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Spencer Finch

Botanica

6 Sept - 12 Oct

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Galerie Nordenhake opens its new space in Mexico City with *Botanica* the first exhibition in Mexico of US-American multi-media artist Spencer Finch. The exhibition includes a series of new watercolour drawings, photographs, and a light installation conceived explicitly for the gallery space located in Colonia Roma. The exhibition as a whole evinces the extensive exploration of colour and light for which Finch has become well known.

The notion of *Botanica* evokes not only the store as well as the paradigm of knowledge surrounding the concept of flora but points specifically to the selection of works made by the artist for the exhibition and emerges from his poetic approach to the study of nature and the mining of his own garden. According to Susan Cross 'Spencer Finch's conceptual approach revolves around the perception of everyday light and colour. Finch carefully studies the world around him, while simultaneously striving to understand what might lie beyond it. Whether he is relying on his powers of observation or using a colorimeter, a device that reads the average colour temperature of light, the artist employs a scientific method to achieve poetic ends.'

Each of the works on view constitute a precise gesture of reflection on looking at the natural world. More specifically, they explore a direct reference and derive inspiration from artists, poets and philosophers as varied as Claude Monet, Federico Garcia Lorca, Shikibu and Ludwig Wittgenstein. This continues Finch's long held occupation with and channeling of historical literary and philosophical figures such as Emily Dickinson, Sigmund Freud and Isaac Newton.

Taken as a whole, Spencer Finch's exhibition, dramatically expands the meaning of *Botanica* beyond the scientific to encompass ideas both lyrical and imaginative.



Shadow of Orange Tree
(After Lorca)

