

Crown Point Press

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Mary Weatherford
and
GESTURE: A Group Exhibition
March 14 – May 4, 2019

Crown Point Press announces two concurrent exhibitions: *Mary Weatherford* and *GESTURE: A Group Exhibition*. On view from March 14th to May 4th, the exhibition presents a series of four new etchings by Los Angeles-based painter Mary Weatherford alongside a group of prints selected from Crown Point's previously published work.

Mary Weatherford's painting style is rooted in abstract expressionism and color field painting. "The combination bridges the gap between painters like Helen Frankenthaler and Post-Minimalists like Bruce Nauman and Keith Sonnier," wrote Roberta Smith in *The New York Times* in 2018. Weatherford applies color in gestural brushstrokes over a white background to achieve varied levels of luminous opacity. Since 2012, she has installed industrial neon tubes "like a drawn line" through her large-scale paintings. She was a visiting artist at California State University, Bakersfield in 2012 when she began her breakthrough series, *The Bakersfield Project*. During drives around the small town, Weatherford watched as illuminated neon signs along the road flickered against the changing gradient of the sky. This gave her the inspiration to add light fixtures as a sculptural dimension into her work. Every element down to the transformer box and its hanging wires play an important role. "These paintings wouldn't be what they are without the third element, which is the cords," Weatherford explains. "The neon is color and form, which is painting, and the cords are line. The cords are the drawing."

Weatherford completed the plates for her first project at Crown Point Press in December of 2018. Her approach to making etchings is reminiscent of her painting technique. Using spit bite aquatint, a method of painting with acid onto a copper plate, she created an etched result resembling watercolor. Weatherford chose not to rework her images while in the studio, rather favoring the effects of unlabored mark-making; the final outcome appears effortless.

"Everyone's vision is influenced by one's experiences," Weatherford told *ArtNews* in 2015, adding "I can't write about myself and my life, but I've always thought that my paintings are, in effect, my journal. I can look at a painting and remember what was going on at that time." In beginning a new work, she generally finds a place that is meaningful to her, researches its history, and then creates paintings based on her understanding of the place. She uses her memory to recreate the environment by reflecting on details like temperature and time of day within the particular location. David Kordansky of David Kordansky Gallery, Los Angeles, has called her paintings "sublime explorations of atmosphere, ambiance and light." He added "They're also commitments of an emotional, subjective kind — physical reflections of moods and positions. They're diaristic indexes of life lived, personal but also political."

Mary Weatherford was born in 1963 in Ojai, California and raised in Los Angeles. She received a Bachelor of Arts in visual arts/art history from Princeton University in 1984 and a Master of Fine Arts from the Milton Avery School of the Arts at Bard College in 2006. Her work was featured in the 2008 California Biennial at the Orange County Museum of Art, Newport Beach, CA. She is represented by David Kordansky Gallery and Gagosian Gallery.

GESTURE: A Group Exhibition includes prints by Mary Heilmann, Jacqueline Humphries, Brice Marden, Amy Sillman, Pat Steir, Charline von Heyl, and John Zurier. Work by these artists complements Mary Weatherford's new etchings; there is a connecting theme of gestural abstraction. Each artist demonstrates a unique ability to create a visual language in a non-representational narrative. Charline von Heyl takes a pragmatic and intentional approach to her art; like Weatherford, von Heyl believes the result is more important than the process. In her print *Schatzi*, the immediacy of the artist's hand is represented through various expressive movements by using the intaglio processes of spit bite aquatint and soft ground etching. Mary Heilmann used memory in a way similar to Weatherford by creating bold monochromatic prints of wave-like forms, exemplified in her 2017 series *New Lineup*, *Lineup 2*, and *Yellow Lineup*.

Mary Weatherford and *GESTURE: A Group Exhibition* is on display in the Crown Point Gallery at 20 Hawthorne Street, San Francisco, March 14th – May 4th, 2019. The gallery hours are Monday 10-5 and Tuesday through Saturday 10-6.