



“Artnet Asks: Garth Weiser on Masking and Unmasking in Art,” *Artnet.com*, April 26, 2017



Garth Weiser, *10* (2017). Courtesy of Simon Lee.

What defines Garth Weiser’s multilayered paintings is their inherent mystery. Images “flicker in and out of focus like analogue TV static,” explains [his latest show’s](#) press release. “Ghosts of cartoon-like figures puncture the surfaces, shape-shifting as the eye is teased through dense layers of dots and drips, scumbles and scrapes, peaks and troughs.”

Now on view at [Simon Lee](#) in London through May 27, Weiser’s latest body of work represents a six-year process of painterly excavation. Their surfaces need to be seen in person to be believed.

Here, we check in with the artist about his current show, his process, and what we can expect from him next.

What does an average day in the studio look like for you?

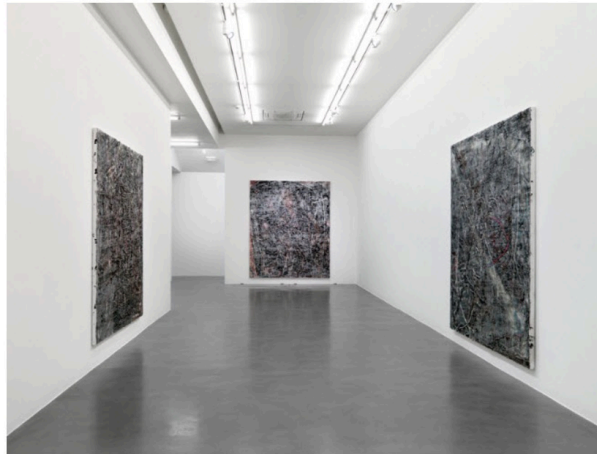
I get to the studio around 10 a.m. and leave around 7 p.m. I usually have a few things going at once, as the process is quite involved: There is a lot of masking and removing tape, thick application of oil paint, and spray painting. The last phase of the painting is done in a spray booth with a lot of gear on. Half of the process is blind, in a way, as the painting is masked and then unmasked.

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Garth Weiser, installation view. Courtesy of Simon Lee.

When did you know you wanted to be an artist?

My mother and father are ceramic artists. I grew up at the Archie Bray Foundation in Helena Montana, which is a ceramic residency program. My father was the director there from 1976 to 1988. It is a place where ceramic artists from all over the world would come to work and lecture. From a young age, I was hanging out in studios and talking to everyone from French porcelain specialists to Thai folk potters. This I'm sure informed my direction in some way. I think I knew I wanted to be an artist for sure when I went to a small charter art high school in Arizona. The oldest teacher was 30. There were a few teachers that had gone to art school in New York City, and they were great. They had us reading *Art Forum* and there was even a contemporary art issues class. They would talk to us about the early 90s art scene in New York City, and I found it fascinating at that age.

My parents, both being artists and supporting themselves as artists, did not think it was such a crazy idea for me to follow in that direction. I applied to The Cooper Union in 1999 and was accepted, so I moved to New York and started to study there.

What are some things that inspire you?

Ruins, decay, steel road plates in New York City.

Are there any media you want to explore that you haven't yet?

I am currently working on some tests for sculptures. I am trying to carve forms with spray paint.

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Garth Weiser,3 (2017). Courtesy of Simon Lee.

Do you ever experience artist's block? What do you do to overcome it?

Yes. I tend to take a finished painting that I think works and start working on top of it. This sometimes leads to a new thing. It's a way of starting with a scaffold that helps you see what you want to get away from or change in your work.

What is the best show you've seen in the past year?

Carol Bove at [David Zwirner](#) New York.

Do you collect art? Tell us about your collection.

I would not say I collect art but I do trade with other artists occasionally. Most recently with Trevor Paglen and Eric N. Mack.

What has been the highlight of your career so far?

I would say my show at The Contemporary Austin. Working closely with Louis Grachos on the exhibition and catalog was a real honor. Seeing work from the last ten years all together was a bizarre and interesting experience.

What are you working on at the moment?

At the moment I am taking a break. I just finished a show that opened at Simon Lee Gallery in London on April 20 and a mid-career survey of paintings from 2008–2017 that opened April 3 at The Contemporary Austin. The next show will be at Casey Kaplan in New York in November.

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If you could have dinner with any three artists, living or dead, who would you choose?

Gerhard Richter, Philip Guston, and Andy Kaufman.



Garth Weiser, installation view. Courtesy of Simon Lee.