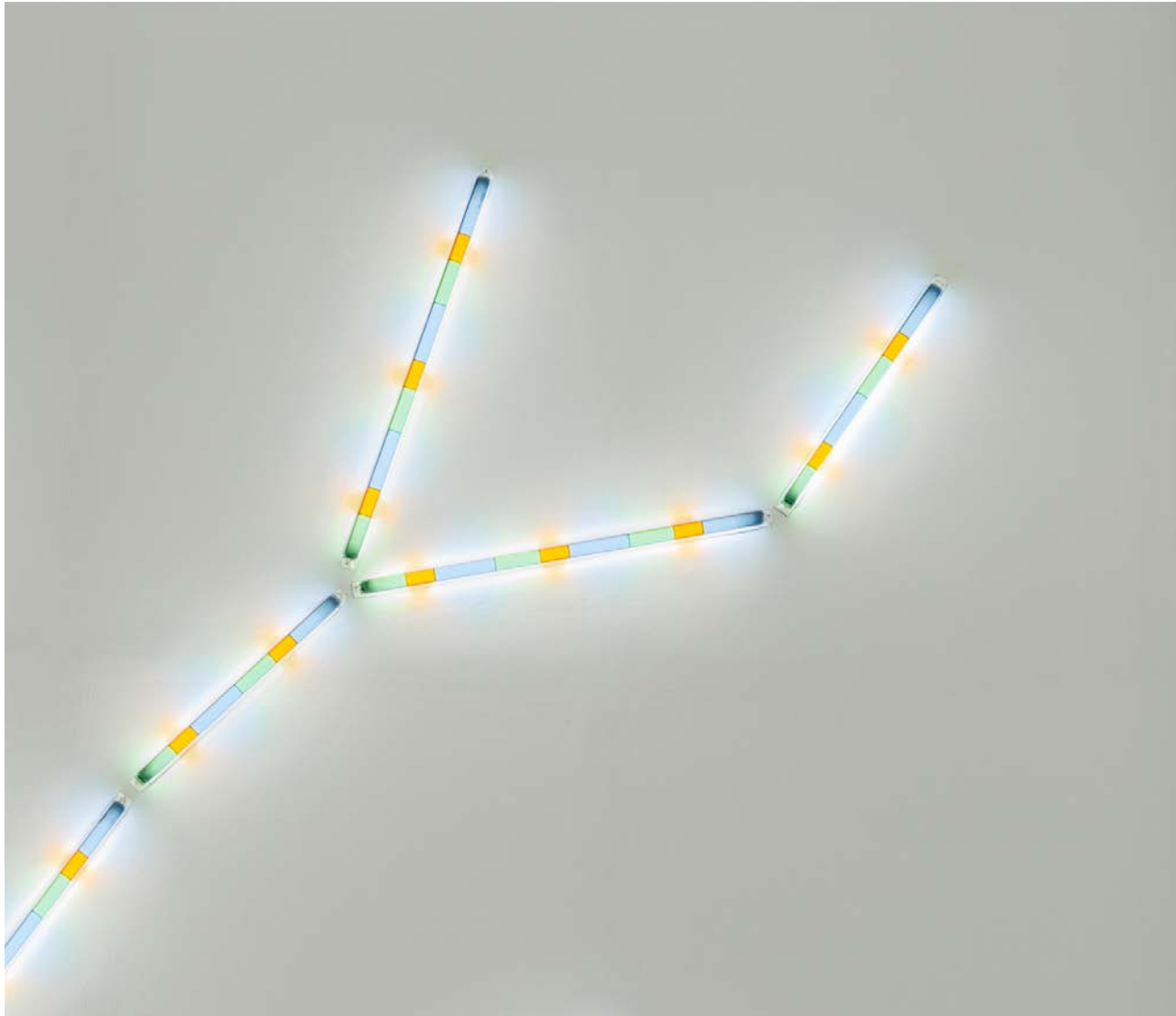
2019

12 Fluorescent lights, fixtures, filters

320 x 420 x 5 cm, |

126 x 165 1/3 x 2 in

In his site-specific light work, *Shadow of Orange Tree (After Lorca)* Finch employs standard fluorescent lights and theatre gels to precisely re-create the shadow of an orange tree in the garden of Federico García Lorca's childhood home. Finch travelled to Fuente Vaqueros and measured the light of the shadow under an orange tree. According to the collected data he filters the fluorescent light with green, blue and orange gels to arrive at the quality of light of the original shadow. The work is inspired by Federico García Lorca poem *Song of the Barren Orange Tree*, in this way, Finch plays again under Wittgenstein's thesis on colour and language as well as psychological experience. In this work, as in many others, Finch plays with the pseudo-scientific to create a metaphysical and philosophical reflection.



Detail, *Shadow of Orange Tree* (After Lorca)



Still Life (Bouquet) morning effect, noon effect, afternoon effect, evening effect
2019

Watercolour on paper
Set of four drawings,
70 x 53.3 cm |
21 x 27 in each

Finch's interest in Claude Monet and the effects of light and colour is perfectly captured in *Still Life (bouquet)*, morning effect, noon effect, afternoon effect, evening effect, a suite of four watercolour drawings made just this summer. The work documents the colour changes of a bouquet of flowers picked from Finch's garden and uses eleven brush strokes, one for each flower as shown at different times of day.



*Still Life (Bouquet) morning
effect, noon effect, afternoon
effect, evening effect*
2019
Watercolour on paper
Set of four drawings, 70 x
53.3 cm | 21 x 27 in each

Detail



Installation view



Following a Bee (Zinnias)

2018

Soft pastel and pencil on
paper

77.5 x 111.5 cm, |

30 1/2 x 44 in

This piece is inspired by
Emily Dickinson's poetry:
"To make a prairie it takes a
clover and one bee, /
One clover, and a bee, /
and revery."

