

# GALERIE EVA PRESENHUBER

## PRESS RELEASE

### Sam Falls

September 3 – October 5, 2024

Press Preview on Tuesday, September 3, 11 am – 5 pm

Opening Reception, 5 – 10 pm

Galerie Eva Presenhuber x P21

74 Hoenamu-Ro, Yongsan-Gu, Seoul, South Korea

Opening hours, Tuesday – Friday, 11 am – 6 pm, Saturday, 12 – 6 pm

Galerie Eva Presenhuber is pleased to present its ninth solo exhibition of US artist Sam Falls in a dedicated showroom at P21 Gallery. It is the artist's first and the gallery's fourth exhibition project in Seoul.

Falls seeks to explore the open atmosphere and enter a symbiotic relationship with the environment, aiming to integrate the processes and outcomes of art with those of nature and time, rather than merely depicting them. He believes that the true artistic drive transcends aesthetics to embrace the profound universality of mortality and its emotional extremes: birth and death, joy and pain, light and darkness, the cycles of the natural world. Since the beginning of his career as an artist, Falls has consistently explored not only the imitation but the embodiment of nature. Conceptually, he has used both abstract and empirical approaches to deepen his understanding of the environment from microscopic to macroscopic scales, studying plant morphology, habitats, and life cycles.

The artist has integrated this philosophy of art and nature into his life and work. He steps back to allow the hand of the environment to play an active role in both the process and aesthetic of his artwork. The artist has methodically abandoned conventional and contemporary artistic tools, such as brushes and cameras, to forge a more genuine collaborative process with nature. As a result, he has engaged directly with the elements - sunlight and rain - using them not only as tools, but as subjects to create artworks that serve not only as transpositions of natural elements, but as temporal snapshots. His oeuvre has evolved to include the flora and fauna surrounding his studios in the Hudson Valley of upstate New York and rural California as integral subjects and materials.

In the tradition of conceptual post-studio artists, Falls works site-specifically, using plants as geolocators and the environment's atmosphere as the hand that completes the work, for example *Mesa Dahlias* (2020). He lays his canvas out in the forest or field and collects cuttings from plants in the immediate surrounding area, focusing on native plants and seasonal expressions. The plants are laid on the canvas, followed by dry water-reactive pigments that are catalyzed by the precipitation over the course of a night, several days, to weeks, depending on the weather. This exposure to rainfall or mist creates an exposure that sets the image, and the entire process is repeated until the work is finished. Every exposure is different and illustrates not only the weather of a specific moment in time, but the climate of an area as well as symbolism and geography held within the index of the natural world.

With his natural-dyed sun-works, Falls has highlighted the temporal dimension of his work. While he initially studied photography and used sunlight to create enduring outdoor photograms with industrial objects capable of withstanding a year in the elements, his latest creations are made from cuttings of living plants at the height of their spring bloom. These botanical elements are left to dry naturally on dyed canvases until early fall. Falls hand-dyes organic canvases with traditional natural pigments derived from sources such as redwood seeds, lac, madder root, marigold flowers, and cochineal insects. The resulting images, such as *Sleep* (2022), not only illustrate the nuanced interplay of sunlight and environmental resilience, but also encapsulate time within the artwork itself – embodying the inherent mortality of all things in the cumulative passage of time.

Reflecting on the endangered state of landscapes and the need to preserve them, Falls has created ceramics that might be called *fossils for the future*. Larger ceramics, like *Bobolink* (2022), integrate earth sculptures with both plant life and human forms, evoking a poignant symbolism that underscores the potential loss of these forms in their living state. Smaller works, such as *Lifelines* (2023), incorporate actual flowers used in Polaroid photographs, a medium once at the forefront of technological reproduction and now obsolete. Falls uses this medium to capture the ephemeral beauty of spring blooms, then immortalizes them as fossils by later returning to the same flowers

# GALERIE EVA PRESENHUBER

when they are wilting weeks later and pressing them into wet clay. The final work is a photograph of life at its brilliant beginning framed in a fossil of its elder and exhausted self. These works serve as sublime memorials to natural beauty while at the same time highlighting the inescapable anxiety of fleeting time and aging. Falls began making these works when he had children and likens them to this experience of the duality of joy and pain of watching them grow up.

Sam Falls was born 1984 in San Diego, CA, and lives and works in Los Angeles, CA, and Upstate New York. He has created his own formal language by intertwining photography's core parameters of time and exposure with nature and her elements. Working largely outdoors with vernacular materials and nature as a sitespecific subject, Falls abandons mechanical reproduction in favor of a more symbiotic relationship between subject and object. In doing so, he bridges the gap between photography, sculpture, and painting, as well as the divide between artist, object, and viewer.

Recent solo exhibitions by Sam Falls include MOCA Cleveland, OH, US (2023); Mori Museum in Tokyo, JP (2022); Hammer Museum, Los Angeles, CA, US (2018); Museum of Modern and Contemporary Art Trento and Rovereto, IT (2018); The Kitchen, New York, NY, US (2015); Ballroom Marfa, Texas, TX, US (2015); Pomona College Museum of Art, CA, US (2014); Public Art Fund, New York, NY, US (2014); and LAXART, Los Angeles, CA, US (2013), among others. His work has been included in group exhibitions at Museum Frieder Burda, Baden-Baden, DE (2024); Art Basel Unlimited, Basel, CH (2024; 2019); Biennale Weiertal, Winterthur, CH (2023); Fondation Opale, Lens, CH (2020); Aspen Art Museum, Colorado, CO, US (2018); Le Consortium, Dijon, FR (2017); Columbus Museum of Art, Ohio, OH, US (2017); Mead Gallery, University of Warwick, UK (2016); Fruitmarket Gallery, Edinburgh, SC (2015); Hammer Museum, Los Angeles, CA, US (2015); Menil Collection, Houston, TX, US (2015); Museo MADRE, Naples, IT (2014); and the International Center of Photography, New York, NY, US (2013); among others.

For more artist information, please contact [onlinesales@presenhuber.com](mailto:onlinesales@presenhuber.com).

For press images and information, please contact [press@presenhuber.com](mailto:press@presenhuber.com).