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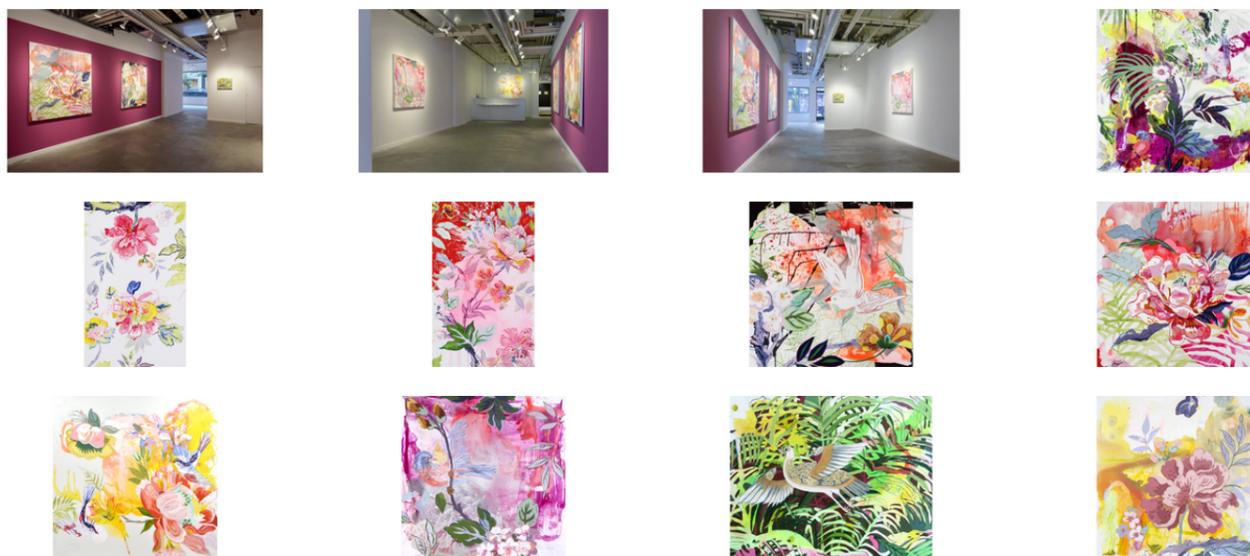
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FRONT GALLERY

Elisabeth Condon: "Bird and Flower"

September 7 through October 16, 2016

Opening reception: September 7, 2016, 6-8pm



Artist talk: Sunday, October 16, 2:30pm

Lesley Heller Workspace presents Bird and Flower, an exhibition of new paintings by Elisabeth Condon. This is the artist's first solo show in New York in five years and her second with Lesley Heller Workspace.

Condon initiates each canvas with poured color to generate contingent and unexpected compositions. Her recent paintings interlace these pours, which are inspired by watercolor and Chinese splashed ink technique, with birds, flowers and plant forms culled from upholstery fabrics, wallpaper patterns and traditional Chinese scroll painting.

Bird and Flower refers to the classical Chinese painting technique of the same name, defined as much by its subject matter as by its reliance on the contour line achieved through a process of copying, tracing and refining. The bird-and-flower technique provides a departure point from which Condon explores her own process and imagery. Condon traces fabric and wallpaper samples, projecting and altering them; combining mechanical or objective modes of representation with more subjective gestures resulting in a merger of spontaneous and stylized methods. The fabric and wallpaper patterns evoke the harmony and beauty of Chinese bird-and-flower painting, while the pours and imagery beneath suggest alternative realms. The paintings' compositional rhythms mimic Condon's practice of Chinese idioms, as if amplified in color; their Tree of Life patterns show time's passage with flowers and birds at various moments of bloom, perch and flight.

Gathering influences that range from Yuan Dynasty landscape, ancient textiles, Van Luit wallpapers, Marimekko sheets and her mother's decorating samples, Condon continually mines multiple paint applications within a synthetic landscape, creating imagery that feels—much like life today—equally artificial and real. Her riotous, yet joyful paintings balance a sense of control with abandon through the intersection of nature, culture and transcendence.

Elisabeth Condon (born Los Angeles, CA) has developed an extensive body of work that exploits the spill of poured paint as a central landmark in her compositions. Condon has been working with Chinese imagery for over a decade, making numerous trips to China to study traditional painting techniques; most recently a six month intensive in 2014. Her paintings combine references to Chinese scrolls, American postwar abstraction, landscape, and wallpaper patterns, infusing them with a glam rock aesthetic.

Condon is the recipient of numerous awards and fellowships including the Hanban Confucius Institute's Understanding China Fellowship, Pollock Krasner Foundation Grant, Florida Individual Artist Grant, 2015, New York Studio School Alumni Association's Mercedes Matter Award and the 2015 New York Pulse Prize and various university research grants.

Exhibitions include the Museum of Fine Art in St. Petersburg, FL; National Art Museum of China, Beijing; Shenghua Art Centre, Nanjing, China; Tampa Museum of Art, FL; Ft. Lauderdale Museum, FL; 1285 Avenue of the Americas Art Gallery, New York, NY; Hollywood Art & Culture Center, Hollywood, FL; Weatherspoon Art Museum, Greensboro, NC; Albany Museum of Art, Albany, GA and the Housatonic Museum of Art, Bridgeport, CT. Public collections include the US Embassy Beijing, Swatch Art Peace Hotel Traces Collection Shanghai, The Sweeney Print Collection at the Museum of Fine Art in St. Petersburg, FL, Girls Club, Ft. Lauderdale, FL, and the JP Morgan/ Chase Collection NY.