

WILLA WASSERMAN  
TS CLEF  
17.12.2022– 11.02.2023

Step into figurative painter Willa Wasserman's light filled rave of larger than life nudes featuring crushes, cool girls, t4t cruising, hot older brothers, & the sound of the ocean crashing in the near distance while you cum.

Distorting the limits of ocular and lens based perception, Wasserman renders, or rather unravels, the constraint of single point perspective, of any sort of fixed gender as each brushstroke instigates countless sex changes to build bodies in motion.

Capturing the feeling—eros—of live performance, Wasserman paints during live sittings inviting catalogs of gesture, of light & reflection on the ever shifting, ever stunning, ever desirous, trans body. Grinding against the dangers of panoptic visibility, there is a figurative revelry and rallentando to Wasserman's work, where, bathed in light, relaxation and falling asleep in a lover's arms become possible.

Wasserman's materials and techniques mirror, both literally and symbolically, the fluidity of transition. Her oil paintings on linen incorporate silverpoint, a historical technique of scoring or burnishing specially prepared surfaces with a silver stylus or wire. Silverpoint's fine, indelible traces slowly change color over dozens of years (patina) from gray to warm umber as the silver oxidizes in the presence of atmospheric moisture. Oxidative processes represent an electronic transition on the metal's surface, reminding the viewer of the electricity between lovers and in t4t cruising spaces. Several larger works are painted with oil on polished brass and silvered copper whose glamorous metal shine, under layers of wax and lacquer, reflects and absorbs varying levels of light depending on how the viewer is oriented, refusing the imposition of figurative singularity. Self portrait in a convex mirror and Still life with barn splinters are works whose image was reflected with a convex security mirror throughout the painting process to distort depth's dimensions onto brass and linen—as in gay crime—evading capture.

Originally from Indiana, Wasserman has been living and working in New York since 2008—aside from a few LA years. The spark of her painting practice began with a crush on the cool older girl, Whitney, in high-school, who became her instrumental painting mentor. The convex oil on copper painting, Lilacs (for Whitney) simultaneously serves as Wasserman's reckoning with her mentor's recent passing and homage to the importance of queer mentorship.

Through mirroring, reflection and t4t desire, Willa Wasserman's TS CLEF insists on the elasticity of transfiguration and ultimately, how the process of relation is deeply transformative.

- Andrea Abi-Karam

## Courtesy

All images are Courtesy of the artist and High Art, Paris / Arles

## Captions:

1. Willa Wasserman, TS CLEF, 2022, High Art, Paris, exhibition view
2. Willa Wasserman, TS CLEF, 2022, High Art, Paris, exhibition view
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14. Willa Wasserman  
*Figure & Instrument, 2022*  
Distemper, silverpoint and oil on muslin  
274.5 × 165 cm / 108 3/4 × 65 3/4 in
  
15. Willa Wasserman  
*Figure & Instrument, 2022 (detail)*  
Distemper, silverpoint and oil on muslin  
274.5 × 165 cm / 108 3/4 × 65 3/4 in
  
16. Willa Wasserman  
*Self portrait in a convex mirror, 2022*  
Oil on copper  
Ø 38.1 cm / Ø 15 in
  
17. Willa Wasserman  
*Vivian & Her Rosary, 2022*  
Oil on copper  
26.7 × 18.7 cm / 10 1/2 × 7 3/8 in

18. Willa Wasserman  
*Atlantic Cherry Grove*, 2022  
Oil on copper  
19 × 26 cm / 7 1/2 × 10 1/4 in

19. Willa Wasserman  
*Lilacs (for Whitney)*, 2022  
Oil on copper  
Ø 27.9 cm / Ø 11 in

20. Willa Wasserman  
*Mæ*, 2022  
Oil and silverpoint on linen  
91.4 × 76.2 cm / 36 × 30 in

21. Willa Wasserman  
*Self Portrait (the polished surface)*, 2022  
Oil and brass point on linen  
108.6 × 45.7 cm / 42 3/4 × 18 in

22. Willa Wasserman  
*Still life with barn wood splinters*, 2022  
Oil and silverpoint on linen  
22.9 × 14 cm / 9 × 5 1/2 in

23. Willa Wasserman  
*Atlantic Cherry Grove*, 2022  
Oil and silverpoint on linen  
20 × 29.5 cm / 7 7/8 × 11 5/8 in

24. Willa Wasserman  
*Emily & Quinn*, 2022  
Oil on brass  
61 × 121.9 cm / 24 × 48 in

25. Willa Wasserman  
*Violette*, 2022  
Oil and silverpoint on linen  
94 × 132.7 cm / 37 × 52 1/4 in

26. Willa Wasserman  
*Viridian & Lue*, 2022  
Oil on brass  
183 × 122 cm / 72 × 48 in

27. Willa Wasserman  
*Viridian & Lue*, 2022 (detail)  
Oil on brass  
183 × 122 cm / 72 × 48 in

28. Willa Wasserman

*Tree, 2022*

Oil on copper

152.4 × 91.4 cm / 60 × 36 in

29. Willa Wasserman

*The Meat Rack Clearing, 2022*

Oil and silverpoint on linen

19.4 × 29.8 cm / 7 5/8 × 11 3/4 in

30. Willa Wasserman

*Trees Crossing, 2022*

Oil on silvered copper

38.1 × 27.9 cm / 15 × 11 in

31. Willa Wasserman

*A Clearing, 2022*

Oil and silverpoint on linen

28.3 × 21 cm / 11 1/8 × 8 1/4 in