

Foxy Production
2 East Broadway, 200
New York, NY 10038, USA
+1 212 239 2758 / foxyproduction.com

Petra Cortright

ultra angel wing absolute

14 January - 5 March 2022

Foxy Production is very pleased to announce “ultra angel wing absolute,” Petra Cortright’s third solo exhibition at the gallery. “absolute” is a perfumer’s term for a fragrance at its highest concentration, at its most potent. Cortright sees her works as distillations of the images circulating around her, whether from the real world or the internet. Her new series of digital paintings use Angel Wing Clematis, a white narrow-petaled climbing-vine flower—thought to symbolize knowledge and aspiration—as its central motif.

Cortright depicts fragmented and reconnected still lifes and landscapes: floral arrangements appear to be inside a darkened studio, near a window, in a garden, or by a lake. The artist’s suggestions of place are complicated by their references to the process of painting—by their brushstrokes, lines, smudges, drips, and textured surfaces—by their active, abstracted backgrounds, and by their multiple-perspectives and vantage points.

The artist combines a number of themes from art history—from Vanitas painting to Modernist landscape and Abstract Expressionism—within canvases that have an animated vivacity all their own. Her works’ interconnections of genre, subject, mark-making, and color produce a visual flow, where figure, ground, and dimension appear to be in flux.

The artist’s canvases are a mix of original and copy: some elements—flowers, leaves, and branches—are photographed in the artist’s garden, while others, including marks, lines, and brushstrokes, are painted in Photoshop or appropriated from the internet. Configurations of objects, forms, and colors reappear in different permutations and combinations across the exhibition, giving the works a serial quality that suggest cels from an animation or the products of a generative software; yet, though the artist’s studio and tools may be embodied in her computer, her hand is always present. Her paintings can be seen as maps or traces of her actions in front of the screen. They read like bursts of imagination and performance that have somehow fissured out from the mantle of an increasingly homogenized and corporate world.

Petra Cortright’s considerable body of work is central to the canon of internet and digital art. She became renowned initially for making performance-based self-portrait videos that use her computer’s webcam and default effects tools, which she would then upload to YouTube and caption with spam text. Her practice has expanded to the composition of dynamic digital files distributed across a range of media, including multi-channel installations and paintings on aluminum, linen, or paper.

Petra Cortright (Santa Barbara, CA, 1986) lives and works in Los Angeles, CA. She studied Fine Arts at Parsons School of Design, The New School, New York, NY (2008), and at California College of the Arts, San Francisco, CA (2004).

Recent exhibitions include: “BALEAF GYS AKADEMIKS MAAMGIC BROKIG,” Société, Berlin (solo)(2021-2022); “Predator Swamping,” 1301PE, Los Angeles (solo)(2021); “The Body Electric,” Walker Art Center, Minneapolis, MN, touring to the Yerba Buena Center for the Arts, San Francisco, CA, and the Miami Dade College Galleries of Art + Design, Miami, FL (2019–2021); “Collection 1970s–Present: Search Engines,” MoMA, New York, NY; “.paint,” MCA, Chicago, IL (both 2020); “Dirty Protest: Selections from the Hammer,” Hammer Museum, Los Angeles, CA; “Now Playing: Video 1999-2019,” Scottsdale Museum of Contemporary Art, AZ; “Hate Speech: Aggression and Imitation,” Künstlerhaus, Halle für Kunst & Medien, Graz, Austria; “Plugged-In Paintings,” SITE131, Dallas, TX (all 2019); “I Was Raised On the Internet,” MCA, Chicago, IL (2018); “RUNNING NEO-GEO GAMES UNDER MAME,” City Gallery, Wellington, New Zealand (solo); Foxy Production, New York, NY (solo)(both 2017); “Electronic Superhighway,” Whitechapel Gallery, London, UK (2016); and “NIKI, LUCY, LOLA, VIOLA,” Depart Foundation, Los Angeles, CA (solo)(2015).

Public projects have included commissions from Frank Gehry Partners, LLP, Los Angeles, CA; “Midnight Moment,” Times Square Arts, New York, NY; “Art on the MART,” Chicago, IL (all 2019); and SketchedSpace, Seoul, South Korea (2018).