Maria Zahle









FACE (Christine), 2024
Handwoven linen, indigo dyed linen, with plant dyed linen, wool, silk, and cotton, bookbinder's wire, on hanging system in cast bronze
(from series of 4)





Torso, 2024
Handwoven linen, with plant dyed linen, wool, silk, and cotton, bookbinder’s wire, on Swedish oak
(from series of 3)

Maria Zahle: Sisters

2024

Hot Hands, curated by Tanja Toft Rix Hansen

Skovgaard Museet

Denmark

Works acquired by the museum collection







Sisters (1-3), 2024

Handwoven linen, indigo dyed linen, with plant dyed linen, wool, silk, and cotton, bookbinder’s wire, on hanging system in cast bronze

Maria Zahle: SOLO

2023

Alice Folker Gallery
Copenhagen, Denmark

Curated by Tone Bonnén





Color is a crucial element in Zahle's work. Recently, Zahle has begun to grow plants such as indigo and madder, enabling her to produce pigments and dye paper and yarn with homemade colors. In the process of making her own dyes, the engagement with color has extended beyond how it feels, appears, and functions within a work, to also become about an awareness of the biological components and chemical processes of color.

-from exhibition text by Tone Bonnén



SOLO, 2023
Hand woven and plant dyed linen and wool, scrap yarn, bookbinders' wire, cast bronze on ramp pedestal of wood, MDF, brass screws



Flint, 2023
Plant dyed cotton paper,
archival tape, in
custom-made frames
on indigo dyed wall



Maria Zahle: Turn Turn Turn

2022

Arcade

Brussels, Belgium

Maria Zahle's works are made with a small range of materials: woven linen, wool, natural dyes, metal bars and wire, stones, crayon, hand-coloured paper, and archival tape.

Many of the materials, importantly, have been sourced or created by the artist before she puts them to use in one of her objects.

-from exhibition text by Mark Godfrey





Maria Zahle:
No Stranger or Lover to Me

2022

Rønnebæksholm

Næstved, Denmark

With invited works by
Phyllida Barlow
Christine Clemmesen
Anthea Hamilton
Hannah Heilmann





Venetian Bodies, 2022
Handwoven, plant dyed linen on
bent stainless steel





Turn, 2022
Handwoven and plant dyed wool, silk, linen,
With bookbinders' wire and elements of cast alloy



Next page:

Conversation between Phyllida Barlow and Maria Zahle (excerpt)

- from the catalogue *No Stranger or Lover to Me*

Phyllida

I'm not necessarily suspicious of it. I just have never had a subject. I feel that I am a kind of hunter. I'm hunting for something. And it's very unhinging to begin a piece of work. It can have this sense of absolute pointlessness about it. Because I don't know what its voice is. What is it that's being sought? I can't say, but the actions that go with that seeking out are very necessary.

Maria

I've been thinking a lot about what the studio means, what it is, really. When dyeing my yarn I do it on the kitchen cooker or outside in the garden, and then I bring it into the studio. Having my hands on everything all the time has been a way of getting to know the work. It isn't the execution of an idea that I'm trying to mould correctly, so the touching of the material, a hands-on approach, has been really necessary to develop the works. And right now I'm weaving. After having made a lot of work very quickly I've made hurdles for myself by weaving, it's quite slow. I measure out the yarn, dye it, dress the loom, thread it, and tie all the knots, there's a real slowing down of the process of making, which means that I feel very close to the work. Not just physically, but also emotionally, because there's an investment of care.

Phyllida

Making big work is to me about reaching ways that challenge oneself, challenge materiality, challenge space. And it's interesting to take that studio methodology to a gallery, it becomes very risky.

Maria

Because the work can easily fail.

Phyllida

Probably, with me, a lot of the work is on the edge of failure. And I think that's why it creates a lot of discomfort.

