



NINO MIER  
GALLERY

# PIETER JENNES

*WHEN WEEDS BLOOM*

APRIL 16 - MAY 14, 2022

NINO MIER GALLERY  
GALLERY THREE & FOUR  
7327 SANTA MONICA BLVD  
LOS ANGELES, CA 90046  
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**Pieter Jennes**

*When Weeds Bloom*

**April 16 – May 21, 2022**

Nino Mier Gallery is pleased to present *When Weeds Bloom*, our first solo exhibition with Belgian artist Pieter Jennes. Twenty-five new paintings, furniture, and a floor installation comprise the artist's Rabelaisian romp through a densely populated forest. The exhibition will be on view across two gallery spaces in Los Angeles from April 16 to May 21, 2022.

Last year in Antwerp, where Jennes currently lives and works, a social scene burgeoned outside the city center. Because the pandemic forced the closure of many public gathering spots, people began congregating in the woods, where land was still public. Jennes describes an invigorating mix of desperation and glee, as people would gather in freezing temperatures to drink, chat, and dance within an almost laughably harsh landscape. In *When Weeds Bloom*, Jennes represents some of the spirit of these gatherings, harnessing the shock, humor, and antiauthoritarianism that characterizes the carnivalesque.

Many of Jennes' slapstick compositions are divided in two, albeit unequal parts: one part contains a figure (or two) falling, while the other depicts a small huddle of figures with mask or doll-like faces staring at the display of gracelessness before them. Crowds of clustered people have been, for the better part of the past two years, a taboo. But in Jennes' paintings, what is dangerous is also what is life-affirming. His men and beasts point to the self-deprecating comedy that is so often a reprieve from the depths of despair, loneliness, and fear. In *why and How? ... nobody will know*, a goat inexplicably falls back-first onto an unsuspecting victim smoking a cigarette. Indeed: why, and how? We look to Jennes' other paintings for answers, but they respond only with beguiling, clownish revelry.

The exhibition captures its cast of human and animal characters mid-gesture within theatrically flat outdoor settings. Jennes foregoes clear delineations between foreground and background, placing horizon lines close to the canvases' lower edge, and eschewing naturalistic perspective. Depth instead is articulated in Jennes' surfaces, which are worked palimpsests of rich oil paint. Much of the texture, pattern, and even emotion (his trees are filled with lovers' inscriptions) displayed in the works is achieved through his painstaking manipulation of matter and form.

The flattened compositions in *When weeds bloom* resemble stages, revealing Jennes' interest in the dynamics between performance and observation. In *I like life a lot*, a figure topples headfirst into the grass while his dancing compatriots observe with warm smiles. In *I'm scared my toes are blue*, a man on an overturned bike pushes a friend to the ground. A dense mass of characters gather at the painting's margin, watching the scene with intrigue. The strangeness of being perceived takes on an explicitly surreal tone in *where have you fallen, have you fallen?* The painting depicts a man falling headfirst from a tree. He is inches away from the ground, but instead of grass we catch a glimpse of another face. Their gaze locks: the falling man has been caught. Unfortunately for him, his debauched fall will not be broken, only witnessed.

The relationship between actor and observer plays out not just between figures within the paintings, but also in the form and address of the exhibition as a whole. While the flattened space of each canvas might seem to push back on us, their installation reaches outward, inviting us into its sphere. Jennes' forest surrounds us on all sides, and a suite of fifty metal frogs lies beneath our feet. The artist even offers us a place to sit and stay a while: he hand-crafted a bench, a table, and a set of chairs for the exhibition. The galleries, then, become Jennes' expanded canvas, and we become members of his enchanted world.

The attitude and aesthetics of carnival are deeply entrenched within Jennes' works, which find auspices in fellow-Belgian painter James Ensor's kaleidoscopically grotesque compositions. Traditionally, Carnival serves as a suspension of social and political mores. Once masks and costumes are donned, the rules of polite society screech to a halt and citizens of any class are offered the chance to embody a more libertine identity with little consequence. While *When Weeds Bloom*—which features vagrants who drink, ogle, dance, sing, jump, and tumble amid thin-trunked trees—does not overtly reference the celebration, its spirit is apparent in the style and content of the work. Moreover, his paintings depict the risks we are willing to take in the name of festivity.

*Pieter Jennes (b.1990, Mortsel, Belgium; lives and works in Antwerp) studied painting at the Royal Academie of Fine Arts, Antwerp, as well as curatorial studies at The Royal Academie of Fine Arts & University of Gent. He has had solo exhibitions at institutions including Gallery Sofie Van de Velde, Antwerp, BE; The White House Gallery, Lovenjoel, Belgium; CIAP, Hasselt, Belgium; and Public Gallery, London, UK*



Installation View of Pieter Jennes, *When Weeds Bloom*, Gallery 3, Nino Mier, Los Angeles (April 16 - May 21, 2022)



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*reflections: tips and clues*, 2022 | Oil and glitter on canvas | 78 3/4 x 66 7/8 in, 200 x 170 cm | (PJE22.008)





*hints on fecundity*, 2021 | Oil and glitter on canvas | 78 3/4 x 66 7/8 in, 200 x 170 cm | (PJE22.005)







*bitch steals my boots even from the grave*, 2021 | Oil on canvas | 66 7/8 x 78 3/4 in, 170 x 200 cm | (PJE22.007)





