

HANNAH HOFFMAN GALLERY

Ann Craven
Flowers (Watercolors)
June 4 - July 9, 2022

Hannah Hoffman Gallery is pleased to present *Flowers (Watercolors)*, a solo exhibition of new works by Ann Craven, who lives and works in New York City and summers in Cushing, Maine.

“I learned how to paint by looking, by looking at something in the round and painting it,” Craven insisted last year in a conversation with her friend, the painter Lois Dodd. “I’ve always struggled with the idea that I just want to paint what I’m looking at and abandon all these sort of smart-ass things I try to do with birds and stuff [laughs]”^{*} Forthright, witty, and self-aware, Craven’s comments hint at the heady mix of contradictions at the heart of her work. Her signature subjects - birds, other animals, flowers, the moon – draw on direct observation as well as an expansive, personally curated archive of preexisting images.

For more than three decades, Craven has worked to dismantle the distinction between subjectively expressive art making and the ordered, cerebral practices often grouped under the heading of conceptual practice. She combines ostensibly lighthearted subject matter and a captivating handling of paint with a rule-bound, systematic approach to features like the size and titles of her compositions.

Craven’s effervescent palette and expert paint handling are evidence of her ability to get lost in the visual and textural pleasures of painting. Yet, when viewed together, her works also reveal a deliberate, iterative thinker. Craven’s mind is at once wholly engaged in the moment of making and keenly aware of the way the past always pierces the present. Her subjects exist in a temporal continuum—one that calls forth the purposeful workings and reworkings at the heart of a studio practice and the more mysterious machinations of visual and emotional memory.

The current exhibition features 18 new watercolors, all flowers, a medium particularly well-suited to her concentration on the objects before her eyes and the drama of color on paper.

Ann Craven presented her first retrospective, titled *TIME* and curated by Yann Chevalier, at Le Confort Moderne in Poitiers, France in 2014. Recent solo exhibitions include *Karma*, New York (2021); the Center for Maine Contemporary Art, Rockland, Maine (2019); Shane Campbell Gallery, Chicago (2019); *Karma*, New York (2018); Southard Reid, London (2017); Maccarone, New York (2016); among others. Craven’s paintings are in the public collections of the Museum of Modern Art, New York, New York; Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, New York; Colby College Museum of Art, Waterville, Maine; Farnsworth Art Museum, Rockland, Maine; and the Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago, Illinois, among others.

Craven’s work is currently on display in the 2022 New England Triennial which spans two museum venues—deCordova Sculpture Park and Museum and Fruitlands Museum.

^{*} February 2021. “It’s Going to Take Some Time”. Lois Dodd in conversation with Ann Craven. *Animals Birds Flowers Moons*, published by Karma, New York, 2021

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