Maria

I feel like being on the edge of failure is an emotionally recognizable situation, right? No matter how brilliant you are,

you can feel like you're on the edge of failure at any given point. So, work like that will feel more intensely relatable.

Phyllida

I would love that. But unfortunately I don't think that happens. I think there is a culture of product perfection. The neat new car. And the new car that's got a scratch on it is just, that's it. You know, it's ruined! But from an artistic point of view, it's the scratch that makes it.

Maria

The work that I respond to is the work where I feel in some way I recognize my own fallibility and incompleteness and longing for… I don't know. Something more, else, different!

Phyllida

I don't think there's any problem in an audience being perplexed or troubled or anxious. And if an audience couldn't be made desirous as you're describing, which is what maybe ignites a process of making, as you say, the longing for… but what the hell is it that one is longing for?

Maria

I had a teacher in high school who was trying to explain ancient history to us, and she drew a line on the blackboard. Under the line she wrote 'humans', on top of the line she wrote 'gods', and then she drew an arrow pointing from the people up to the gods and wrote 'longing'. I thought that was quite accurate!

Phyllida

Isn't that brilliant!

Maria

That really stuck with me, that arrow. We're stuck down here in the muck, longing for... trying to scratch ourselves out of that hole.

Phyllida

But aren't we also fascinated by the muck that we are in? Is there a kind of longing that the muck can become the thing you're looking for?

Maria Zahle & Christine Clemmesen:

NIGHT CUTS DAY
(Nat Skærer Dag)

Kunsthal Vandrehallen
Hillerød, Denmark

Zahle's abstract banners of unevenly dyed paper rectangles accentuate the ceiling height of the building and suggest a material and spiritual connection between the soft, nimble body of the viewer and the large and hard body of Vandrehallen. (…) the artists remain open and curious to the materiality of the world: the relationship between body and space, ceiling rafter and paper, tape piece and photograph.

