

HVW8 Gallery Berlin Presents

SELECTIONS | MARK GONZALES (FOWER PLOWER) & ERIN D. GARCIA (GRAND PRIX)

Opening: April 26, 6 – 10 PM

Gallery Weekend 2019: April 27/28th, 12pm – 8 pm

Exhibition Hours: April 27 – June 15, 2019, Wednesday to Friday 2-7pm, Saturday 12-6pm

For Gallery Weekend 2019, HVW8 Gallery Berlin presents a special exhibition of veteran artists Mark Gonzales and Erin D. Garcia. Selected works from the artists' most recent series, namely Gonzales's *Fower Plower* and Garcia's *Grand Prix*, are shown for the first time together in Berlin. HVW8 Gallery also welcomes visitors to a salon-style retrospective of the HVW8 collection, including works by Jerry Hsu, Lisa Leone and Josep Maynou & Friends.

Mark Gonzales - Based in New York, skateboarder and artist Mark Gonzales first exhibited with HVW8 in 2013. In summer 2017, Gonzales debuted his first solo show *Fower Plower* at HVW8 Los Angeles, comprising a selection of paintings that investigate ideas of color theory, the humor and geometry of Paul Klee, the graphic/ non-graphic qualities of Donald Baechler, semiotics, theology—and, of course, classic floral themes.

The paintings are luminous and alive and crackle with movement—fittingly Gonzales is a dancer, in the tradition of Merce Cunningham or Trisha Brown, but on wheels. His teenage years in 1980s Los Angeles were spent traversing the streets which by proxy became his moving canvas. He earned a reputation as a pioneer of modern skateboarding—a master, albeit one not bound by flawlessness or precision, but the anarchy afforded only after achieving true mastery. It was as if he haphazardly broke the laws of nature, causing time and space to bend to him and leaving behind him a wake of influential agitation.



His art, like his poetry, is not separate from his skating. Gonzales's canvases are filled with painterly technique honed over years of drawing and painting, but they also exhibit a shambolic quality; the works are equal parts precise and imprecise. This particular body is inspired by the disappointment he felt when his business partner "sold out" in the early 1990s, the faces are bursting with bitterness. They are painted-on fake smiles, cheerful in the face of misery and embarrassment. Years later, however, the harsh cynicism has softened, and the power of the smiles seems to have cracked the regret. Indeed, Gonzales seems to be saying, flowers, grown in even the harshest of conditions, can have an immutable healing power.

Mark Gonzales
nature busting thru the city side walks, 2017
Acrylic on Canvas
16h x 12w in
40.64h x 30.48w cm



Erin D. Garcia – In 2013, Los Angeles based artist Erin D. Garcia showed his first of four exhibitions at HVW8 Los Angeles. This selection of paintings are from his most recent body of work *Grand Prix* which debuted at HVW8 Los Angeles Winter of 2018. This is the inaugural exhibition of Garcia's work at HVW8 Berlin and the first time his paintings have been shown in Germany.

Upon first glance, *Grand Prix* tempts one to see it as a radical departure from Garcia's previous works. The artist has thus far engaged in an exploration of deeply primary elements—the repetition and arrangement of shapes and colors—resisting any representational imagery. To date, Garcia's work has been a joyful exercise in the most ethereal yet immediate aspects of human cognition. In *Grand Prix* we are confronted with some images that shock the imagination, and possibly give occasion to rescale our understanding of the artist's earlier output.

Erin Garcia
Still Life #1 c, 2018
Acrylic on canvas
48h x 36w in
121.92h x 91.44w cm

These new iterations of objective drawings and text are alongside pieces that clearly continue the exploration of shape, color, and process that identifies Garcia's work. In addition, assemblies of drawings structured together push all these ideas further. Contextually the new pieces read as an extension of previous studies—newly representational, yes—but in the unmistakable idiom developed by the artist over the past handful of years.

Garcia has moved past 'process + limitation' into full-blown methodology, a subtle but distinct operation that is a delight to witness. His stated aim of "creating compelling compositions using simple techniques and forms" has developed into an eye with which nearly anything can be seen.

The title of the collection itself, *Grand Prix*, plays on curious associations and arrives at a beautiful paradox. Initially conjuring motor sports racing—the apex of aggressive competition, opulence, and the guzzling of fossil fuels—the collection is actually populated with plants and flowers, rhythmic shapes, and colorful gradations. *Grand Prix* is certainly a meditation on the 'grand prize', but its images and ideas of victory are decidedly non-zero sum. The escape provided by these rose repetitions, geometric insinuations, and the freedom found in Garcia's methodology all seem to suggest that a world is possible in which we all win.

Text by Jimmy Jolliff

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