

About the Aspen Art Museum

Accredited by the American Alliance of Museums in 1979, the Aspen Art Museum is a thriving and globally engaged non-collecting contemporary art museum. Following the 2014 opening of the museum's facility designed by Pritzker Prize-winning architect Shigeru Ban, the AAM enjoys increased attendance, renewed civic interaction, and international media attention. In July 2017, the AAM was one of ten institutions to receive the United States' National Medal for Museum and Library Services for its educational outreach to rural communities in Colorado's Roaring Fork Valley and its fostering of learning partnerships with civic and cultural partners within a 100-mile radius of the museum's Aspen location.

Aspen Art Museum
637 East Hyman Avenue
Aspen, Colorado 81611

aspenartmuseum.org
(970) 925-8050

Hours
Tuesday–Sunday, 10 AM–6 PM
Closed Mondays

Admission to the AAM is free
courtesy of Amy and John Phelan.

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We would like to thank the following collectors involved in this exhibition: Barnett Collection, Los Angeles; Collection of Anna and Matt Freedman, Aspen; Collection of Mark Grotjahn; Collection of Lilly and Bruce Karatz; Collection of Larry and Susan Marx, Aspen; Collection of Daryl and Robert Offer; Peress Family Collection; Collection of Michael and Jodi Price; Private Collection; and The Komal Shah & Gaurav Garg Collection.

We also want to give special thanks to Mary Weatherford's studio team, especially Mollie White, Timo Fahler, and Daniel Gibson.

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Mary Weatherford: *Neon Paintings*

Aspen Art Museum

Mary Weatherford uses abstract gestures to depict concrete places. Each nonrepresentational mark alludes to daily life, experience, and surroundings, invoking a hidden narrative or underlying subject matter. Since the 1980s, Los Angeles–based painter Mary Weatherford’s canvases have incorporated a wide variety of subject matter and technique, from repeated concentric circles to screen printing and collage with natural materials. In each series, the artist challenges the discourse of and around the aesthetics of abstract painting. The exhibition *Neon Paintings* examines pivotal pieces from the last decade, with a particular focus on her neon paintings.

Weatherford is a sharp observer of her surroundings, depicting a duality between natural landscapes like mountains and sea, and more urban, architectural environments. For many years, Weatherford often returned to the same sea cave on the central coast of California, painting the site at different times of the day. In another series, she painted a cloud in relation to a mountain or a wall in relation to the moon. The artist began

to incorporate neon tubing in 2012 after driving around the California city of Bakersfield, where she was struck by the neon signage—both illuminated and burnt out—on bars, shops, and old factories. Weatherford’s neons arc over translucent veils of color, illuminating her canvases even as they act as their own expressive marks. The neon’s dangling cords likewise create intentional lines across her paintings.

The artist has noted that her work could be interpreted as self-portraiture—memories of weather, sound, and light. In *Chinatown* (2012), she paints the Manhattan neighborhood lit up late in the night. The particularly chaotic work *Blue Cut Fire*, painted in 2017, references the inferno that ravaged California’s San Gabriel Mountains the summer prior. In other pieces like *the Tempest* (2015), Weatherford composes the commotion of a storm on the sea. These otherworldly scenes are rooted in personal associations, where Weatherford calls us into the places she sees and knows.

—Simone Krug

Mary Weatherford (b. 1963, lives and works in Los Angeles)

Checklist

Gallery 2, right → left

peach 2017
Flashe and neon on linen
68 1/4 × 58 in
(173.4 × 147.3 cm)
Private Collection

Blue Cut Fire 2017
Flashe and neon on linen
117 × 104 in (297.2 × 264.2 cm)
Collection of Mark Grotjahn

Chinatown 2012
Flashe and neon on linen
93 × 79 in (236.2 × 200.7 cm)
Collection of Michael and Jodi Price

Enter KING CLAUDIUS, QUEEN GERTRUDE, HAMLET, POLONIUS, LAERTES, VOLTIMAND, CORNELIUS, Lords, and Attendants 2019
Flashe and neon on linen
117 × 234 in (297.2 × 594.4 cm)
Peress Family Collection

the Tempest 2015
Flashe and neon on linen
104 × 117 in (264.2 × 297.2 cm)
The Komal Shah & Gaurav Garg Collection

Gallery 3, right → left

Chinese Wedding 2018
Flashe and neon on linen
108 1/2 × 80 in
(275.6 × 203.2 cm)
Collection of Lilly and Bruce Karatz

The Sea, The Sea 2018
Flashe on linen
117 × 234 in (297.2 × 594.4 cm)
Collection of the artist

Nude with stockings 2017
Flashe and neon on linen
93 × 89 in (236.2 × 226.1 cm)
Private Collection, Los Angeles

fat night 2015
Flashe and neon on linen
93 × 87 in (236.2 × 221 cm)
Collection of Larry and Susan Marx, Aspen