

The image is a painting featuring several purple flowers with yellow centers, set against a dark, textured brown background. The flowers are rendered with soft, painterly brushstrokes, showing delicate details of the petals and stamens. Some flowers are in full bloom, while others are buds. The stems are thin and brown, with small, unopened buds at the bottom. The overall composition is vertical, with the flowers scattered across the frame. In the center, the name "PAUL WALDMAN" is written in a bold, white, sans-serif font, slightly italicized. The background has a mottled, almost abstract quality, with some lighter, greyish-green shapes that resemble leaves or other floral elements, creating a sense of depth and texture.

PAUL WALDMAN



PAUL WALDMAN

New paintings and sculptures

September 13–October 20, 2012

LENNON, WEINBERG, INC.

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Above: *Flowers and Angel 2*, 2010
Oil over gesso on ragboard, 13 x 18¼ inches

Front and back cover: *Diane's Summer*, 2010
Oil over gesso on canvas, 20¼ x 73 inches (detail)

Photography by Kevin Noble, Alex Racine



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Lakshmana Temple, Khajuraho, India

Paul Waldman came of age as an artist at a time when the basic tenets of minimalism were being established, and the formal strategy of variation within repetition took root in his work and extended through the sixties and seventies. But the orderly geometries that defined his work began to yield to the tumult of the organic and the baroque at the beginning of the eighties.

So Waldman replaced his polished fields of pure color with expanses of landscape, of sea, sky and meadow. Flowers bloomed and tendrils of foliage cascaded and climbed the surfaces of his paintings, tiny leaves ran riot as glazed ceramic over urns and vases. He gave paintings soundtracks and frosted them with neon, and built elaborate birdhouses atop slender posts.

Waldman deployed a menagerie to populate these paintings and sculptures. After the coolly rendered classical nudes of his early work came figures of art-historical origin such as putti and angels, then birds, snakes, cows, camels and lots of dogs. There are human-animal hybrids—Rodin's Thinker with a ram's head and hooves, Cher as a transvestite camel—and references to specific individuals such as Freud's daughter, Al Capone's brother, Judy Garland and Pretty Boy Floyd. Then horned, winged or long-tailed children, dwarfs, androgynous youths draped in patterned silk, women with flames, boys with bubbles, women with penises, and more recently, angels again.

"Whenever there's a putti, it's me," Waldman has said. "Wherever there's an animal, it's usually me, too." From this, we understand that he identifies with the attributes of his menagerie, their beauties and grotesqueries, their duality and singularity. He has harvested these actors through observation and imagination, and cast them in his work as surrogates for the self in its many dimensions.

Elephants are the stars of the new paintings. They are Asian elephants, a regular presence during his annual travels in India and Thailand. They are associated with physical strength and, for Buddhists, strength of the mind. They can be stubborn and ungovernable yet are known for their emotional intelligence, faithfulness and displays of affection. Of all Waldman's creatures, they are the most dignified.

The paintings in which the elephants appear display a discontinuity of space. For years Waldman's diptychs have featured a horizon line that shifts at the boundary of the right and left panels, interrupting his otherwise serenely descriptive landscapes. This is still the case with the small diptychs but in the large ones, Waldman has eliminated the horizon altogether in place of dramatic skiescapes. The elephants, described in volumetric detail, hold the surface plane of the painting against the pictorial depth of the sky but their spatial relation to the background is ambiguous. That the elephants generally appear larger on one side of the diptych than the other further disrupts the cohesion of the space. Flocks of birds and flying sprites share the space of both elephants and sky.

The sculptures on the other hand have an uncanny mismatch of scale. The flying sprites of the paintings have come to rest on the bodies of meticulously sculpted elephants. The elephants are lightly decorated, the women sometimes blue and certainly more Western than Asian in their appearance. Their relative scale feels perfectly normal, their physical relationship intimate in a way, believably implausible but surreal.

The sculptures are very delicate and fantastically detailed for their small size. They are modeled and carved in clay, fired in sections, assembled and painted with casein. Casein can be gently buffed which results in the soft sheen of the women's bodies. The sculptures are placed on steel poles and displayed in a row. Sculptures and bas-reliefs of elephants are ubiquitous in Indian temples, and they, along with the historical Indian miniature paintings that Waldman collects, are reflected in his recent work.

As well as we might know the path of development of Waldman's work, and as readily as we can understand the derivation and influences that Waldman brought together in these paintings and sculptures, the works remain inscrutable. In his own words, "When you really understand something, it's no longer art. When I look at something over the years, like a Botticelli, I don't understand it but it has so much power for me, I'm compelled by it. There is some strange, spiritual thing art embodies that continues to intrigue. I try my absolute best to be right when I make something, to reveal the fantasy of the work, to be truthful to the work and to the image in my mind as it develops."

