

Perfect imperfect: Brent Wadden weaves new works for his first UK solo show

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Last week saw the opening of the first UK solo show by Canadian-born artist Brent Wadden, at London's Pace Gallery

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INFORMATION

'How Long is Now' is on view until 31 October

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Trained as a painter but introduced to weaving in Berlin in 2004, Canadian-born artist Brent Wadden decided three years ago to ditch paint entirely in favour of yarns. Each of his dazzling artworks is composed of individual geometric panels that are painstakingly woven by hand, on backstrap and floor looms from second-hand and leftover fibres. Stretched over raw canvas in graphic compositions, the abstract works that Wadden creates are characterised by their wobbly lines and errors. They are a celebration of the imperfect.

Citing First Nation, folk and Bauhaus textiles among his influences – as well as painting movements such as abstract expressionism – Wadden calls into question the hierarchies of media and disciplines with his work. In conversation with Nicolas Trembley earlier this year, Wadden commented,

'I liked the tension by having the weaving and the paintings in the same room, the language that existed or was created by having both of the things – something like oil painting, which most people would consider a high art or craft, and then the weavings which are like this lesser thing where the textiles could just be on the floor. People don't really respect them as art. It's more of a disposable medium and I wanted to create that dialogue in the gallery space between the two.'

Opened last week at London's Pace Gallery, Wadden's first solo exhibition in the UK features five new site-specific works that respond to the scale of the space at 6 Burlington Gardens. At first glance, they appear to be two-tone abstractions; but on closer inspection the kaleidoscope of colour found in the leftover acrylic, cotton and wool fibres is revealed.

'For me, my work is about patterning, and rhythm, and always making a mistake at some point throughout it,' Wadden tells Trembley. 'It's not a mistake if you purposely do it, but there's a rhythm that happens and there's a format in which you think. There's a formula that I'm using in each piece but there's always a mistake that exists in the work, which I allow to happen.'