

REGEN PROJECTS

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:



Image: Gillian Wearing, *No Reflection*, 2023. Oil on thick board
23 5/8 x 23 5/8 inches (60 x 60 cm). Photo: Mark Blower.

GILLIAN WEARING

reflections

NOVEMBER 3 – DECEMBER 23, 2023

PRESS PREVIEW WITH THE ARTIST: FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 3, 11:00 AM

OPENING RECEPTION: FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 3, 6:00 – 8:00 PM

GALLERY HOURS: TUESDAY – SATURDAY, 10:00 AM – 6:00 PM

Well-known for photographic portraits in which she adopts the guise of others as a way of inquiring about the consistency of the self, with *reflections*, her fifth solo exhibition at Regen Projects, Gillian Wearing focuses our attention on the precarity of perception and self-perception, the constructed reality of pictures of any kind, and the susceptibility of how we see ourselves. Recalling her love of painting as a student, Wearing long wondered how the medium might join her established range of practices, including photography, video, and sculpture. The pandemic lockdowns afforded what seemed like an infinity of time and the privacy to rediscover the medium without scrutiny as she relearned a once seemingly innate skill.

Wearing's paintings clearly evoke many of her familiar themes. Questions of representation, performance, embodiment, mediation, and authenticity are distinctly realized in a suite that abounds with mirrors, doorways, images of the artist herself, and portals of all kinds. Many contribute to what the artist calls the "Historical Family" series, which features "nods to the past" and to artists "that are more like ancestors." Wearing's compositions often draw from the oeuvres of canonical painters, or spirit her into their scenes. "To insert myself into history is to imagine [not only] a different conversation but also [a way to] reframe a work that can mean something to me now," Wearing wrote upon the appearance of the earliest of these works in *Gillian Wearing: Wearing Masks*, at the Guggenheim in 2021.

The exhibition also features a new photograph in the artist's "Spiritual Family" series, with Wearing as the Renaissance painter Artemisia Gentileschi (known for paintings such as *Judith Beheading Holofernes*, 1620) and the video, *Wearing, Gillian*, 2018, an AI assisted collage of more than fifteen actors—including Wearing herself—digitally aligned into a deepfake exploration of the fluidity of identity. Wearing's photographs emerge not only from a detailed and extensive production process, including costuming, set design, and of course the fabrication of the all-important mask but also research into and contemplation of how Wearing embodies her subject—just as an actor might.

Wearing's own eyes usually peer out from behind the masks in her photographs; however, in *Rembrandt's Eyes*, 2023 she appropriates the eyes of the Dutch painter for her own image. Noted for his intense, absorptive, theatrical self-portraits, the allusion to Rembrandt—or to Gentileschi, Edward Hopper, or Édouard Manet among others across the exhibition—underscores how her multifaceted practice draws from an established archive of images and image-makers embedded in the history of painting, prints, photography, and performance. A repeated motif of frames and doorways gives architectural form to a meditation on life's stages, choices, and forking paths—as well as its echoes and capacity to loop back. Paintings of mirrors as they reflect a painting, or, another mirror in turn (one struggles to be certain), court their own play of reflections and misperceptions, until the observed world is revealed to be as abstract as any purely formal composition.

REGEN PROJECTS

Gillian Wearing (b. 1963, Birmingham, UK) studied at the Chelsea School of Art and Goldsmiths' College in London. She lives and works in London.

Over her three-decade career, Wearing has focused equally on her own self-portraiture and on the depictions of others, testing the boundaries between the private and public, questioning fixed notions of identity, and frequently anticipating the cultural transformations wrought by social media. Throughout her works, masks serve as both literal props and metaphors for the performances each of us stage every day as individuals and as citizens.

Wearing has been the subject of numerous solo exhibitions, including *Gillian Wearing: Wearing Masks*, Guggenheim Museum, New York, (2021); *Life: Gillian Wearing*, Cincinnati Art Museum (2018); *Gillian Wearing – Family Stories*, National Gallery of Denmark, Copenhagen (2017–2018); *Gillian Wearing and Claude Cahun: Behind the mask, another mask*, National Portrait Gallery, London (2017); *Gillian Wearing*, Institut Valencià d'Art Modern (2015–2016); *Gillian Wearing*, Whitechapel Gallery, London; traveled to K20, Kunstsammlung Nordrhein-Westfalen, Düsseldorf, and Pinakothek der Moderne, Munich (2012–2013); *A Real Birmingham Family*, Ikon Gallery, Birmingham (2011); *Confessions / Portraits, videos*, Musée Rodin, Paris (2009); *Gillian Wearing: Living Proof*, Australian Centre for Contemporary Art (ACCA), Melbourne (2006); *Gillian Wearing: Mass Observation*, Museum of Contemporary Art Chicago; traveled to Institute of Contemporary Art, University of Pennsylvania (2002–2003); and *Gillian Wearing*, Serpentine Gallery, London (2000); among others.

Wearing was awarded the Turner Prize in 1997, and elected a Royal Academician by the Royal Academy of Arts in 2007. She was made an Officer of the Order of the British Empire (OBE) in 2011, and received a Commander of the Order of the British Empire (CBE) in 2019.

Monographs and publications on her work include *Gillian Wearing: Wearing Masks* (Guggenheim Museum, 2021); *Gillian Wearing: Family Stories* (Hatje Cantz, 2017); *Gillian Wearing and Claude Cahun: Behind the mask, another mask* (National Portrait Gallery and Princeton University Press, 2017); *Gillian Wearing: Living Proof* (Australian Centre for Contemporary Art, 2006); *Gillian Wearing: Mass Observation* (Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago and Merrell Publishers Limited, 2002); *Gillian Wearing: A Trilogy* (Vancouver Art Gallery, 2002); *Gillian Wearing: Sous Influence* (Musée d'Art Moderne de la Ville de Paris, 2001); *Gillian Wearing: Unspoken* (Kunstverein Munich, 2001); *Gillian Wearing* (Serpentine Gallery, 2000); *Gillian Wearing* (Phaidon, 1999); and *Gillian Wearing* (Kunsthaus Zürich, 1997).

Works by Wearing are held in the permanent collections of art institutions worldwide including CAPC musée d'art contemporain, Bordeaux; Hamburger Kunsthalle; Irish Museum of Modern Art, Dublin; IVAM, Institut Valencià d'Art Modern; Kunsthaus Zürich; Los Angeles County Museum of Art; Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles; Museum of Modern Art, New York; Musée d'Art Moderne de Paris; Museum of Contemporary Art Chicago; National Portrait Gallery, London; National Museum of Contemporary Art Athens; Guggenheim Museum, New York; Tate Britain, London; and Vancouver Art Gallery; among many others.

For all press inquiries, please contact +1 310 276 5424 or Grant Johnson at grantjohnson@regenprojects.com.

For all other inquiries, please contact Jennifer Loh, Stephanie Dudzinski, Magnus Edensvard, or Anthony Salvador at sales@regenprojects.com.