-From exhibition text by
Anders Kjær Rasmussen





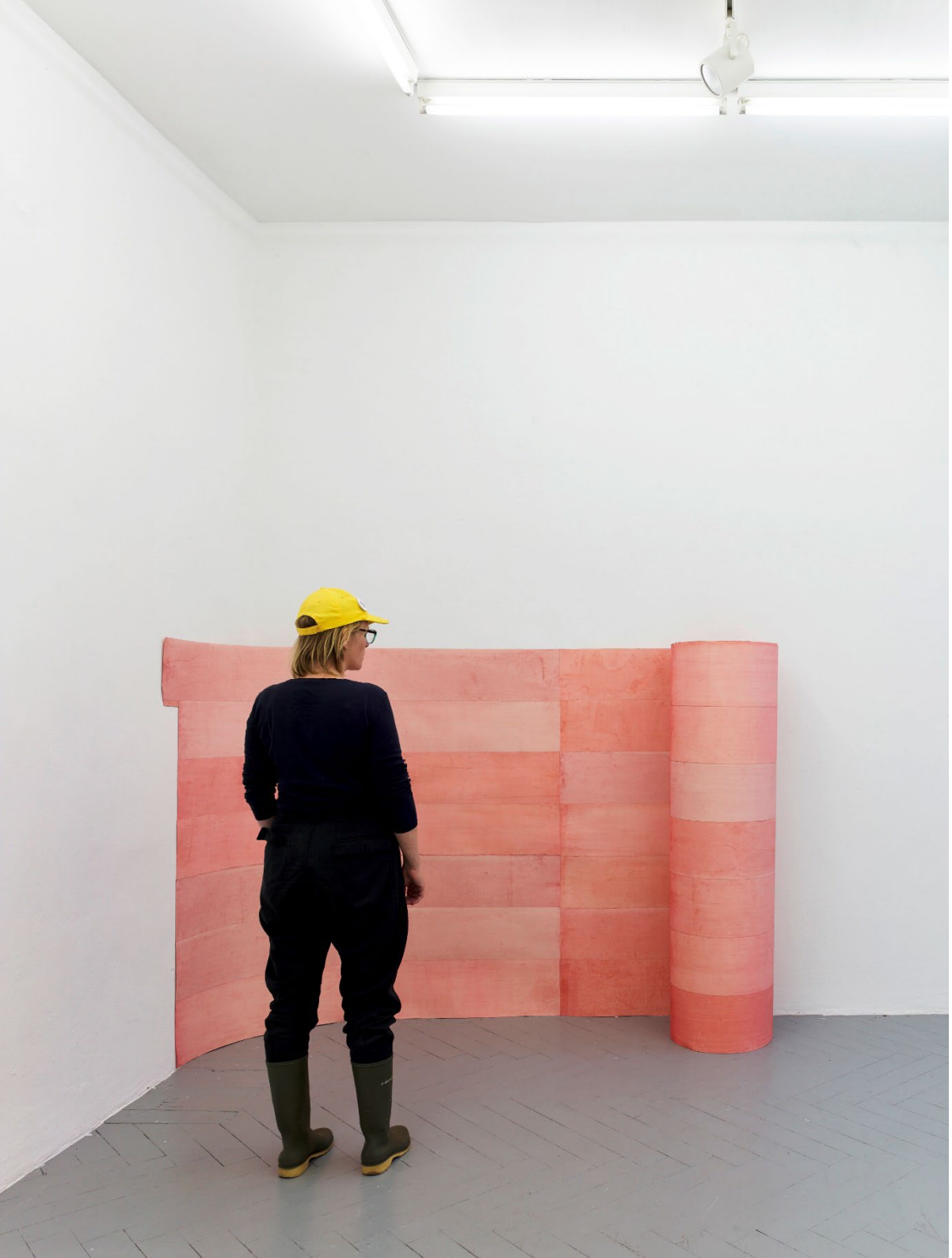
Maria Zahle: Me As Paper

2021
Plant dyed cotton paper,
adhesive

Maria Zahle & Tillmann Terbuyken
Sunny Legs

2021

Friese Kuenstlerhaus
Hamburg, Germany



Maria Zahle and Tillmann Terbuyken have been thinking about exhibiting together for a long time – since they met during their studies at the Royal Academy Schools in London and the HFBK in Hamburg around 2006.

Both artists work with the materiality of colour, of text, of images. A white painting is also a piece of plywood, a woven sculpture doubles as a bunch of loose threads, and a woad plant can become a patch of blue.

