

NICHOLAS METIVIER GALLERY

TONY SCHERMAN | *WHEN A FLOWER IS CUT*

PRESS RELEASE

September 28th – November 2nd

Together with the Estate of Tony Scherman, Nicholas Metivier Gallery is honoured to present *When a Flower is Cut*, our first solo exhibition and the first exhibition since Scherman's passing. The exhibition will showcase important paintings and drawings from the last three decades of Scherman's career, many of which are from his personal collection and on view for the first time. *When a Flower is Cut* will open on Saturday, September 28th with a reception from 1-3PM. The exhibition will be on view through Saturday, November 2nd.

Adopting the difficult medium of encaustic painting early on in a career that spanned over five decades, Tony Scherman was lauded for his remarkable facility with the ancient medium and for positioning it firmly within the context of contemporary art. The dynamic process involves mixing melted wax with oil paint and applying it rapidly onto a dry surface in layers. Scherman's signature approach began with a beige ground to which he added colour, continually building up and burning away the wax to leave light trapped within the surface.

The effect of combining light and darkness heightened the theatricality of his subjects hailing from history, mythology, and popular culture. Using the inherent weight and common associations surrounding his subjects, Scherman proposed a narrative without being descriptive or venturing into the arena of a history painting. Instead, he aspired to depict the inner psyche of his subjects creating what were often described as "forensic portraits".

The cutting of a flower not only kills it, but its slow death gives us pleasure or comfort. When a flower is cut, it not only becomes a sign signifying love, the hearth, death, but becomes sacred in its assignation.

- Tony Scherman

Rarely exhibited but an immensely important facet of Scherman's practice were his drawings. Often favouring waxed butcher's paper, Scherman relinquished control over conscious thought when making his drawings. His hand and eye moved together in synchronicity and in ways beyond reason and rationale.

Tony Scherman (1950-2023) grew up in Paris and London. In 1974, Scherman received an MA from the Royal College of Art in London and returned to Toronto in 1976. His work was featured in more than 100 solo exhibitions across Canada, in the United States and Europe and can be found in collections including the Art Gallery of Ontario, Toronto; Montréal Museum of Fine Art; Musée d'art contemporain de Montréal; Centre Pompidou, Paris; High Museum, Atlanta and Los Angeles County Museum of Art.