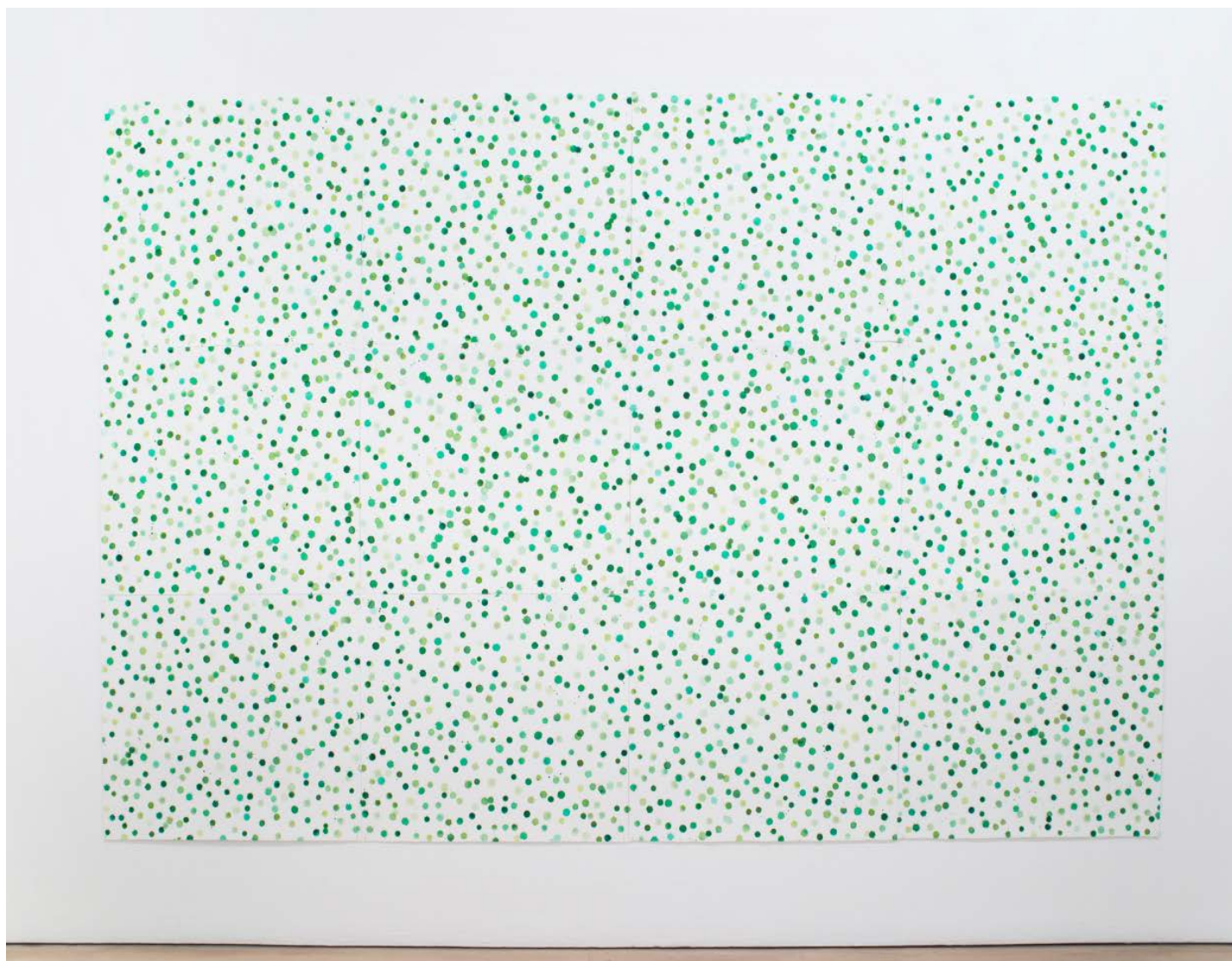
In its creation, Finch
followed a bee around his
garden, tracking his own
pursuit and marking the
bee's stops along the way.