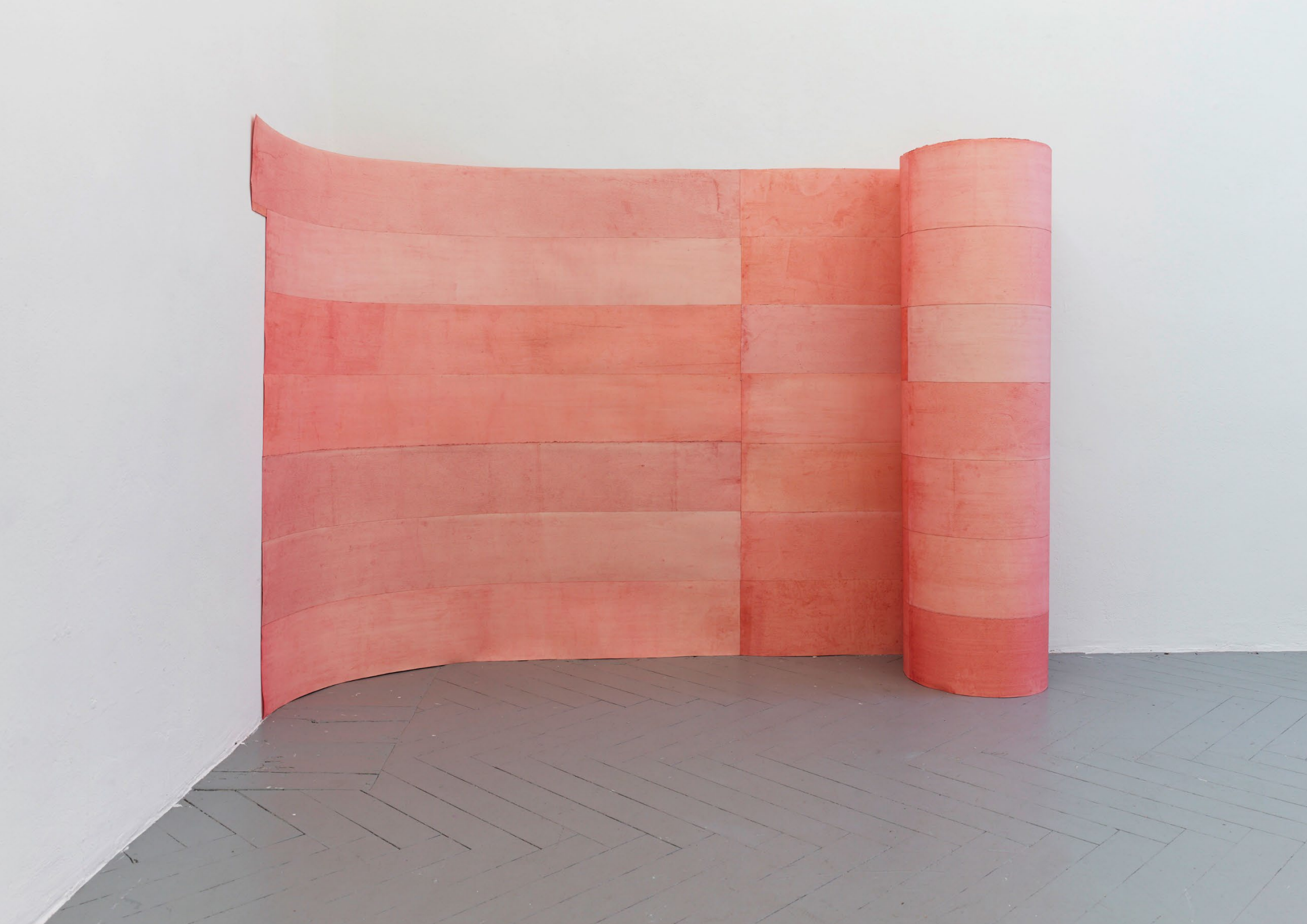
In the exhibition artworks point at their own materiality but also reflect us, our bodies as artists and as viewers.

-from the exhibition text

Maria Zahle: Me As Paper (madder)

2021

Plant dyed cotton paper, adhesive





Kristine Mogensen & Maria Zahle:
Farvesving

2019

Semi-permanent commission
Østerbrogade pedestrian tunnel
Copenhagen, Denmark



Maria Zahle:
With Colour, with Body

2016

Permanent public commission
Aalborg University
Institute of Energy Technology
Aalborg, Denma



The public art commission With Colour, With Body by Maria Zahle at AAU is wholly integrated into the architecture of a new building to enhance the work environment of the people studying and working at the university. In three parts, it lifts the aesthetic expression of the building utilizing clear colours and light patterns in wall paintings and on a linoleum floor, as well as two bronze sculptures placed outdoors.

1

A linoleum floor waves across the building in large hand cut shapes encompassing the two levels of the building. The shapes are organic, uneven, and surprising. The colour intensifies in areas where the building contains the most activity and a higher people density, such as near the main entrance to the auditorium. The colour intensity thereby reflects the human energy of the building.

2

Two bronze sculptures are installed in a steep 'light yard'. The two figurative objects vibrate slightly in strong winds, and their posture hints at a lifted shoulder, a tilted head, a bent leg. The untreated bronze will with time change from brown to black to clear green. Touches by the passersby will function as a polish, giving a lighter shade on the work. These polished areas will make visible the gaze, the touch, and the curiosity of the viewers.

