



Mimi Lauter
Gardens of Human Nature
November 10 – December 22, 2023

Mendes Wood DM is pleased to present *Gardens of Human Nature* by Los Angeles-based artist Mimi Lauter. Comprising sixteen soft pastel and oil pastel framed works on paper of varying scale, this is Lauter's third solo exhibition with the gallery and first in New York City with Mendes Wood DM.

Across the triptych *Gardens of Human Nature* stretches a single plot, or perhaps a table, or perhaps a bier. It hosts a series of forms: orbs laid with oil pastel thick as frosting, semicircular enclosures guarding delicately incised sprouts, a terraced mound crowned with an outstretched palm that holds three tiny sprigs, set in a pulsatile field of crimson and fuchsia. All at once a banquet, a corpse, and a flower bed, Mimi Lauter's work welcomes the strangeness embedded in its title: cultivating what is inherently unmannered, but also fostering the excesses and passions of spirit that make "human nature" rather unlike our concept of the natural world.

Lauter crafts her compositions with the foresight of a gardener who threads one bloom's life cycle into the next so that, in the garden's paratactical logic, something is always bursting into view against the ground of something else's decay. Two *Exquisite Corpses* take up the principle as a game the artist plays with herself, building yet another body-as-garden-plot through successive registers of imagery. Bodies and gardens are both carnal and symbolic in her hands, which secrete little emblems—mountain peaks, vases, hearts, breasts, and many more hands in etched silhouette—within their dense chromatic turf. Working in oil pastel and soft pastel, Lauter alternately masses her medium on the surface of the paper and carves into it to reveal sedimented color, dusting pigment like pollen over raised strokes. Like the art historical gardens invoked in these works—from Pierre Bonnard's dappled scenes to Odilon Redon's fantastic bouquets, to the stormy bowers and pools of late Monet—Lauter's pastels imagine interiority through exterior spaces. Her gardens are landscapes that have acquired the signifying weight of still-life, which tugs at their sensuousness. The three works that share the title *View from the bench on day* __, undermine any suggestion that the garden is a place of merely atmospheric variation. Instead, each is a distinct meditation on the garden as a framed space whose bicameral architecture, filled each time so differently with growth and rot, seems to affirm what Andrew Marvell called the mind's capacity for "annihilating all that's made / to a green thought in a green shade." The vanishing point of human imagination identifies itself with the garden's point of origin: an Eden of materials saturated with spiritual sense and wild intensity, which in Lauter's work resolve into the same thing.

—Joanna Fiduccia

Mendes
Wood
DM

47 Walker Street
New York, NY 10013 United States
+ 1 212 220 9943
Tuesday to Saturday, 10 am – 6 pm
www.mendeswooddm.com



Mimi Lauter
Gardens of Human Nature
November 10 – December 22, 2023



Mimi Lauter (b. 1982, San Francisco, USA) lives and works in Los Angeles.

Lauter received her B.A. at the University of California, Los Angeles, and her MFA from University of California, Irvine. In 2012, Lauter was included in the first Los Angeles Biennial “Made in L.A.” organized by the Hammer Museum in collaboration with LAXART. In 2021, Lauter participated in Prospect.5 New Orleans, LA. Her work is represented in the collections of the Frederick R Weisman Art Foundation, Los Angeles, USA; Hammer Museum, Los Angeles, USA; He Art Museum, Guangdong Province, China; Henry Art Gallery at University of Washington, Seattle, USA; Los Angeles County Museum of Art, Los Angeles, USA; Marciano Art Foundation, Los Angeles, USA; Nixon Collection, London, United Kingdom; Rachofsky Foundation, Dallas, USA; Santa Barbara Museum, Santa Barbara, USA; Tanoto Foundation, Singapore; and the Wagner Foundation, Boston, MA, USA.

Her solo exhibitions include *Ruach*, White Cube Bermondsey, London, United Kingdom (2023); Tif Sigfrids, Athens, GA, USA (2022); *Consequential Landscapes*, Mendes Wood DM, Brussels, Belgium (2021); *Symphony No. 1*, Blum & Poe, New York, NY, USA (2020); *Après nous le déluge*, Mendes Wood DM, São Paulo (2019); *Sensus Oxyntation*, Blum & Poe, Los Angeles (2018); *Miniatures*, Shane Campbell Gallery, Chicago (2018); *Devotional Flowers*, Derek Eller Gallery, New York (2018); *Interiors*, Tif Sigfrids, Los Angeles (2017); *A Carnival of Musical Echo*, Shane Campbell Gallery, Chicago (2015).

Mendes
Wood
DM

47 Walker Street
New York, NY 10013 United States
+ 1 212 220 9943
Tuesday to Saturday, 10 am – 6 pm
www.mendeswooddm.com