Installation view



Installation view



Spring (3,563)

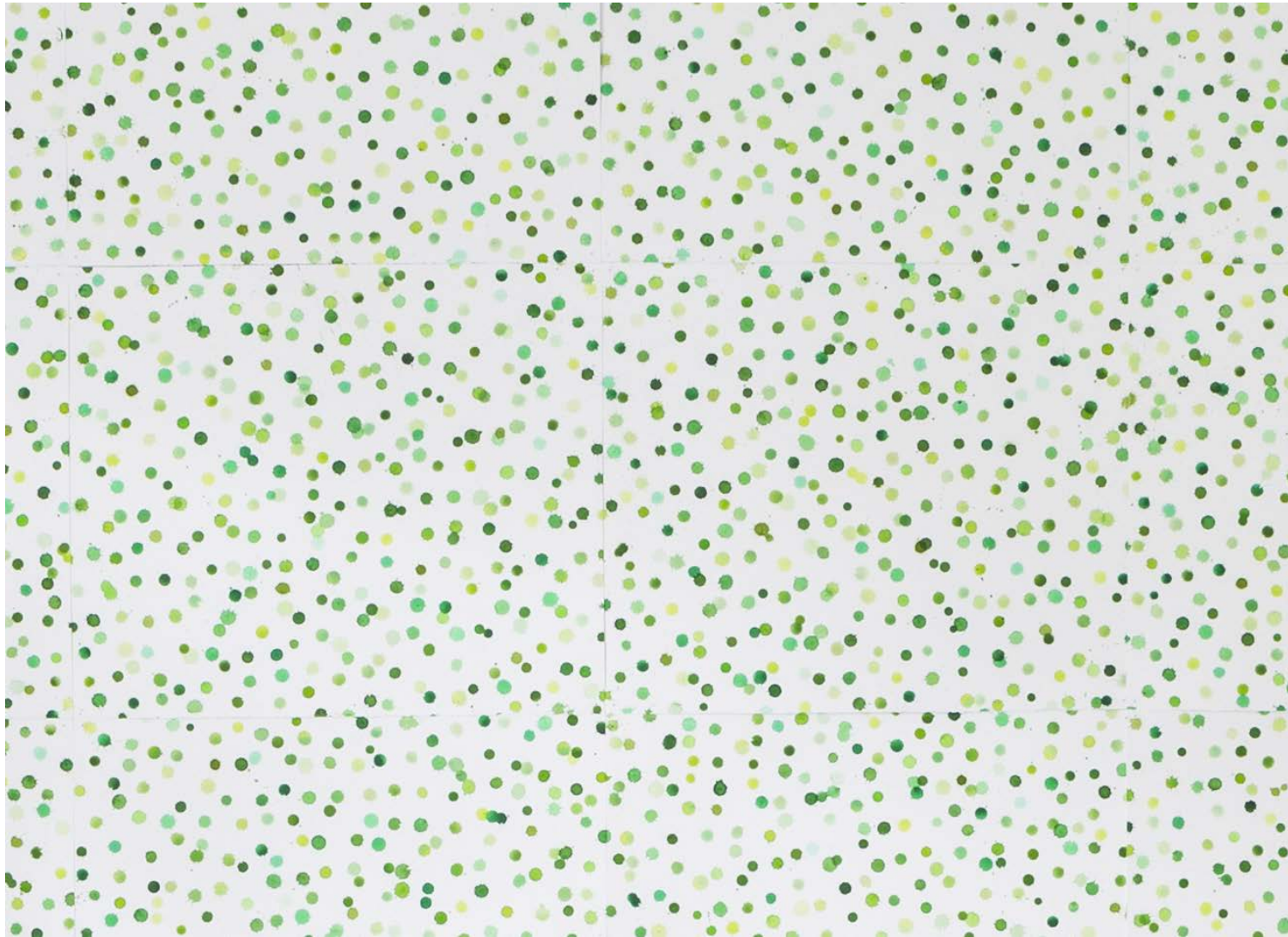
2016

Watercolour on paper

228.6 x 355.5 cm, |

90 x 140 in

The work consists in a depiction of the most comprehensive variety of greens painted with watercolour on a series of papers. The artist created all these colours by recording 3,563 different tones of green with a colorimeter in his garden during Spring and then he matched them with the accurate use of the palette of watercolours. Therefore, the work poetically transmits the expansive quantity of perceptions we have in our everyday life during Spring.