Jill Weinberg Adams, New York, August 2012

Quotations from *Paul Waldman: Eros Art and Magic*, Edizione Charta, Milani, Italy, texts by Carter Ratcliff, Carol Strickland, John Nunley.

Sculpture installation view





Entry Level, 2011

Ceramic and casein, 9 $\frac{1}{8}$ x 9 $\frac{1}{4}$ x 3 inches



Balancing Act 2, 2011–12
Ceramic and casein, 9¾ x 10 x 4½ inches



Vista, 2011

Ceramic and casein, 9½ x 10 x 4 inches



Balancing Act 2, 2011–12
Ceramic and casein, 9¾ x 10 x 4½ inches



Balancing Act 3, 2012

Ceramic and casein, 6 x 13 x 7 inches



Balancing Act 1, 2011
Ceramic and casein, 9 $\frac{3}{8}$ x 10 x 4 inches



Elevation, 2011

Ceramic and casein, 9 x 8¼ x 3¼ inches



Grey Ladies, 2012

Ceramic and casein, 12 x 9⁵/₈ x 7 inches



Landscape, 2011

Oil over gesso on ragboard, 8 $\frac{1}{8}$ x 11 inches



Elephant Day 2, 2012

Oil over gesso on ragboard, 8 $\frac{1}{8}$ x 10 $\frac{3}{4}$ inches

over-leaf: ***Diane and Paul, 2012***

Oil over gesso on canvas, 20 $\frac{1}{8}$ x 72 $\frac{3}{4}$ inches (detail)







Alex and Paul, 2011

Oil over gesso on canvas, 20 $\frac{1}{8}$ x 72 $\frac{3}{4}$ inches





Diane and Paul, 2012

Oil over gesso on canvas, 20 $\frac{1}{8}$ x 72 $\frac{3}{4}$ inches





Diane's Summer, 2010

Oil over gesso on canvas, 20¼ x 73 inches





Vista 2, 2011

Oil over gesso on ragboard, 8 x 11 inches



Elephant Day 1, 2011

Oil over gesso on ragboard, 8½ x 11 inches



Diane and Suzanne #2, 2012

Oil over gesso on canvas, 20 $\frac{3}{16}$ x 73 inches





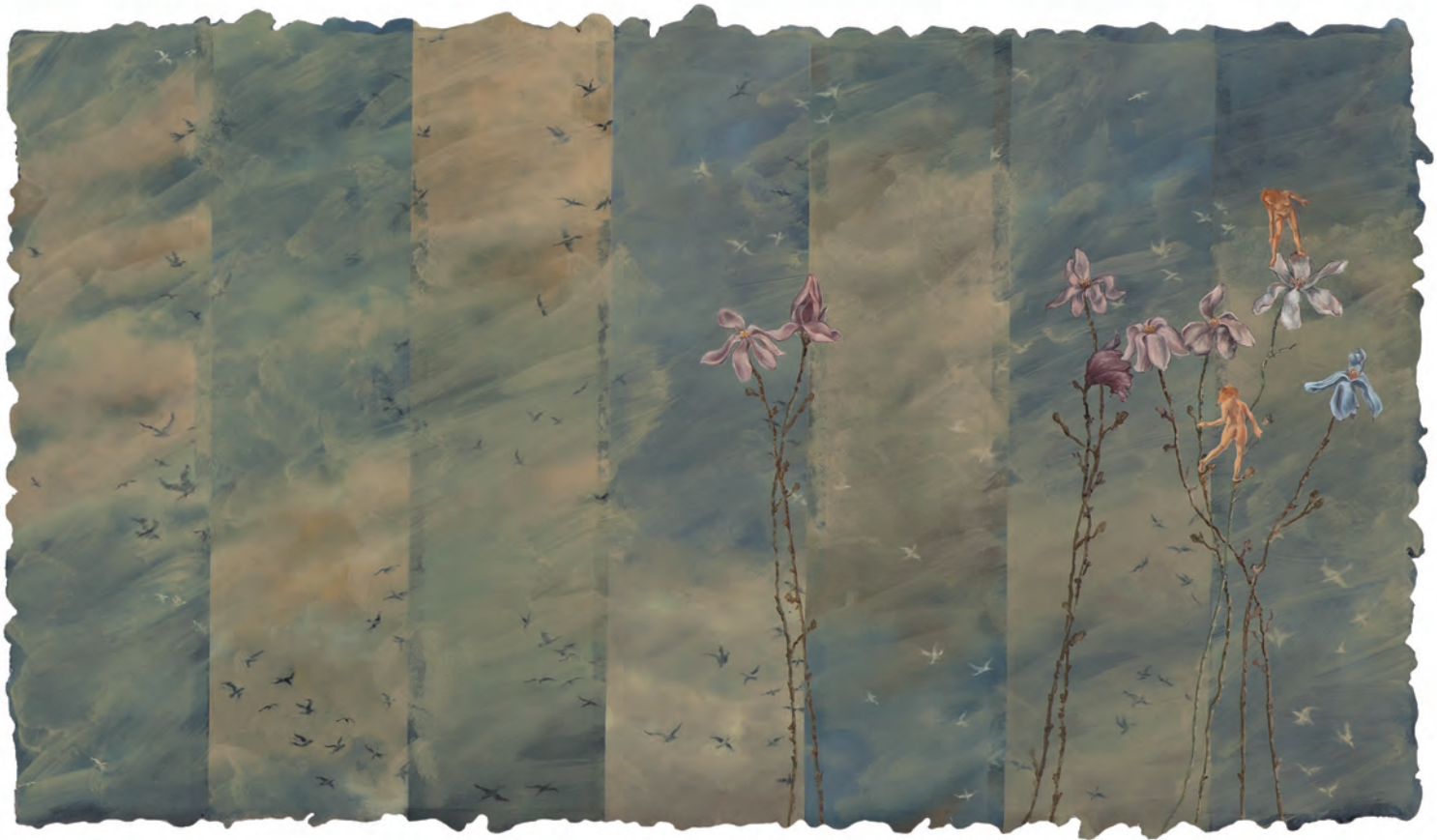
End of Summer, 2012,
Oil over gesso on canvas, 20 $\frac{1}{4}$ x 72 $\frac{5}{8}$ inches