3

Three painted stripes on the outside walls of the auditorium stretch upwards in clear colours of green and red. Some shapes are filled out, while some are loose outlines. Each shape is unique and relates to the next. As a visual ladder the vertical paintings can make a viewer lift her eyes and experience an opening up of space above.



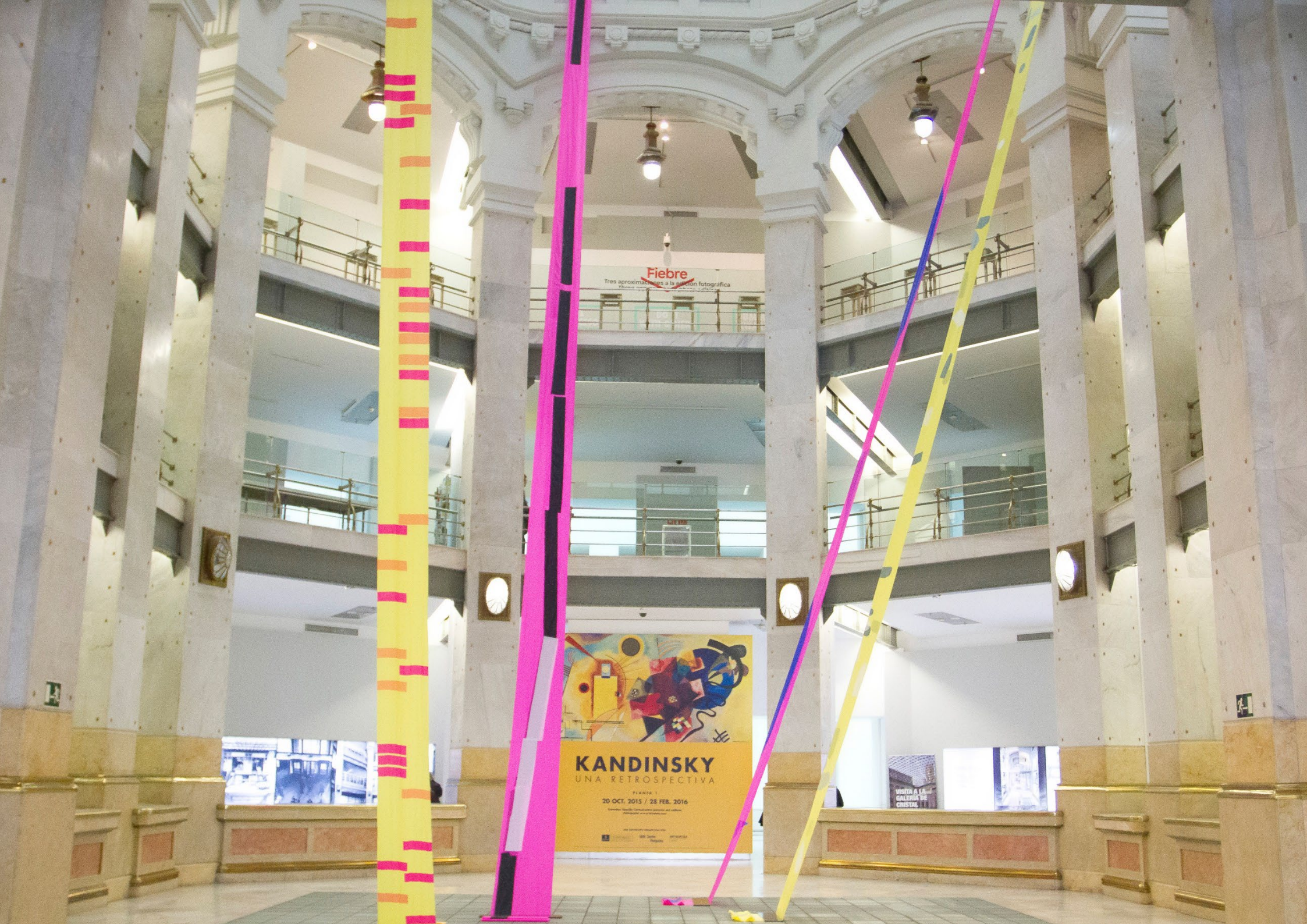

AUDITORIE

Maria Zahle: UpUpUpUp

2016

CentroCentro

Palacio de Cibeles, Madrid, Spain


Fiebre
KANDINSKY
UNA RETROSPECTIVA
PLANTA 1
20 OCT. 2015 / 28 FEB. 2016



CentroCentro presents the installation UpUpUpUp, by Maria Zahle, a Danish artist residing in London. Zahle intervenes in the former central post office with four large pieces of fabric measuring up to 16 meters in length, all sewn by hand and inspired by the enormity of scale and intricate decorative elements within the building. Light and colour flood the space in stripes of pink, blue and brilliant yellow. The ripstop nylon works highlight the verticality of the main hall and encourages a viewer to reflect on the presence of their own body within the space, how we move into it, through it, and what we see and feel in the process.

-from the exhibition text

CV MARIA ZAHLE

Public art commissions

2025 *Show me show you (working title)*, 4 large woven works for Sunnanå Idrottshall, Skellefteå, SE
2016-19 *Farvesving; Farver Bag et Gitter; 20 Flader 5 Farver,* 3 pedestrian tunnels, Copenhagen, DK
2016 *With Colour, With Body*, Dept. of Energy Technology, AAU, DK, finansieret af Bygningsstyrelsen
