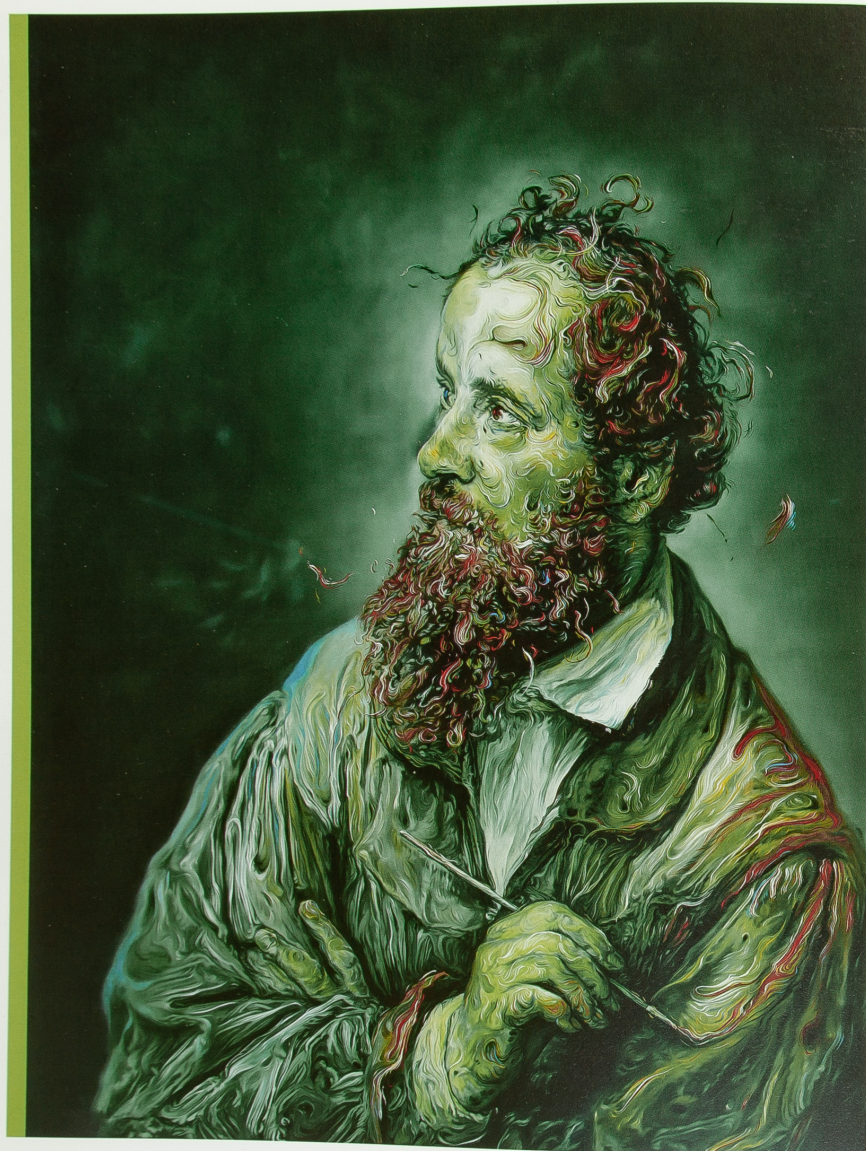


REMEMBER

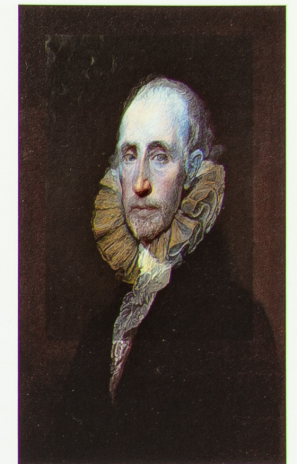
EVERYTHING



68 Abstract Composition No. 1, 2013, in Remember Everything, Udenarder Straße, Berlin 2013

Glenn Brown

"I use images of paintings as a starting point for my work, and in the few cases that they are from so-called popular or low culture I don't differentiate. In my mind they are still paintings, though they may have been painted with the intention to reproduce them, for instance on the cover of a science-fiction book. I only ever use part of the image, in that I want to add myself to it. How I do it depends on what I am trying to say. I often have ideas for paintings but only later find a painting to attach myself to, to make my idea manifest. I tend not to encounter them by chance, but go hunting for them, at night, when they are asleep in a book."



