

TOM WUDL

Reflections of the Flowerbank World

3 September - 5 October 2013 • Reception for the artist: **Saturday, 7 September, 6-8 pm**



Unattached, Unbound, Liberated Kindness, 2013
 pencil, gouache, 22 karat gold, and gum arabic on rice paper
 25 x 36 1/2 in. (63.5 x 92.7 cm)

Venice, CA -- L.A. Louver is pleased to present an exhibition of recent paintings on linen and vellum by Los Angeles-based artist Tom Wudl.

Created with acrylic, oil and gold paint, gouache, pencil and gold leaf, Wudl's new work is inspired by the Avatamsaka Sutra (or Flower Ornament Sutra), the revered scripture of Huayan Buddhism. The sutra describes an interdependency of all phenomena within a cosmos of infinite realms. Written in language that evokes sublime imagery, it seeks to create a path to enlightenment through exalted experiences of imagination and reality. The sutra has inspired Wudl over the past decade, infusing the work he presented in two previous exhibitions at L.A. Louver: *specimens from the flowerbank world*, in 2009, and *immensities and infinities*, in 2011. In this new exhibition, titled *Reflections of the Flowerbank World*, Wudl further explores the rich content of the sutra, to create some of his most intricate and complex paintings to date.



Unattached, Unbound, Liberated Kindness, 2013 (detail)

An exquisite flower is depicted at the heart of several of Wudl's compositions. In *Blossom of Inexhaustible Kindness*, 2013 the petals of a flower are articulated with complex crosshatching, and edged in red and gold, while in *Mandala of Liberation*, 2012 a gold rose is surrounded by a rich array of sparkling, multi-faceted jewels that emanate from a sky-blue ground. A rose also dominates the

composition of *Unattached, Unbound, Liberated Kindness*, 2013 in which each petal of the blossoming flower is weighted with a rich array of colored jewels. Offset against a dark ground, the rose is surrounded by floating flowers and forms created with gouache, gold paint and gold leaf. *Unattached, Unbound, Liberated Kindness*, is the largest painting in the exhibition, and took over four years to complete.

A club motif, often miniscule in scale, is pervasive in the majority of Wudl's compositions. He paints the motif in dense arrangement, and in low contrast to its background. This makes the clubs barely discernable to the eye, and there are passages in several works where they seem to fuse together and become a shimmering backdrop. In *Net of Light of Supreme Wisdom*, 2013, Wudl brings the club to center stage, depicting it within a lavish world of geometric forms that bring to mind a precious Renaissance Illumination. For Wudl, the club represents the elaborate descriptions of phenomena that are characteristic of the Avatamsaka Sutra's literary style, and its repetition reflects the sutra's primary purpose as an exhortation to meditation.

Tom Wudl immigrated to the United States from Cochabamba, Bolivia in 1958. Beginning life in a new country at age ten, Wudl already knew he wanted to become a painter. He attended Chouinard Art Institute, Los Angeles, but gained most of his skills and insight through his independent study of late Medieval and early Renaissance paintings, and travel to the art centers of Europe. Wudl has balanced his painting with a long career teaching art. He has held positions at Art Center College of Design, Pasadena; UCLA; UC Irvine; UC Santa Barbara; Claremont College; and Otis College of Art and Design, in addition to an extensive private teaching practice.

Wudl has exhibited his work in museums and galleries throughout the United States and abroad, including *Documenta V*, Kassel (1972); Sezon Museum of Art, Tokyo, and Nagoya City Museum in Japan; the Whitney Museum of American Art, New York; San Francisco Museum of Art; Pasadena Art Museum; and the Los Angeles County Museum of Art. L.A. Louver has represented Tom Wudl since 1980.

Concurrent to his exhibition at L.A. Louver, Wudl's work is featured in the exhibition *Tapping the Third Realm*, organized by the Ben Maltz Gallery at Otis College of Art and Design and the Laband Art Gallery at Loyola Marymount University, in Los Angeles. This exhibition, which highlights the work of artists who deal with ideas of spirituality, is on view September 22 – December 8, 2013. Gallery info: www.otis.edu/benmaltzgallery (310.665.6905) and <http://cfa.lmu.edu/labandgallery> (310.338.2880).

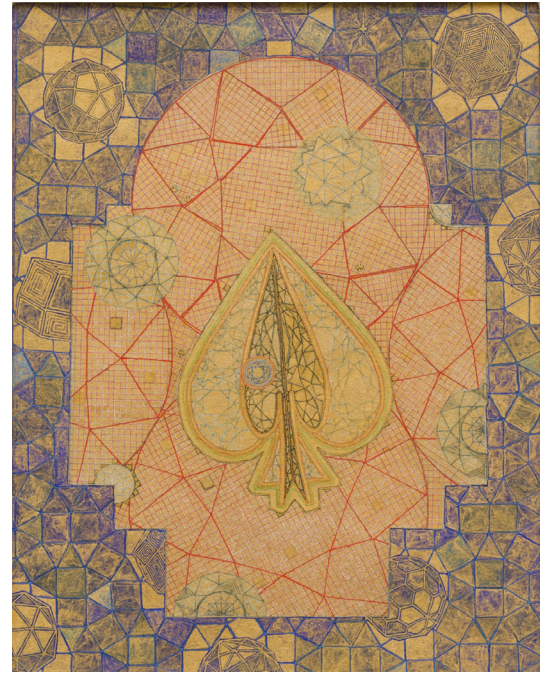
Concurrently on view in the first floor gallery and Skyroom (3 September - 5 October 2013):

Alison Saar: *Slough*. New sculptures and drawings.

Next on view at L.A. Louver (10 October - 9 November 2013):

R. B. Kitaj: Paintings, 1992-2007

Jason Martin: New Works



Net of Light of Supreme Wisdom, 2013
22 karat gold powder, gum arabic,
colored pencil over ink on paper
9 x 7 1/8 in. (22.9 x 18.1 cm)

For more information and visuals, please contact Elizabeth East, L.A. Louver, 45 North Venice Boulevard, Venice, CA, USA, www.lalouer.com
tel: 310-822-4955; fax: 310-821-7529; e-mail: Elizabeth@lalouer.com Gallery Hours: Tues - Sat, 10 - 6 PM; Validated parking available

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