Spring (3,563)
2016

Watercolour on paper
228.6 x 355.5 cm, |
90 x 140 in

Detail



Falling Leaf (Beech) 2019
Watercolor on folded paper
4 x 4 cm each square



Detail, *Falling Leaf (Beech)*



*Two Petals Fall (after
Masaoka Shiki)*
2019

Two archival inkjet prints 42
x 42 cm each,
Ed. 1/5 + 1 AP

*Two Petals Fall (after
Masaoka Shiki)*, a new
photographic diptych,
makes time palpable in its
subtle exploration of shape
and form. The peony
pictured is again from
Finch's garden and has lost
two petals, as described in
a poem by the Japanese
diarist and poet Shikibu by
way of Anne Carson in her
book *Plainwater*. Intense
looking and the passage of
time become main subjects
of this captivating yet
slightly grotesque flower.



Detail, *Two Petals Fall* (after
Masaoka Shiki)



Detail, *Two Petals Fall* (after
Masaoka Shiki)



Remarks on Colour

2019

27 Plants in Mexican soil,
terracotta pots
dimensions variable

For *Remarks on Colour*, Finch translates aphorisms taken from one of the last works by Ludwig Wittgenstein *Remarks on Colour*. The installation is made up of six groups of plants selected according to a philosophical approach to colour. In this way the artist proposes a living interpretation of the problems of colour and language that the philosopher raised in his language games of colour, such as "reddish-green" or "transparent white."



Remarks on Colour
2019
27 Plants in Mexican soil,
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Installation view

Spencer Finch was born in New Haven, Connecticut, in 1962, and currently lives and works in Brooklyn, NY.

He has participated in the Folkestone Triennial, UK (2011), the 53rd Venice Biennial (2009), the Turin Triennial (2008) and the Whitney Biennial (2004). A survey exhibition titled *What Time Is It on the Sun?* was on view at MASS MoCA, North Adams in 2007-2008. His long-term installation *Cosmic Latte* is on view at the museum at least through 2020. Spencer Finch has exhibited internationally since the early 1990s. His solo exhibitions include locations such as Arcadia University Spruance Gallery, Glenside, PA (2018); Norton Museum of Art, West Palm Beach, FL (2017); The Morgan Library and Museum New York; Montclair Art Museum, NJ; Turner Contemporary, Margate (all 2014); Indianapolis Museum of Art; FRAC Basse-Normandie, Caen (both 2013); Museum of Art, Rhode Island School of Design (2012); The Art Institute of Chicago; Museum of Contemporary Art San Diego; Emily Dickinson Museum, Amherst (all 2011); Corcoran Gallery of Art, Washington DC and FRAC des Pays de la Loire, Carquefou (both 2010). A long term installation of his work *Moon Dust* (Apollo 17) is on view at the Baltimore Museum of Art, MD (since 2018).

Spencer Finch was chosen to create the only work of art commissioned for the National September 11 Memorial and Museum, New York which opened in 2014. In 2018 he created *Fifteen Stones* (Ryōan-ji), a site-specific installation for the reflecting pond of the Mies van der Rohe Pavilion, Barcelona. His installation *Lost Man Creek*, recreating at a 1:100 scale, a 790-acre section of the Redwood National Park in California, was on view at MetroTech Commons, Downtown Brooklyn until May 2018. His commission for the Crossrail Paddington Station in London titled *A Cloud Index* will open in 2020. Other recent public commissions include: *The Western Mystery*, Olympic Sculpture Park, Seattle Art Museum; *Newton's Theory of Color and Music* (Goldberg Variations), Steinway, New York (2016); *Kentucky Sunlight* (Lincoln's Birthday), Speed Art Museum, Louisville (2016); the glass façade design for The Johns Hopkins Medical Center, Baltimore (2012); and *The River that Flows Both Ways*, High Line Park, New York (2009).