

Lines Falling Together: Wendy Letven's solo show at Fou Gallery, New York

Dominique Musorrafiti | May 11, 2020 | China Magazine, Contemporary art in China, Featured

Numerous artists, galleries, and artistic and cultural institutions due to COVID-19 had to pause their exhibitions and events, this also happened to the solo show *Lines Falling Together in Time* by Wendy Letven curated by Lynn Hai at Fou Gallery in New York.

Wendy Letven is a multidisciplinary artist whose works include installations, sculptures, drawings, and paintings. Her artworks show a scrupulous refinement of detail that reflects her concerns about nature. Many of her works are influenced by natural phenomena, such as movement, resonance, rhythm, and coordination, as well as by music, poetry, science, and philosophy. In her works, space is full of abstract elements where lines, shapes, and symbols embroider apparently random connections to pursue a deeper level of harmony.



Wendy Letven with installation Random Misfirings of the Brain, Activate Market Street storefront installation, Newark, 2016. Photograph by Gary Fredriksen ©Wendy Letven, courtesy Fou Gallery.

Her creations lead to shifting the attention from simple minimalist decoration to the metaphor of something bigger: the Acausal connections between phenomena. The artist is looking for universal truths for this she deconstructs and reinterprets the regeneration of natural landscapes. Human's relationship with ecology and technology is also put in relation and discussion from the point of view of the matter and in the technique used by Wendy for the realization of her creations, always in line faithful to her aesthetic synaesthesia.



Wendy Letven: Lines Falling Together in Time installation view. Photograph by Lynn Hai. ©Wendy Letven, courtesy Fou Gallery.

Spatial models and relationships recur in her artworks, creating different consonances. We see combinations of lines, shapes, and symbols. What apparently seems unrelated is visually abstract. Abstract shapes offer a glimpse of infinite possibilities of interpretation, but also a journey through visual vectors that stretch, move away, change their path or end up converging in the same place: the rules of nature. In fact, the artist inspired by nature reminds us that there is a balance of space and time that creates modules, textures, which are

repeated with similar and different rhythms within the micro and macro, in living beings, in the elements of chemistry and matter. In every organic form, we find this consonance and model.



Wendy Letven, Gyre, 2020. Site-specific installation. Cut paper, dimensions variable ©Wendy Letven, courtesy Fou Gallery.

We find mechanisms such as gears and load-bearing structures that connect the elements to each other to create something new, but which maintain a deep and cyclical balance. An apparently random fabric, but that in its unraveling and evolving proves to be profoundly consistent, coherent, and universal. The shapes, just like in the DNA code, show us the traces of a story, of a path, of origins, of a natural collective project that is simultaneously visible, but other times to our distracted eyes it seems invisible or hidden.



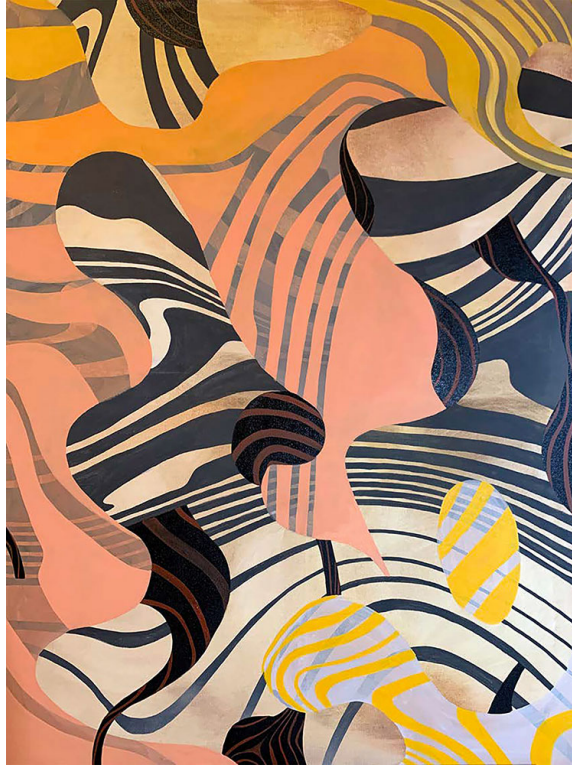
Wendy Letven: *Lines Falling Together in Time* installation view. *Winding River*, 2020. Photograph by Lynn Hai. ©Wendy Letven, courtesy Fou Gallery.

The dynamism of her artistic language is conveyed through her interdisciplinary works, installations, and sculptures, in which the forms reproduce new atmospheres where time and space are condensed simultaneously to explore a new dimension of natural and universal rhythms with a range of different and infinite possibilities. The central installation of “Lines Falling Together in Time” is represented by “Winding River” a river, which underlines the importance of form, rhythm and time, which flow into a landscape. The work meets and intertwines with Lao Tze’s statement “Let things flow naturally forward in whatever way they like.” The installation consists of several aluminum strips painted in white, bent in curves that recreate the image of splashing water, and thus through physical distortions, we can have the illusory perception of change.



