

MATT WEDEL

26 April – 24 June 2017

Reception for the artist: Wednesday, 26 April, 6-8 pm



left to right:

Flower tree, 2016, ceramic, 5 3/4 x 7 1/2 x 8 3/4 in. (14.6 x 19.1 x 22.2 cm)

Fruit Landscape, 2016, porcelain, 8 x 8 1/2 x 8 in. (20.3 x 21.6 x 20.3 cm)

Flower tree, 2016, ceramic, 9 x 10 x 9 in. (22.9 x 25.4 x 22.9 cm)

Venice, CA -- L.A. Louver is pleased to present new ceramic and porcelain sculptures by Matt Wedel. With an emphasis on smaller-scaled works, the exhibition brings an intimate focus to Wedel's command of form and color.

The ten works on view are variations of the artist's signature *flower tree* motif. Wedel has transmogrified the trees into looser compositions, morphing them into fruit and floral landscapes that appear almost abstract in form.

Ribbon-like petals and stylized fruit formations extend and wrap onto themselves, covered with painterly swirls of dripping glazes in both bright and muted palettes. Wedel has imbued the works with a lively sense of movement: some appear to be in bloom with outwardly reaching tendrils, or to droop from the weight of their own growth; while others seem to bashfully coil inward, as if poised for growth. Several forms are densely articulated and succulent-like, expressed with petals that compound into expanding mounds, in neutral tones of white and grey.

The scale of the new sculptures allows the viewer to contemplate form with greater intensity. No larger than 11 x 17 in. (27.9 x 44.5 cm) and as compact as 6 x 7 in. (14 x 19 cm), each can be held with two hands, as if plucked directly from the soil. Building on these small sculptures, Wedel has developed three massive works that will be revealed this summer at the Omi International Art Center in Ghent, New York.

Living and working in rural southeastern Ohio has provided Wedel with the flexibility to create without restriction and to work in a scale that dwarfs his own body. Enveloped by natural surroundings, his home/studio sits amongst sprawling acres of unspoiled land. For Wedel, in living intimately with the terrain, working in the landscape and depicting the landscape have become one and the same. Like tending plants in the earth, Wedel cultivates his own forms, rooted in his imagination and brought to life from clay.

Matt Wedel was born and raised in Colorado, and first began working with clay at the age of two. Under the guidance of his father, a functional ceramicist, Wedel developed an early passion for making sculpture. He earned a BFA from The School of the Art Institute of Chicago, Illinois, in 2005, and a MFA from California State University, Long Beach in 2007, where he studied with Tony Marsh. Wedel went on to teach at the University, and has since taught at Nova Scotia College of Art and Design, Halifax, Nova Scotia, Canada; Rhode Island School of Design, Providence, Rhode Island, and University of Colorado, Boulder. In early 2012, Wedel moved with his family to Albany, Ohio, where he built his own studio and an oversized kiln.

Matt Wedel's work has received national attention with his inclusion in group exhibitions at Ellis Armory, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, 2008; Art Gallery of Nova Scotia, Halifax, Nova Scotia, Canada, 2009; 67th Scripps Annual, Ruth Chandler Williamson Gallery, Claremont, California, 2011; Brevard Art Museum, Melbourne, Florida, 2011; *Stone Gravy*, curated by David Pagel, Ameringer McEnery Yohe Fine Art, New York, 2012; Descanso Gardens, La Cañada, Flintridge, California; Arizona State University Museum, Tempe, 2013, and the Fondation d'entreprise Bernardaud, Limoges, France in addition to Omi International Art Center, Ghent, New York 2017 (both forthcoming).

L.A. Louver first presented Matt Wedel's work in the group exhibition *Rogue Wave '09*, and has represented the artist since 2011.