2014 *Dogs & Sails*, New Walk Museum and Art Gallery, Leicester, UK

Collections

2024 Skovgaard Museet, DK (donated by New Carlsberg Foundation)
2023 New Carlsberg Foundation, DK
2014 New Walk Museum, Leicester, UK
+ various private collections in DK, UK, BE, US, etc

Solo exhibitions

2023 *SOLO*, Alice Folker Gallery, DK
2022 *No Stranger or Lover to Me,* Rønnebæksholm, DK
Turn Turn Turn, Arcade, Bruxelles, BE
2021 *The Toe The Horse The Sister*, Bladr, DK
2020 *HHH HHV HHH*, feat. DEAP, Aga Works, DK
2018 *Trotsky and the Wild Orchids*, Arcade, London, UK
Open Studio, Gallery Sofie van der Welde, Oostende, BE
Maria Zahle, Cobra-Rummet, Sophienholm, Lyngby, DK
2016 *Sten & Pang*, Kiosk 7, Copenhagen, Denmark
UpUpUpUp, CentroCentro, Palacio de Cibeles, Madrid, ES
2015 *My Favourite Phone Number*, Arcade, London, UK
Up, Arcade stand, ARCO 2015, Madrid, ES
Politics, Tenderbooks, London, UK
2014 Sails and Dogs, New Walk Museum, Leicester, UK
2013 *Solo Objects*, ARCO art fair, Madrid, ES
2012 *And Annika*, Arcade, London, UK
2010 *A Figure, A Rectangle*, Arcade, London, UK
2008 *Hotdog, Jumping Frog, Albuquerque*, Tisvildeleje Pakhus, DK
2007 *a2+b2=c2*, The Hex, London, UK

Group & duo exhibitions

2025 *World Building* (working title), Sydhavn Station, Copenhagen, DK (curated by Marie Vinther, et al)
Winter Salon, Alice Folker Gallery, DK
2024 *Landscape,* Alice Folker Gallery, DK
Winter Salon, Alice Folker Gallery, DK
Modul IV Skaftevæv v/ Laugets Vævekurser (weaving show), Biblioteket Rentemestervej, Copenhagen, DK
Hot Hands, Skovgaard Museet, Viborg, DK