Wendy Letven: Lines Falling Together in Time installation view. Winding River, 2020. Photograph by Lynn Hai. ©Wendy Letven, courtesy Fou Gallery.

At Fou Gallery are also on display the artist's most recent paintings. Wendy Letven in her oil works "Ebb and Flow" (2020) and "In the Current" (2020) uses color as a tool to recreate space, painting dimensional atmospheres that create movements such as the depths and spatiality present in her installations and sculptures. In 2010, the artist began a series of ink paintings prompted by her concerns about environmental changes after the oil spill from the Gulf of Mexico, Louisiana. In this series of paintings, she investigates the essence of the flow derived from the pictorial process of pouring ink and liquids. The ink evokes the flow of water. Wendy paints and expresses her attention to environmental scenarios, recreating natural physical rhythms in landscapes where phenomena such as storms and rising sea levels are under discussion.



Wendy Letven, *Ebb and Flow*, 2020. Oil on canvas, 48 x 36 inches. ©Wendy Letven, courtesy Fou Gallery.

The physical distortions of her creative works evoke the movements and stages of the environment, atmospheric flows, the dynamics of air and light. A balance of space and time links the tissue of the universe and nature. Deep connections and resonance between the phenomena emerge from unrelated lines, shapes, and symbols, where symmetry and asymmetry try to translate and communicate the main idea and attention of the artist to the environment and nature. The natural energy flows in the creative work show the artist's understanding of the space and time balance. This self-regulating mechanism by managing spatial relationships leads to satisfying the need for perpetual changes. The lines find their space following their own transformative flow, and nature synchronizes its rhythm, the biological forms we see, and those we do not see as sound waves recreate harmony.



Wendy Letven, *In the Current*, 2020. Oil on canvas, 48 x 36 inches. ©Wendy Letven, courtesy Fou Gallery.

Her personal artistic language is inspired by the Swiss psychologist Carl Jung in the context of meaningful coincidences rather than simple randomness. Significant coincidences create other forms, generate inspirations that can then reflect on our existence. The meeting, the path, the journey turns into growth, on the occasion of exchange and enrichment. When multiple psychic and physical phenomena take place simultaneously, a new reality is generated, a point of possibility for personal emotional growth.



Wendy Letven, *Flare Up*, 2017. Ink on Arches Paper, 30 x 22 inches ©Wendy Letven, courtesy Fou Gallery.

Shapes and shadows interact in space like dance movements, similar to the poses that the body forms when dancing passes from one posture to another. The dynamics of gestures, albeit simple, release lines of vitality, love, and hope. Movement creates something new and interaction and interference form a physical substance that is concretized and embodied in her artworks. The artist comes to the conclusion that the dichotomy, the opposing aspects are part of a unicum, this understanding of nature, of the human being, of time and space binds what seems apparently antithetical. The vision that emerges from her artwork is a balance. The world and nature are a single body, in which we are all part of a complex mechanism where we move together.



Wendy Letven: Lines Falling Together in Time installation view. Photograph by Lynn Hai. ©Wendy Letven, courtesy Fou Gallery.

Yesterday, it should have been the last day of the exhibition “Lines Falling Together in Time” at Fou Gallery. Inevitably, finding ourselves in a pandemic situation, in which we must maintain social distancing and not be able to benefit from cultural and artistic public spaces is an additional opportunity to think about the causes of the virus and the lockdown related to pollution and to the over-exploitation of the resources of nature and the planet. Together at the same time thinking about the missed opportunities and possibilities, what we had planned, what we wanted to do, we can make sure to transform this moment into a circumstance to find new perspectives and solutions. Together at the same time, many emotional certainties have been put to the test. Fear is what could slow us down, but every downfall is an opportunity to go back up. Destruction is the condition that drives reconstruction, every trauma is what precedes a new beginning and fragility when brought to light turns into the starting point of strength.



Wendy Letven: *Lines Falling Together in Time* installation view. Photograph by Lynn Hai. ©Wendy Letven, courtesy Fou Gallery.

Nature respects an omnipresent order of life, but if rhythms, patterns, and textures are suffocated and interrupted by human, nature re-establish itself invisibly before until recovers all its spaces. This awareness is a sign of regrowth, the starting point for reconstruction. Wendy Letven's joyful and exuberant works look precisely in the direction of tranquility and optimism. The worries waiting for better times lead to slowdowns in the regeneration process ... but when nothing is sure then everything is possible for this we seize this moment in which we are all simultaneously synchronized as an opportunity to be reborn in a better self.

Yesterday was also the mother's day in many parts of the world. Maybe we should remember the mother of all of us, nature, the planet earth that offers us this moment to reconsider and start our relationship with love, empathy, and respect responsibly.

Photos by Lynn Hai, ©Wendy Letven, courtesy of Fou Gallery
<https://china-underground.com/2020/05/11/lines-falling-together-wendy-letvens-solo-show-at-fou-gallery-new-york/>