

PRESS RELEASE

MARKUS WEGGENMANN – it could be sweet
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it could be sweet is Markus Weggenmann's first exhibition of new works at the Galerie ftc. in Berlin since 2008. Weggenmann initially became known for his abstract forms in colorful, brilliant hues, rendered in industrially manufactured auto paint. His new show also features works of this type. Due to the way his works are produced, the painter recedes behind his work, but it is the effect of the colors that is of primary importance, not the individual style. Nevertheless, the objects in each of these recent paintings appear to be identifiable, so that this new body of work is not quite as abstract as the previous one.

Weggenmann turned to the genre of still life painting to create this fresh group of works, which are the first of his paintings to feature specific subjects. In this way, he introduces into his painting a tendency that leans in the direction of the object. He collects forms into ensembles that convey images of familiar things: bowls of fruits and vegetables, or vases filled with colorful bouquets of flowers, and some of these paintings are unusually large in size.

The title of the exhibition is also a reference to this genre: Weggenmann's palette is extremely intense in color and there is such a sense of artificiality about the paintings that they teeter on the edge of sweetness and pleasantry. Not only are some of the objects literally sweet, but, depending on one's perception, the colors and shapes are, too, and they are difficult to circumvent. Weggenmann very deliberately sounds the depths of the tolerable, coming as close as possible to the notorious razor's edge. He has retained the splendid colors and intense luminosity of his earlier works, while the palette is more extreme, ranging from brash and gaudy to reserved and quiet; at the same time, the selection of motifs and presentational styles is broader, more similar to traditional still life painting.

It might seem odd that the artist would shift to object-oriented painting, after so many years spent working with the abstract. However, if we recall that the basis for this step is, as it always has been, primordial, spontaneous painting—for here, too, we can still recognize the energetic flow of the forms emerging from the brush—it becomes clear that the artist is still building upon his earlier works. Simultaneously, Weggenmann is discovering his own unique ways of dealing with the genre, since neither the gestural components nor the intensity of the colors are lost—although spatial depth and structure are not determined by color and form alone; instead, for the first time, they are also created by things.

Thus, we might say that Weggenmann is expanding his playing field and embarking upon new paths. In turn, the observer is still able to recognize familiar shapes within a new context of motifs, but can also experience the immediate sensuality of color in a quasi-sensual genre, the still life.

*Markus Weggenmann born 1953 in Singen/Hohentwiel, Germany.
He lives and works in Zurich, Switzerland.*