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Spencer, Samuel, "Garth Weiser Brings 'Post-Apocalyptic Op Art' to Hong Kong's Simon Lee Gallery,"
BlouinArtInfo, February 16, 2016

BLOUINARTINFO INTERNATIONAL ▼

Garth Weiser Brings "Post-Apocalyptic Op Art" to Hong Kong's Simon Lee Gallery

BY SAMUEL SPENCER | FEBRUARY 16, 2016



Garth Weiser, "5", 2016, Oil on canvas, 208.3 x 177.8 cm (82 x 70 in.)
(Courtesy of the artist, Casey Kaplan, New York and Simon Lee Gallery)

Coming to Asia for the first time, New York artist Garth Weiser's impasto abstract oils will be shown in Hong Kong by the Simon Lee Gallery this February and March.

Built up of various layers of paint that are then destroyed and defaced, Lee's paintings seem almost battle-scarred. When seen as a whole, their uncertain surfaces serve to fool the eye as to their exact composition, with the effect being a sort of post-apocalyptic Op Art. Shadows rise and fall from the uneven surfaces, causing the canvases to shift and alter their appearance depending on how they are approached.

The Simon Lee show will comprise five new paintings, created by Weiser in Brooklyn and in Hillsdale, New York, in spaces shared with his partner, fellow artist (<http://hk.blouinartinfo.com/artists/francesca-dimattio-1104401>) (/artists/francesca-dimattio-1104401) (/artists/francesca-dimattio-1104401)FRANCESCA DIMATTIO (/artists/francesca-dimattio-1104401).

The Hillsdale studio space, renovated by the two of them, has made it easier for the artist to create large works. Those that make up this exhibition are slightly larger than man-sized, giving the work an imposing quality that ties him to earlier Abstract Expressionists.

Although the Ab Ex connection might seem obvious, Weiser's work must be seen as a furtherance of the tradition rather than a reductive rehash.

The sculptural quality of his work is a departure, as are the painter's techniques, which make the most of techniques not invented in the era of Pollock or de Kooning. This is particularly evident in the paintings being shown at Simon Lee, on which Weiser got to use for the first time the spray booth that was installed as part of the renovations on his Hillsdale studio.

These techniques, and the work that results from them, have been gaining Weiser fans across the United States. His last two solo shows have taken him from the east coast (Casey Kaplan, New York, 2015) to the west (Altman Siegel, San Francisco, 2014), and many states in between.

"Garth Weiser" runs from February 19 through March 17 at Simon Lee Gallery.

ARCHITECTURAL DIGEST

Walsh, Brienne, "Artist Garth Weiser Has Collectors Buzzing," *Architectural Digest*, May 2014



Artist Garth Weiser in his Brooklyn studio. He is represented in the U.S. by New York's Casey Kaplan and San Francisco's Altman Siegel galleries.

For Brooklyn-based artist Garth Weiser, painting is an act not of pure spontaneity but of carefully calibrated cannibalization. To realize new works in his ongoing series of abstract canvases, he refers closely to previous ones, often consulting the step-by-step photographs he's taken during a piece's progression to document a given effect. No matter if he duplicates a technique or tweaks it, chance inevitably triumphs in the final image. "Even with this ordered routine, I am still surprised by the results," says Weiser, whose latest paintings are on view at San Francisco's Altman Siegel gallery from April 24 to May 31.

Over the past five years his creations have evolved from graphic compositions reminiscent of Russian Constructivism to thickly impastoed works with subtle striations—what he calls "interference patterns." To achieve them Weiser lays thin strips of tape over a canvas and then coats the surface with oil paint. By ripping the tape away and repeating the action (at different angles, in different hues), he conjures a nuanced interplay of color and texture that recalls everything from wood grain to snakeskin. Recently Weiser has experimented with copper leaf, applying sheets of the material to layers of paint and modeling paste and then making rhythmic slices into these strata with a customized crescent knife. "Anything that catches a shadow, I cut apart," the artist says.

Critics and collectors alike are enraptured. Since 2011 Weiser's offerings at art fairs have regularly sold out, as did his solo show at Manhattan's Casey Kaplan gallery last year. His increasingly sought-after work can

be found in the permanent collections of the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, the Dallas Museum of Art, and the Museum of Contemporary Art Chicago.

To escape the distractions of city life, Weiser is building a new studio in upstate New York, on the same property as the retreat he shares with his wife, artist Francesca DiMattio. Once part of a Christmas-tree farm, their land reminds him of his childhood in Montana. The fresh air and extra space, no doubt, will only propel the evolution of his practice. "Any process that allows for a certain kind of openness, that's a success," he reflects. "When that stops, I will have to start making a new type of painting."

