

Tiffanie Turner *American Grown*

Opening Reception
Sept. 9th, 2023, 5-7pm

Exhibit Dates
September 9th - October 21st, 2023



Tiffanie Turner
580085

2023, Paper mâché, Italian crepe paper, stain, glue, cardboard, wood rods, rubber balls, 32 1/2 x 33 x 15

(August 16th, 2023) – Eleanor Harwood Gallery is delighted to announce our second solo show with Tiffanie Turner opening in our newly expanded gallery.

Tiffanie Turner is an architect, author, and artist known for her small, meticulously detailed paper flowers and her giant paper botanical sculptures. At both scales, her sculptures of flowers deform, reform, pile up, contradict, and contort what we think of as a typical blossom. She pulls focus away from the specific blooms depicted, but uses their floral familiarity and allure to draw the viewer into her artwork and the meaning behind them.

Turner's work connects the associations and formal similarities of certain flowers with recognizable objects and themes to take on agism, sexism, conventional beauty standards, generational differences, marriage, and motherhood. Much of her work is faded, aged, or mutated, all metaphors of the impact of aging on our own bodies as well as a metaphor for some of the darker parts of American culture. Turner uses her sculptures to work through these issues, creating thousands and thousands of hand-cut petals out of Italian crepe paper, carefully sculpting and painting them into astonishing works.

One sculpture titled *Originalism (December 15, 1791 - present)*, refers to the ratification of the Bill of Rights which put into law the right to bear arms. Her sculpture contains fifteen dead flowers (peonies, symbolizing shame in some cultures), one each for "15" in the ArmaLite semi-automatic rifle model AR-15. "Originalism" refers to the "principle or belief that a text should be interpreted in a way consistent with how it would have been understood or was intended to be understood at the time it was written." Turner is addressing proponents of constitutional originalism and the continuation of gun violence via the desiccated bouquet. The faded bunch of flowers stands in as a memorial and a meditation on gun deaths in America.

Turner's *580085*, is a sculpture constructed like a Rorschach test with four rose blooms. It quite literally asks us to look at the blooms and choose what we see. Do we see the deformity of a mutated double bloom? Or do we see the sculpture as beautiful? Do we see differences as alluring or do we only see a single perfect rose bloom as the "right" kind of bloom? Turner is always playing with our perceptions of beauty and "normalcy" guiding us to see imperfection as interesting, as a "fascination", as a botanist would term a deviation in a flower.

The full body of sculptures in *American Grown* is the result of two and a half years of work. Turner had three tenets as her guiding principles for *American Grown*. One, to become "anti-circle", to physically change her work from wall-mounted, front-facing circles, to forms that were conical, multi-directional, angled, upward, mirrored, elongated, and beginning to defy gravity. Second, after almost a decade of thinking about and staring at nothing but flowers in her work, she sought to draw on resemblances she noticed between flowers and other earthly objects, both natural and manmade. She drew on those resemblances, associations, and formal similarities to imbue meaning into her sculptures, hoping that even if the viewer never connects the multi headed "Cockscomb Rose" to the very common fasciated strawberry of the same name, they will still wonder about the piece, and perhaps find something in it that she hasn't yet seen. The third and final tenet was to connect this work back to her childhood, comparing and contrasting the standards and safeguards around the raising of her two children with memories of her grandparents and parents, focusing on the past, present, and future, in the timeframe of 1950 to 2050.

Through her use of extraordinary detail and oversized beauty and decay, Turner presents *American Grown*, a meditation on her own life and American culture.

Artist Bio

TIFFANIE TURNER was born in 1970 in Colonie, NY and raised in the woods of New Hampshire. She received her Bachelor of Architecture from Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute in 1995 and worked as an architect for over 15 years before beginning her career as a botanical sculptor. She was the 2021 recipient of the \$25,000 Pirkle Jones Fund Visual Artist Support Program Grant, and received a Zellerbach Family Grant award in 2016 to support her work as

the May 2016 artist-in residence at the de Young Museum located in San Francisco, where she resided for over 20 years before moving to Marin County with her family in 2018.

Turner has had solo exhibitions at the Kimball Gallery at the de Young Museum, Tower Hill Botanical Garden in Boylston, MA, Rare Device in San Francisco, and Eleanor Harwood Gallery in San Francisco. Recent group exhibitions include “NSFW/Femme” at Spoke Art in San Francisco, CA, “Orchids: Attraction and Deception” at Barry Art Museum in Norfolk, VA, “Lush” at Hashimoto Contemporary in NYC, “Beyond the Bouquet” at Descanso Garden's Sturt Haaga Gallery in Southern California, “Flora” at the Cornell Art Museum in Delray Beach, FL, “Flower Power” at the Asian Art Museum in San Francisco, “Preternatural” at Jack Fischer Gallery in San Francisco, “Detritus” at San Jose Institute of Contemporary Art, and “Botanica” at Bedford Gallery in Walnut Creek, CA. She has been featured in The New York Times, The New York Times T Magazine and the NYT Book Review, the Wall Street Journal, Sunset Magazine, Vogue, American Craft Magazine, O Magazine, Phaidon Press’s “Flower”, and the San Francisco Chronicle, and has been noted online by The New York Times T Magazine, Vice Creator's Project, Architectural Digest, Colossal, Gardens Illustrated, My Modern Met, Design*Sponge, Elie Saab, and The Jealous Curator, among others.

Turner is an instructor in the art of paper flower making in the United States and beyond, and her first book, The Fine Art of Paper Flowers, was released on Ten Speed Press in August 2017. She is represented by Eleanor Harwood Gallery at Minnesota Street Project in San Francisco.

About Eleanor Harwood Gallery

Eleanor Harwood Gallery opened September 2006 in the Mission District and is now located in San Francisco’s premier gallery complex, the Minnesota Street Project. The gallery specializes in work with complex craft and concept, exhibiting painting, drawing, sculpture, textiles and photography by emerging to mid-career artists. The roster includes artists that are represented in major American and European collections. The gallery actively promotes and encourages career growth for represented artists.

Location

1275 Minnesota Street, Suite 105, San Francisco, CA 94107

Hours

Tuesday-Saturday 11am-5:00pm and by appointment

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