

Vivian Greven &
Lambert Maria Wintersberger
Fruit of the Loom
4.9.—31.10.26

„I feel that, as human beings, we are often lonely, disconnected, and isolated. For me, painting is a way to establish or reestablish connections—to reconnect, so to speak.“

– Vivian Greven

A timeless sensitivity to the idealization and vulnerability of the body connects Vivian Greven and Lambert Maria Wintersberger, despite the forty-four-year age difference between them and their distinct artistic backgrounds. While Vivian Greven's work is shaped by the influences of digitalization on our relationships and our perception of ourselves and the world, Lambert Maria Wintersberger's work is defined by analog experiences during the dazzling commercialization of everyday life in the highly industrialized postwar Germany. Both experiences—digital and analog—play a crucial role in the tension between subjective bodily perceptions and an idealized body image.

In the postwar years of the 1950s and 1960s, this discrepancy was intensified by aggressive advertising strategies for everyday cosmetic products. It was a time when personal trauma, material deprivation, and the loss and hardship of the Second World War were “retouched” beneath the glossy surface of what was then the new era of color advertising and the flawless world of color cinema. These tensions reached a preliminary climax in Wintersberger's body of work from the 1960s and 1970s, which has been associated with “German Pop Art.”

The Nail Polish works began in the mid-1960s, playfully engaging with the history of “gestural” painting and the trivial motif of the manicure. The theme of the supposedly personal gesture culminates in



Vivian Greven, Marilyn (Theresa) I, 2026,
Oil on canvas, 65 x 50 cm

motifs of severed, crushed, or bound fingers, which Wintersberger depicted in the 1970s using a smooth, depersonalized style of oil painting. As one critic wrote at the time: “Wintersberger's increasingly bold cropping and growing use of alienation elevated pain to an aesthetic level.” As a way of distancing himself, Wintersberger provocatively said of himself, “I am a landscape painter.” For him, the canvas was a space for experience and projection, regardless of the motif.

This creates another connection between Wintersberger and Greven, as both understand anatomy and objects as “forms” that they structure and analyze in a manner similar to a landscape. In this sense, what appears on the canvas is the “fruit of the woven canvas,” hence the exhibition title Fruit of the Loom, initiated by Vivian Greven. This landscape-like “space of association” is particularly striking in Greven's Kuss (Kiss) motifs. The kiss, one of the most primal interhuman acts designed to create maximum intimacy—becomes, in Greven's work, an abstract landscape of pulsating color nuances ranging from cool to warm. In Wintersberger's work, this approach reaches another high point in

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„I can rely only on my own means,
on the fact that that something
emerges through paint that, firstly,
surprises me and secondly, is
nevertheless true and stands in
contrast to everything else.“

– Lambert Maria Wintersberger

the “painted collages” of his portraits. Vivian Greven aptly observes that, viewed from today’s perspective, Wintersberger’s painting technique anticipates aspects of the digital experience. Today, it is the influence of social media platforms such as Instagram and TikTok that shapes our complicated relationship with our own self-image and our interpersonal interactions. In her painting, Vivian Greven combines the digital with the analogue, thereby constructing an “emotional space of resonance” that seems to connect the past, present, and future. Vivian Greven says of her paintings: “When I use paint, it becomes more than just pigment on a canvas. It feels almost like a physical experience—as if one were touching something intangible that is nonetheless very present.” Touch, as a gesture of interpersonal communication and self-affirmation, is a central theme in Greven’s work, both formally and conceptually. The motifs in Qulla and Theresa are based on representations of sculptures from art history. The tactile quality of marble, with its idealization of the body, is rendered in Greven’s glazed oil painting in a manner that is partly illusionistic and partly detached, as though we were perceiving this “reality” through the LEDs of our smartphone screens.

The interplay between real bodily experience and alienation continues in her X series, which she developed from art-historical representations of Venus



Lambert Maria Wintersberger, Sprengung 20, 1970,
Oil on canvas in artist’s frame, 140 x 115 cm

and her research into so-called “cameltoe” images on the internet. The female lap is never explicitly depicted in Vivian Greven’s work. The tactile illusion of different textiles, rendered in the tradition of sixteenth- and seventeenth-century Dutch painting, combined with the extreme close-up, transforms the motif into abstraction.

Greven’s most recent body of work, “Marylin,” explores the influence of visual culture on the transformation and dissolution of the body as an idealized concept, while simultaneously looking back to the cultural milieu experienced by the then-young Lambert Maria Wintersberger. In their paintings, Vivian Greven and Lambert Maria Wintersberger each deconstruct unambiguous narratives surrounding images of the body. Their work reveals a continuous process of searching and finding, thereby opening up a space for reflection on what it means to be human.

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Biographical Note:

Lambert Maria Wintersberger (DE, 1941–2013) is represented in numerous museum collections, including the Städel Museum Frankfurt, Kunstmuseum Bonn, Kunstpalast Düsseldorf, Sprengel Museum Hannover, Staatsgalerie Stuttgart, Stedelijk Museum Ghent, Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney, Centraal Museum Utrecht, and the Nationalgalerie Berlin. Major exhibitions in which he participated include the 11th São Paulo Biennial (1971), the National Museum of Art, Oslo (1969), Haus der Kunst, Munich (1966 and 1982), and German Pop at Schirn Kunsthalle Frankfurt (2014).



Vivian Greven, Chimäre I, 2026,
Oil on canvas, 160 x 110 cm



Lambert Maria Wintersberger, Nail-Polish III, 1965,
Oil on canvas, 150 x 105 cm

Vivian Greven (DE, 1985) is known for numerous international exhibitions. Her work is currently on view at Kunsthalle Nürnberg and in the current collection presentation at Kunstpalast Düsseldorf. In 2027, she will present her first institutional solo exhibition in China at the Yi Museum, Hangzhou. Recent solo exhibitions include the Paula Modersohn Becker Museum, Bremen (2024), and Neue Galerie Gladbeck. Her works are held in museum collections including the Long Museum, Shanghai, Kunstmuseum Stuttgart, Hamburger Kunsthalle, and the Providence College Galleries, USA.

- In collaboration with the Estate of Lambert Maria Wintersberger, as well as Galerie Konstanze Wolter, e.artis contemporary and Villa Haiss.

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