMAC Contemporary Art Museum, Louisville, KY USA; and the Schlossmuseum Linz, Austria, among others.