Biotopia, Fraktal Ventesal, Skørping, DK
2023 *Summer Showroom,* Alice Folker Gallery, Copenhagen, DK
På Korte Kontrakter, Den Frie Udstilling, Copenhagen, DK
2022 *Søby Sommer Biennale*, Ærø, DK
Ocean Dancer, Violet, Antwerp, BE
2021 *Night Cuts Blue,* Vandrehallen, Hillerød Bibliotek, DK
Sunny Legs, Frise Kunsthal, Hamburg, DE
2020 *YIELD,* Arcade, Bruxelles, BE
The Remote Studio, Resonance FM, UK
2019 *Stråle Kant Dag*, Danske Grafikeres Hus, DK
Hul i Gul, Hvidovre Bibliotek, DK
#AOTD - Art of the Day, CCA Andratx, Mallorca, ES
Close Call, Kunstscenen, København, DK
Stedet er Levende, Astrid Noacks Atelier, DK
2018 *Anthea Hamilton: Projects*, Kettles Yard, Cambridge, UK
Arcade stand, ZonaMaco art fair, Mexico City, MX
2017 *Occasional Geometries*, Yorkshire Sculpture Park, UK
Drawing Biennale, Drawing Centre, London, UK
Socle du Monde Biennale, Herning Højskole, DK
Presentation at Arcade stand, Code Art Fair, Copenhagen, DK
Bestyrelsesmøde, Kiosk 7, Copenhagen, Denmark
2016 *Baldock, Pope, Zahle*, Northern Gallery of Contemporary Art, Sunderland, UK
2015 *#4*, 6GINS, Liverpool, UK
Paw, Arcade, London, UK
How to Read, Five Years, London, UK
(1/1).10 (with Philippe van Snick), Galerie Tatjana Pieters, BE
2014 *Fresh*, CCA Andratx, Mallorca, ES
Paper Works, Galerie Tatjana Pieters, Ghent, BE
2013 *Politics*, Arcade, London, UK
Stand with Arcade, MIART art fair, Milan, IT
Enjoy and Discover Squares & Triangles, Arcade, London, UK
Double, Illums Bolighus, Copenhagen, DK
Take Me Out, stand with Limoncello, London Art Fair, UK
2012 *ZippyZippy*, Dorothea Schlueter Galerie, Hamburg, DE
Tree Stripe, Frieze Art Fair Sculpture Park, Regents Park, London, UK
2010 *Paul Richards and The Hex*, Amer Abbas Gallery, Vienna, AT
Alice Channer, Dagmar Heppner, Alicja Kwade, Maria Zahle, BolteLang, Zurich, CH
2009 *Double Object*, Thomas Dane Gallery, London, UK
Autonomy Together, Subvision Festival, Hamburg, DE
Middlemarch, Auto-Italia South East, London, UK
2008 *Double Object*, Occasionals, London, UK
Production Still – Mike Cooter & The Hex, Moot, Nottingham, UK

The Hex Retrospective, Limoncello Gallery, London, UK

Publications

2024 *Hot Hands,* exhibition catalogue, Skovgaard Museet
2022 *No Stranger or Lover to Me*, exhibition catalogue, Rønnebæksholm
Maria Zahle: *The Toe, The Horse, The Sister*. Published by AkermanDaly
Christine Clemmesen and Maria Zahle: *Nat Skærer Blå*
Tillmann Terbuyken & Maria Zahle: *Sunny Legs*
2018 Christine Clemmesen and Maria Zahle: *Stråle Kant Dag*
2017 Maria Zahle: *8 Poems*. Published by AkermanDaly
Occasional Geometries, Yorkshire Sculpture Park, 2017

