



For Immediate Release:

HANNA VON GOELER | FLEURS DU MAL

December 8, 2022 - January 22, 2023

Artist Reception Saturday, December 10, 5-8PM

High Noon is pleased to present **Hanna von Goeler's** second exhibition with the gallery, **Fleurs du Mal**. Titled after Baudelaire's famous book of poems, the *Fleur du Mal* section includes infamous poems— censored at the initial time of publication— such as *Un Voyage à Cythère*, *Femmes Damnées*, and *Une Martyre*, about women who transgressed societal norms.

Rather than create a depiction— or abstraction— von Goeler has painted flowers in the way that a house painter paints a house, conflating object and representation. Most of the flowers were grown in her garden and some wild flowers and weeds were picked from roadside meadows. They are carefully dried, and layers of paint are applied by different means depending on the type, then attached or embedded with paint and painting mediums onto up-cycled vintage floral tablecloths. The tablecloths are stretched as canvases and serve as springboards for the compositions, many which are riffs on some of art history's greatest hits: Van Gogh's *Starry Night*, Manet's *Le Déjeuner sur l'herbe*, Botticelli's *Primavera*— artists and works familiar to the lay person, Sunday painter, and art professional alike. Placing her pun on flower painting onto vintage floral tablecloths, von Goeler references the domestic labor of women which historically resided outside of the production of capital, but certainly aided and supported it.

Chloris and Flora is inspired by Botticelli's *Primavera*, in which flowers spill out of the mouth of the Greek goddess Chloris, scattering into the landscape, and fastening to the Roman goddess Flora's dress, creating a kind of *mille-fleur* allegory of spring. Zephyrus, the biting wind of March, kidnaps Chloris, marries her, and transforms her from nymph into deity— Flora, the goddess of spring and eternal bearer of life. By focusing the viewer's attention to her lips, von Goeler highlights Chloris's voice being silenced, language replaced by flowers. It also references the mythical notion that creation or production by women circumvents labor in the classic Marxist sense.

Von Goeler's diptych version of **Le Déjeuner sur l'herbe** uses the language of minimalism. The left canvas is a mid-century tablecloth of roses that has been mounted across stretcher bars, representing the picnic/luncheon in Manet's 1862-1863 and Monet's 1865-1866 paintings of the same name. A thick layer of paint was pulled across the right panel with painted botanicals dropped into it, becoming the grass or meadow on which the luncheon takes place. The flowers in this panel, however, are not representations but actual flowers, yet in another sense represent themselves. The figures (in Manet's version, a nude woman reclines on a tablecloth set for a picnic, and is surrounded by men dressed in suits) are missing from this version, leaving space for a viewer to imagine or project. As Jessi Jezewaska Stevens wrote in the *New Yorker*, "Flowers are the ultimate symbol, you could say, endlessly accommodating of projections. What is the logic that so easily links flowers, the primary painterly subject for women, in particular to women, the painterly subject for men?"

"Flower painting" or still life such as emerged during the Dutch Golden Age, was the rare genre in which women had a chance to participate (it was considered lowest of the five genres by the French Academy; history painting being the highest of genres). With colonialism and the import of species such as the tulip native to Ottoman Turkey, came the demand for paintings of these valuable floral specimens. This gave rise to rare new opportunities for women artists such as Rachel Ruysch, Clara Peeters, and Maria Sibylla Merian. Still life or *nature morte* was also home to *vanitas* and *memento mori* thematics, with flowers symbolizing both life and growth as well as the ephemeral. These themes find home in the contemporary flower paintings in **Fleurs du Mal** as well, with an added layer of ecological concern.

Hanna von Goeler received a Bachelor of Fine Arts from the Rhode Island School of Design, a Master of Fine Arts from the University of California, Davis, and completed additional post graduate study at the Jan van Eyck Academy in the Netherlands. Her work has been exhibited nationally and internationally at venues such as The Museum Bellerive, Kunsthall KAdE, The Hunterdon Museum of Art, The Museum of Arts and Crafts Itami, Hudson Valley MOCA, Princeton University's Bernstein Gallery, Hunter College's Times Square Gallery, Shirley Fiterman Art Center, and the Naracje Festival for Installation and Intervention in Public Space. Her work has been featured in publications such as the *Wall Street Journal*, *New York Times*, *MSN*, *Another Magazine*, and the *Stuttgarter Zeitung*, amongst others; in books such as Malek Abou's *Fondement Metaphysiques du Dollar* and *Architectural Inventions: Visionary Drawing* (Matt Bua and Maximillian Goldfarb); as well as in museum and gallery catalogs.

Please join us for the artist reception **Saturday, December 10th from 5-8PM**. A full-color, limited edition catalog of the exhibition will be published during the exhibition's run. For any additional information about the exhibition or **High Noon's** programming, please contact Jared Linge at jared@highnoongallery.com, or call 760.519.1956.

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