Flowers and Helpers, 2010

Oil over gesso on canvas, 20¼ x 72⅝ inches



Paul Waldman began to exhibit his work in New York in 1961. His first inclusion in a group show and his first solo show both took place at the Allan Stone Gallery a year after it opened. He continued to show there for several years and was regularly included in exhibitions of emerging artists, both uptown and downtown, in galleries and museums through the 1960s. His work was featured in exhibitions at Stable Gallery, Richard Feigen Gallery and Knoedler, and included in survey exhibitions at the Weatherspoon Art Gallery, the Arkansas Arts Center, the Smithsonian and the Newark Museum. His first appearance in a Whitney Painting Annual was in 1967.

Waldman had his first exhibition at Leo Castelli Gallery in 1973 and was represented by Castelli for more than twenty years. He was included in the inaugural exhibition at the Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden in 1974. Castelli brought his work to Art Basel for the first time in 1976 and collaborated on exhibitions with Blum Helman Gallery and Xavier Fourcade. During the 1980s, Waldman's work was seen in numerous national and international venues including the Guggenheim Museum and the Centro Cultural Arte Contemporaneo in Mexico City.

He had solo shows at Galerie Fairdeh Cadot in Paris in 1987, 1988 and 1991, and had his final exhibition with Castelli in 1996. After exhibitions at Joseph Helman Gallery in 1998 and 2000, Waldman joined Lennon, Weinberg. This is our fourth solo exhibition of his work since 2002.

A monograph documenting four decades of his work was published by Edizioni Charta, Milan, in 2005, *Paul Waldman: Art Eros and Magic*, includes essays by Carter Ratcliff, Carol Strickland and John Nunley. Waldman's work has been the subject of articles and reviews by Eleanor Heartney, Ken Johnson, John Russell, Elizabeth C. Baker, Peter Schjeldahl, Hilton Kramer, Nancy Princenthal, Vivien Raynor, and John Perrault.

His paintings, sculptures and drawings are in the permanent collections of numerous museums. A partial list includes the Baltimore Museum, Brooklyn Museum, Carnegie Museum, Cincinnati Museum, Dallas Museum, Denver Art Museum, Fogg Art Museum, Guggenheim Museum, Hirshhorn Museum, Herbert Johnson Museum, the Louisiana Museum in Denmark, Los Angeles County Museum of Art, Milwaukee Art Museum, Museum of Fine Arts Houston, Museum of Modern Art, Nelson Atkins Museum, Norton Simon Museum, Parrish Art Museum, Toledo Museum, Williams College Museum of Art and the Yale University Art Gallery.

Paul Waldman lives and works in New York City and Southampton.

Flowers and Helpers, 2010
Oil over gesso on canvas, 20¹/₄ x 72⁵/₈ inches (detail)





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