"I wanted to be associated with the artists Max was working with. I don't make any works for group shows or art fairs, as it's very frustrating to make a work that leaves the studio immediately after it is finished. I want to have them around for a while so I can learn more from them. I like to make a group of paintings or sculptures that work together. I did make an exception for a painting that Patrick Painter (my Los Angeles art dealer at the time) took to Art Basel, where Patrick was sharing a booth with Max. Patrick said: 'If you give me a painting, I will install it on the wall opposite

Max's desk, he will see it every day.' It worked. Max was intrigued by the painting and that's how we met. It's that magic of imagining your work hung with other artists you admire, and it's exciting when it happens."

Glenn Brown, Zimmerstraße, Berlin 2002.

"For my second show with Max in 2002, I wanted the invitation card to look like a funeral announcement. I was told that it was a horrible idea. Max just laughed and said: 'OK, whatever you want.' *On Hearing of the Death of My Mother* is an interesting painting based on a very pretty Renoir flowers painting, but I think I must have been going through quite a dark stage at the time; another painting from the show based on the same Renoir is called *Kill Yourself*. It was a rather dark exhibition."

Glenn Brown, Bleibtreustraße, Berlin 2011.

"When Max and Samia asked me to do a show in 2011, the gallery was in this huge industrial building in Wedding and I said to them that it would be too difficult to show my work in such a space. After a while, Max came back and said, 'I have a solution,' and it was quite straightforward: they proposed to move all furniture from their apartment and turn it into a gallery. So they installed new lighting, took the electrical points out, and



Glenn Brown

Einladung zur Eröffnung
am Dienstag
den 11. September
18 bis 22 Uhr
11. September
bis 26. Oktober
dinstags bis samstags
11 bis 18 Uhr
Galerie Max Heister
Zimmerstraße 90/91
D-10117 Berlin
(+49) 30 229 24 97
Fax 229 24 17
www.maxheister.com

Washington Sex (Stuart/Brown), 2008 (top); *On Hearing of the Death of My Mother*, 2002, invitation card for Glenn Brown, Zimmerstraße, Berlin 2002 (bottom)



70 *Kill Yourself, 2002, in Glenn Brown, Zimmerstraße, Berlin 2002*



Painted the walls. I had chosen a very light gray for the walls. Later I realized it was very much against Max's aesthetic. He likes white, the strong white of the late 20th century. This gray was the color that might have been on the walls in the 19th century. Primarily it was to make the paintings look better and more dramatic.

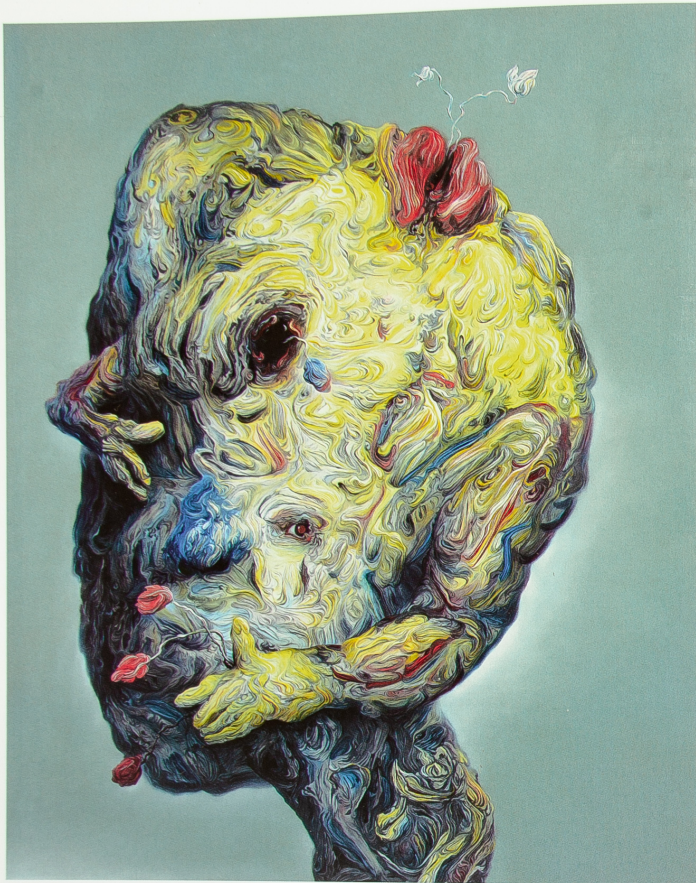
Whenever you present an exhibition, the order in which the work is revealed to the audience does make a difference, you don't want to give them anything too dramatic or outlandish to start with, for one. I realized that making an exhibition with very different works created problems. Someone would look at a painting which demanded a particular emotion, and with another painting be turned in a completely different direction. You can't expect people to have such abrupt changes. It works better if you have separate rooms, with each having a particular emotional theme. Similar works exhibited together create a stronger effect."

