

Brent Wadden: *WHIMMYDOODLES*

May 13 – June 24, 2023
1201 South La Brea Avenue
Los Angeles



Brent Wadden, *Untitled*, 2023 © Brent Wadden, courtesy Pace Gallery

New York – Pace is pleased to present an exhibition by artist Brent Wadden at its Los Angeles gallery from May 13 to June 24. Marking Wadden’s first-ever solo show in LA, this presentation is titled *WHIMMYDOODLES* in a nod to Bill Nye’s description of the overwhelming feelings that come with thinking about climate change, which he shared in a recent radio interview. The show will spotlight a new body of handwoven paintings of various sizes, including several large-scale pieces. A weaver and colorist, Wadden is known for his abstractions that unite traditions of painting, design, craft, and folk art.

Mounting his handwoven textiles on canvas, the artist transposes craft techniques into the realm of painting. Through enactments of warp and weft, he embraces the variations and idiosyncrasies that emerge in his compositions. Wadden’s deliberate and labor-intensive process of repetition reveals subtle disruptions in accumulations of line, color, texture, and form in his resulting works, which might be mistaken for conventional paintings from afar.

The artist often sources secondhand or found fabrics and yarns—including cotton, wool, acrylic, and hand-woven fibers—for his compositions, which he sketches in pencil before weaving. Using a backstrap and floor looms to produce his handwoven paintings, Wadden must forge these works line by line. Because this process allows for only a foot of textile to be seen at any given time, the artist does not know exactly how a final piece will look until it is released from the loom. For Wadden, this element of the unknown “is where the magic happens.”

The production of Wadden’s textiles is as significant as their aesthetic content. Through his practice, he pushes back against the demands of mass mechanized production along with the deleterious effects of consumer culture and capitalist thinking. The artist’s meticulously crafted works feature a dynamic sense of motion and depth only achieved through acts of diligence and care.

Wadden’s work is informed by various art historical movements, traditions, and figures. He has drawn inspiration from Abstract Expressionism and Bauhaus textiles in his investigations of geometry and color. The artist’s use of clearly defined compositional grids, which often contain rhythmic and bold diagonals, can be understood in dialogue with the work of Agnes Martin; the quilters of Gee’s Bend, Alabama; Frank Stella; and Anni Albers. Through his engagement with these influences, Wadden has nurtured a practice that collapses hierarchies and binaries of media and discipline.

Brent Wadden (b. 1979, Glace Bay, Nova Scotia) produces abstract woven works that bring together traditions of painting, design, craft, and folk art. Although Wadden's early drawings and paintings developed through academic training, he largely taught himself weaving, which would become the central focus of his artistic output. The geometric patterns of his compositions evoke the art-historical influences of abstraction, the Bauhaus, and process art, most notably drawing from the quilts of Gee's Bend, pictorial weaving by Anni Albers, and Agnes Martin's gridded paintings. Mounting his handwoven textiles on canvas, Wadden complicates notions of medium by transposing craft techniques into the realm of painting. Through warp and weft, Wadden's practice embraces the variations and glitches that emerge through a process of repetition, revealing subtle disruptions in the accumulation of line, color, and form.

Pace is a leading international art gallery representing some of the most influential contemporary artists and estates from the past century, holding decades-long relationships with Alexander Calder, Jean Dubuffet, Barbara Hepworth, Agnes Martin, Louise Nevelson, and Mark Rothko. Pace enjoys a unique U.S. heritage spanning East and West coasts through its early support of artists central to the Abstract Expressionist and Light and Space movements.

Since its founding by Arne Glimcher in 1960, Pace has developed a distinguished legacy as an artist-first gallery that mounts seminal historical and contemporary exhibitions. Under the current leadership of CEO Marc Glimcher, Pace continues to support its artists and share their visionary work with audiences worldwide by remaining at the forefront of innovation. Now in its seventh decade, the gallery advances its mission through a robust global program—comprising exhibitions, artist projects, public installations, institutional collaborations, performances, and interdisciplinary projects. Pace has a legacy in art bookmaking and has published over five hundred titles in close collaboration with artists, with a focus on original scholarship and on introducing new voices to the art historical canon.

The gallery has also spearheaded explorations into the intersection of art and technology through its new business models, exhibition interpretation tools, and representation of artists cultivating advanced studio practices. As part of its commitment to technologically engaged artists within and beyond its program, Pace launched a hub for its web3 activity, Pace Verso, in November 2021.




Today, Pace has nine locations worldwide, including a European foothold in London and Geneva, and two galleries in New York—its headquarters at 540 West 25th Street, which welcomed almost 120,000 visitors and programmed 20 shows in its first six months, and an adjacent 8,000 sq. ft. exhibition space at 510 West 25th Street. Pace's long and pioneering history in California includes a gallery in Palo Alto, which operated from 2016 to 2022. Pace's engagement with Silicon Valley's technology industry has had a lasting impact on the gallery at a global level, accelerating its initiatives connecting art and technology as well as its work with experiential artists. Pace consolidated its West Coast activity through its flagship in Los Angeles, which opened in 2022. Pace was one of the first international galleries to establish outposts in Asia, where it operates permanent gallery spaces in Hong Kong and Seoul, as well as an office and viewing room in Beijing. Pace's satellite exhibition spaces in East Hampton and Palm Beach present continued programming on a seasonal basis.

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