Bibliography

2022 *Maria Zahle: No Stranger or Lover to Me*, IDOART
Maria Zahle: Rønnebæksholm, den2radio
Stine Lundberg Hansen: *Det rum kan rumme mere end mig*, kunsten.nu
2021 Adam Heardman: *Artists' Books. Maria Zahle: The Toe The Horse The Sister*, Art Monthly
Finn Hagen Madsen, *Maria Zahle*, Kunstavisen
2018 Maria Kjær Themsen: *Næsten sprog, næsten form, næsten skulptur*, Weekendavisen
2016 Mads Vibe-Andersen: *Maria Zahle udsmykker Aalborg Universitet*, kunsten.nu
2012 Rebecca Geldard: *And Annika*, Time Out London
Maria Zahle 'And Annika' at Arcade, Mousse Magazine
2010 Quinn Latimer: *Alice Channer, Dagmar Heppner, Alicja Kwade, Maria Zahle*, Artforum

Projects and performances

2014 *Twilight*, on the late work of Phyllida Barlow, invited by Henriette Heise, SMK, DK
2023 Performance / reading, European Poetry Festival, 100 Years Gallery, London, UK
2021 *The Toe The Horse The Sister,* solo performance, Kunsthal Charlottenborg, DK
2020- Co-founder of *Polychrome*, a project space for art, music and poetry, Copenhagen, DK
2018 *Lilt*, LP release by Squares & Triangles
8 Poems, performances at The AllBright Club, London & Aeromoto, Mexico City
2017 *In the Pines*, performance, David Risley Gallery, Copenhagen, DK
2016 Online residency at *Akerman Daly*
2015 *Hg*, release of *Squares & Triangles* debut LP
2010-2012 Co-founder of *The Hex*, project space, London, UK
2009 Participant in *What Do Artists Do?* initiated by artist Phyllida Barlow
2007- Member of music group *Squares & Triangles*

Awards (selected)

2023 Best Book Design, graphic design by Alexis Mark of my catalogue No Stranger or Lover to Me, The Royal Library, Copenhagen
2018 Arbejdslegat / Work Grant, Danish Arts Foundation
2015 Grant for the Arts, Arts Council England
2013 Alexandra Reinhardt Memorial Award (ARMA) Artist Residency, New Walk Museum & Art Gallery, UK
Artist in residence, CCA, Andratx, Majorca, ES
2009 British School in Rome Prize, Royal Academy Schools, UK
2007 The Landseer Award, Royal Academy Schools, London, UK
2005 Artist in Residence, Bangkok University, TH
Terence Cuneo Memorial Prize, UK
Duveen Travel Scholarship, Slade School of Fine Art, London, UK
2004 Ellen Stoeckel Battell Fellowship, Yale University, US

Affiliations and appointments

2024-30 Member of Akademiet for de Skønne Kunster, as well as the Jury 2024-27
2022-26 External examinator, School of Visual Art, Royal Danish Academy of Fine Art, Copenhagen
2022-24 Board member Optagelsesudvalget / Admissions Board, Association of Visual Artists, DK
2015- Member, The Royal Danish Academy of Fine Art's Society of Artists

Teaching

Contracted appointments at Kensington & Chelsea College (2005-2015), University of Lincoln (2012-13), Goldsmiths College (2014).
Visiting artist at Arts University College Bournemouth, Camberwell College of Arts (2011), Reading University (2013), UK; Billedkunstskolerne på det Kongelige Danske Kunstakademi (2019-20), Holbæk Kunsthøjskole (2020), Modus (2020-21), Ærø Kunsthøjskole (2022), DK; St. Joost School of Art & Design, NL (2023)

Education

2020-24 Professional Handweaving Diploma, Laugets Vævekurser, DK
2006-9 Postgraduate Diploma Fine Art, Royal Academy Schools, London, UK
2003 Exchange during BA at the New York Studio School, NY, USA
2001-5 BA Fine Art (Hons), Slade School of Fine Art, London, UK

Gallery representation

Alice Folker Gallery, Copenhagen