Remember Everything, Oudenarder Straße, Berlin 2013. "The painting I made for the exhibition is based on a portrait of an artist from the 19th century, which has been painted by an Italian named Giuseppe Carnovali, so now three artists are involved in it. In a way, it's a conversation piece.

I started the painting in green, and then started putting some red on it. A friend of mine, who is an art therapist, came to the studio, saw the work, and told me that if someone uses green and red together, alarm bells ring in terms of psychology. It demonstrates that something is wrong in their life. It didn't matter what the painting depicted, to her the color dominated the subject. This is partly why I decided to continue, I wanted to make this painting work. It's quite a conservative image in many ways. It's very recognizable. It's not abstract. It's not particularly distorted. It was about red and green, and I didn't want them to dominate so much, it's all about balance.

My paintings and sculptures are a criticism of the painterly gesture, which has dominated art for a long time. I enjoy looking at gestural painting, I love it, but I don't feel capable to do it myself; the only way I can create the emotion of the gesture is by these volume illusions. It's what seems to fit. It's a pity in many ways but it's where I've ended up. The gestural brush mark seems to have been used to death. It can no longer hold the same meaning as it once had.

I'm the kind of artist who wouldn't mind doing the same work again and again as long as it gets better. It's not about originality; it's about quality. It's one of the notions the art world is obsessed



"Art, to me, has never felt like a depiction of reality. It is always about getting some internal understanding of reality out. I view all paintings as a language to be used and shaped to help me comment on what I feel about the world. I had to, and still am, learning to paint. I am learning how to construct all these artificial devices together to form a coherent and interesting image. We each have our individual view of the world so what becomes interesting is when an artist manages to communicate his own perspective, in a manner that seems both familiar and articulate yet alien at the same time."²





74 *Woman I*, 2011 (top), exhibition view (bottom), Glenn Brown, Bleibtreustraße, Berlin 2011



with: presenting something new. I think there is a lot of art that has been presented during the 20th century and which has been acclaimed only because nothing like it had been seen before. But it's not always so interesting, I think a lot of abstract expressionist works are dull, and as the 'shock of the new' disappears quite quickly, you're left with something which is meaningless. Although I fully realize that people's tastes change, I like the idea of making a work that has a long shelf life."

"It could be said that with the flatness of the painted surface, I am denying my physical presence—not only because actual marks can barely be seen, but also because the viewer is not sure how I have made the paintings, or even if they are painted at all. The artist is only a disembodied presence.

I find myself making flowing curls all over the paintings to take you visually on a journey over an image. For me this is an interesting way of moving the viewer's eyes around the canvas.

I try to get those same sliding brush marks into the sculpture, even though the process is different physically. The sculpture involves large brushes; I always use one size for the entire sculpture, whereas with paintings, I use tiny brushes of various types... I see the sculptural brush marks as challenging the logic of paint in that they ap-

pear to defy gravity. For me, they exist within a surreal world that is based on getting paint to do something it shouldn't do, and to sit in a three-dimensional world that it shouldn't be in. The vitrine allows the sculpture to exist within its own mummified world."³

All quotes from a conversation between the artist and the author. London, July 2013, except: ¹ Glenn Brown interviewed by Laurence Sillars, in *Glenn Brown* (Liverpool: Tate Publishing, 2009) ² Glenn Brown interviewed by Katarzyna Uszyska, in *Glenn Brown* (Vienna: Kunsthistorisches Museum, 2008) ³ Glenn Brown interviewed by Rochelle Steiner, in *Glenn Brown* (London: Serpentine Gallery, 2004)

Carnival, 2011, in Glenn Brown, Bleibtreustraße, Berlin 2011 *Overleaf: Le Châle Vénitien*, 2013, in *Remember Everything*, Oudenarder Straße, Berlin 2013 (left and right)

Glenn Brown

