

walter storms galerie

For immediate release

BEVERLY FISHMAN

The Promise of Happiness

October 28 to December 23, 2021

Opening: October 28, 2021 from 6.00 – 9.00 pm

Walter Storms Galerie

Schellingstrasse 48

80799 Munich, Germany

Tue - Fri 10.00 am – 6.00 pm, Sat 11.00 am – 4.00 pm

For the first time in Germany, Walter Storms Galerie is showing the powerful, visually electrifying works of American Beverly Fishman. With her highly polished "pill reliefs", the renowned artist gives the pharmaceutical industry a whole new visual language in terms of content, creating seemingly abstract compositions in vibrant colours from iconic tablet shapes. Her three-dimensional, geometric wall reliefs are not immediately associated with pills; rather, they stand for a product aesthetic that counters the hard edge with an up-to-date interpretation.

Beverly Fishman's (*1955 in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania) work is influenced in its imagery by advertising and the power of the pharmaceutical industry. She aims to show how science, technology and medicine influence our bodies and minds, and how our culture defines us as either sick or healthy. How our desires are fed by the mass media and the products we consume shape our identity. And so in her works she addresses the visual impact and allure of medicines... their shapes, their colours, the materials.

The formal language of her wall reliefs made of urethane paint are modelled on actually existing pills, all of which she had previously researched on the internet. The incisions on the surfaces symbolize the breakage notches that can be used to divide the pills into smaller doses. Fishman's reliefs usually combine two to five medicines. The artist deliberately selects her carefully crafted forms according to their medical fields of application. The titles of her works bear the names of the respective medical conditions.



Beverly Fishman

Untitled (Bipolar, Parkinson's, Anxiety, Two Opioid Addiction)

2021

Urethane paint on wood

111,8 cm x 208,3 cm

Image courtesy of the artist and Miles McEnergy Gallery, New York



Beverly Fishman

Untitled (ADHD, Opioid Addiction)

2021

Urethane paint on wood

111,8 cm x 111,8 cm

Image courtesy of the artist and Miles McEnergy Gallery, New York

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For Beverly Fishman, colour is an extremely material substance. Colours change according to their texture, saturation, quantity and how they are used with other colours when placed in relation to each other. To understand the effect of colours, she first develops colour studies in the form of collages. These collages are based on pill formats. Shapes chosen to evoke the tradition of high modernism, from hard-edge painting to minimalism.

To research her colour combinations, she uses, among other things, colour swatch cards from hardware stores or fragments of vinyl signs to create mixtures of various natural and synthetic colour systems. Once Fishman has decided on a colour palette, she has the tablet moulds made out of wood and specialists coat them with an automotive paint that has a direct connection to the Detroit region. Since scale affects colour relationships, she changes everything until it makes sense to her.

„I am calling this exhibition “The Promise of Happiness,” because that’s what I think what medicine offers us at this moment. My hard-edge paintings appropriate the forms of drugs and pharmaceuticals, objects that I fragment and sometimes incise. Generally combining between two and five medicines, my reliefs invite the viewer to consider prevailing notions of sickness and health, and how science and technology can either improve people’s lives or destroy us. Medicine promises us health; and many times it delivers. The rapidly-developed Covid vaccines, for example, are just the latest example of medicine’s great benefit to humankind. But at the same time, medicine’s promise is just that: only a promise. Sometimes the drugs and procedures cannot heal us, and at other times they even actively endanger us—as we see, for example, with the U.S. Opioid crisis“, says Beverly Fishman.

„For this show, I have moved away from the pastel color world of my most recent work to explore more electric colors“, she continues, “hues that I am now integrating with lines and fields of black. Right now, to capture this time, I feel a need to search for a greater dynamic than ever before - a pulsating tension between all the different components of painting: line and field, solid and void, direct and reflected color, high gloss and eggshell surface, object and wall.”



Beverly Fishman

Untitled (Bipolar Disorder, Depression, Pain)

2020

Urethane paint on wood

108,9 cm x 87,6 cm

Image courtesy of the artist and Miles McEnery Gallery, New York

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Fishman's work is in the permanent collections of the Detroit Institute of Arts (Michigan), the Miami Art Museum (Florida), and the Istanbul Art Centre (Turkey), among others. Most recently, she has had solo exhibitions at Miles McEnery Gallery, New York (2020); Kavi Gupta Gallery, Chicago (2018); and DOSE, an exhibition curated by Nick Cave at CUE Art Foundation, New York (2017), as well as group exhibitions at the Cranbrook Museum of Art, Bloomfield Hills, Michigan (2020); Columbus of Museum of Art, Columbus, Ohio (2019); Lehmann Maupin, New York (2019); Front International, Cleveland Triennial for Contemporary Art, Cleveland, Ohio (2018); and the Borusan Contemporary Art Collection, Istanbul, Turkey (2017).

Beverly Fishman, who holds a Bachelor of Fine Arts from the Philadelphia College of Art and a Master of Fine Arts from Yale University, lives and works in Detroit, Michigan.

About Walter Storms Galerie

Walter Storms Gallery is a leading international art gallery known for its representation of renowned ZERO artists who have played a crucial role in the development of art since the post-war period. Founded in 1977 by Walter Storms, it specialises in contemporary, concrete and conceptual art. The gallery works continuously with members of the ZERO group, important representatives of the European avant-garde, Biennale and documenta participants and promotes young talent. In addition, it runs its own publishing house, which publishes exhibition-accompanying catalogues and books in close cooperation with the artists. A special focus of the gallery's activities is the administration of art estates: the gallery owns the estate of Günter Fruhtrunk (1923-1982) and administers the estate of the widow of Raimund Girke (1930-2002). Walter Storms Galerie participates in numerous art fairs, such as Art Cologne, Art Dubai and the Armory Show. It also offers customised, private consulting and brokerage services to collectors around the world. Today, Walter Storms Galerie maintains three locations in Munich - a spacious, light-flooded exhibition hall of over 500 m² with four different exhibition rooms in Schwabing in the middle of the Kunstareal, one of Europe's most important cultural locations, a salon with sculpture garden in Bogenhausen and a third location in Maxvorstadt dedicated to the print work of Günter Fruhtrunk.

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