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THE NEW YORKER

"Garth Weiser," *The New Yorker*, June 24, 2013

GARTH WEISER

A young New Yorker from Montana employs crackerjack techniques to make large, seductive, rather noble abstract paintings. In most, many layers of oils in grayish color ranges are striated horizontally, mingling ghostly traces of drawn forms with growling materiality. (They appear to generate moiré effects, but look again; the seeming illusions are locked in.) In other works, fields of copper or silver embed skeins of exuberant gesture that would seem to explode in all directions were they not stilled by their union with the wall-like surfaces. An impression of multiple painterly events, frozen in a ceaseless present tense, beguiles.

Through June 22. (Kaplan, 525 W. 21st St. 212-645-7335.)

Goings on About Town, The New Yorker, June 24, 2013

Art in America
INTERNATIONAL REVIEW

"Garth Weiser," *Art in America*, September 2011, p. 132-3



Garth Weiser, *Nautilus*, 2011, oil on canvas, 108 x 89.

Garth Weiser's paintings are eye catching, but they can be chilly. The hard-edge compositions in his 2009 exhibition at Casey Kaplan drew on classic examples of modernist-inspired late-20th-century graphic design (Lászió Moholy-Nagy by way of the Valvoline Oil logo) and were just as coolly effective. These were followed by arrangements of striped bands laid down at varying angles over painterly grounds, whose drips, stains and smears served as a counterpoint to the vibrating interference patterns made by the crisscrossing striations. Weiser's recent exhibition (all works 2011) at Casey Kaplan showed him using a similar combination of chance and craft to produce his most exciting work to date.

Most of the pieces feature a raised, all-over moiré pattern that looks more machined than handcrafted. Over an abstract painting on linen, Weiser uses masking tape and dimensional fabric paint in squeeze bottles to create layers of evenly spaced, parallel ridges of a single color—usually black, white or blue. The interaction between these layers, one usually made up of straight lines and the other of concentric arcs, results in unpredictable rippling effects that resemble knotty pine or watered silk. (The final appearance is unknown to the artist until he peels off the tape.)

The underlying lyrical abstractions, obscured by these buzzing lattices of paint when seen up close, become more visible the further from the canvas one stands. At times the underpaintings seem perfunctory, even as the moirés, paradoxically, seem intentional. But a few of the works suggest productive lines of inquiry: and turquoise depths of the shimmering white Unimark Unlimited; Tobin's Spirit Guide, an uncompromising gray monochrome, might just be the best piece in the show.

In several lovely works on paper, forms seem to be dissolving as fast as they are generated. Drawing #26's mesh of white lines sports a fungal bloom of copper leaf; and the halftone dot pattern in Drawing #32 is as naggingly unreadable as a degraded digital image. Poised at the intersection of transcendental abstraction and scientific imaging, analog and digital, form and formlessness, Weiser's latest paintings have resonance that definitively takes them far beyond good design and the clever recycling of past art movements and into promising new territory.

--Anne Doran

ARTFORUM

"Garth Weiser," *Artforum*, 2011

Garth Weiser

CASEY KAPLAN
525 West 21st Street
May 6–June 25

Garth Weiser's thirteen exquisite paintings in this show seem to grate and incise past the graphic veneers of his earlier work—with its penchant for gradients, macro dots, pin-stripping, and refractive or sculptural planes—toward some secret inner dimension. In a majority of works, vibratory moiré-like designs emerge from tight, toothy diamond lattices of monochrome paint that screen a back layer of colorful blotches or a uniform hue. The dominant pattern at once recalls rippling fluid, landslides, wood grain, and topographic contour lines, as if the push of an invisible vector were warping hard-edge grids into flexile mesh. Up close, the paintings' surform finish can look faceted, scaly, even spiny; when peeling off the tape used for exact striations, Weiser has occasionally left tiny, glistening thorns of paint. Our interest flickers between such surface texture and the throbbing colors beneath, like the fluorescent orange that appears coral within the polished white-gray web of *Unimark Unlimited* (all works 2011), or bits of red and lime green that mottle the night-blue oscillating through *Nautilus*. Depending on viewing distance, this mode of perforated vision can feel occultish or distilling. Though Op art is a chief point of reference, skinny, stray paint drizzles throughout add vibrant interference to the optical hum and reverb.

Bright copper-leaved paintings, such as *Arcadia* and *Grinder*, may be subject to more geometric laws. The copper-leaf membrane in *Drawing #32*, the smallest work here, has been variously punctured, embossed, and dotted with white paint for a part-distressed, part-burnished surface that evokes corroding circuitry as well as an ancient map. At a mere eight and a half by eleven inches, it is elegant evidence of Weiser's ability to magnetize and puzzle the eye at any scale and distance.

— Chinnie Ding

