

## 赫斯珀里得斯花园 GARDEN OF THE HESPERIDES

Leo Gallery Shanghai

ARTIST: Martin Wehmer

OPENING: September 13, 2024, 4-8 PM

DURATION: September 13 - October 27, 2024

VENUE: Leo Gallery 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor Space, 376 Wu Kang Road, Xuhui District, Shanghai



### FOREWORD

Leo Gallery is delighted to present the solo exhibition *Garden of the Hesperides* by Martin Wehmer, on view from September 13 to October 27, 2024. In Greek mythology, the Garden of the Hesperides is a mystical sanctuary where the golden apple tree flourish, emblematic of abundance, allure, and timeless beauty. Using the exuberant blossoms and branches of *Huahua* as a point of departure, Wehmer sets the stage for a dynamic interplay of substance, color, and form.

"Lange stand ich am Ufer und suchte mit meiner Seele das Land der Griechen."  
("For a long time, I stood by the shore, my soul in search of the Greeks' land.")

As a German artist who has made China his home for nearly two decades, Wehmer seamlessly weaves his perceptions of Chinese life into his canvases. His cross-cultural subjects delve into the shifting cultural meanings of everyday objects across different contexts. Concepts and symbols, once rooted in a singular cultural narrative, are reimagined through the lens of cultural interplay, yielding fresh insights. Wehmer's work not only serves as a personal dialogue with life but also as a meditation on cultural identity and transformation, poised between his native land and his adopted home.

Wehmer's signature impasto technique infuses his work with palpable materiality and vibrant energy. The paint, vigorously applied, creates a textured surface that seems to pulse and breathe, defying the stillness of the canvas. His sculptural brushwork forges a tactile and visual intersection, drawing viewers into an immersive sensory experience. Through this lush formal language, Wehmer magnifies, deconstructs, and reconfigures figures and objects, crafting an abstract existence that both narrates and transcends reality.

From his series on "Greek Gods" and "Everyday Objects" to his abstract works, this exhibition brings together a diverse range of Wehmer's creative endeavors from the past decade. In *Garden of the Hesperides*, Wehmer gracefully invites viewers to step into a hidden realm of rare flora, where one can wander, pause, observe, and discover a golden apple uniquely their own.

## ARTIST INTRODUCTION

**Martin Wehmer** born in 1966 in Hettingen, Germany, lives and works in Beijing. He has held lectureships at the Central Academy of Fine Arts (CAFA), the China Academy of Art (CAA) and the Berlin University of the Arts (BUA), and the Tianjin Academy of Fine Arts (TAFA). He was the recipient of Stipendium iaab, International Exchange Basel in Beijing in 2008, Stipendium iaab, International Exchange Basel in Edinburgh in 2003, and the German Art Prize of Volks & Raiffeisen in 1996.

Wehmer is by almost any definition a painter - and one who embraces the traditional craft of his medium by way of extraordinary skill on the one hand, and by his concise and intellectual investigations, pursued with equally extraordinary diligence, on the other. His work originates from the annals of art history, specifically concerning itself with material, picture, plane, and space - issues distinctive to painting. Wehmer is a manufacturer of an artifice that relies on a socially relevant commodity that stays connected through his personal desire and his predisposition. His intention is not to dematerialize nor contextualize the art to advance how we define art-making today, but he consciously embraces the restrictive property of painting. The painting therefore dictates the artistic activity that has produced it and becomes a fetishistic object of desire.

Weimer's works are in the collections of many important institutions, including UBS Hong Kong, Cologne and Zurich, Kunstcredit Basel, Kultusministerium Kanton Basel, and many others.