*tree strikes and yur not out*, 2021 Oil on canvas | 66 7/8 x 78 3/4 in, 170 x 200 cm | (PJE22.017)





*Where do we begin?* , 2021 | Oil and glitter on canvas | 66 7/8 x 74 3/4 in, 170 x 190 cm | (PJE22.009)





*where have you fallen, have you fallen?*, 2021 | Oil on canvas | 74 3/4 x 43 1/4 in, 190 x 110 cm | (PJE22.001)









*he can also sing!*, 2021 | Oil on canvas | 37 3/8 x 25 5/8 in, 95 x 65 cm | (PJE22.025)





*I like life a lot*, 2021 | Oil and glitter on canvas | 78 3/4 x 90 1/2 in, 200 x 230 cm | (PJE22.013)





*why and How? ... nobody will know*, 2022 | Oil and glitter on canvas | 66 7/8 x 78 3/4 in, 170 x 200 cm | (PJE22.012)





*Can a hungry bear dance*, 2019 | Oil on canvas | 41 3/8 x 74 3/4 in, 105 x 190 cm | (PJE22.022)









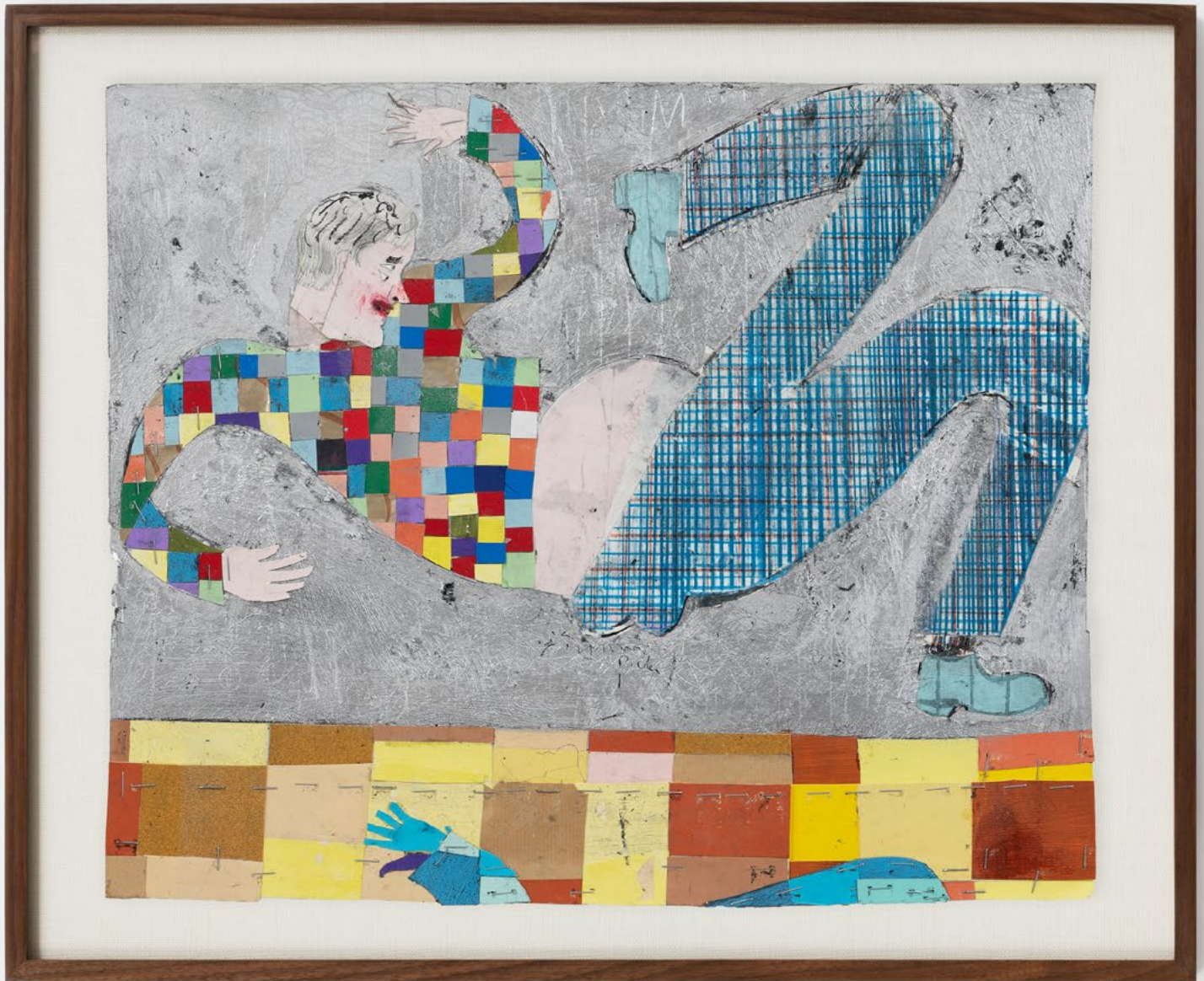
*without me there will be no party*, 2021 | Oil and glitter on canvas | 66 7/8 x 59 1/8 in, 170 x 150 cm | (PJE22.002)





*When weeds bloom*, 2021 Oil and glitter on canvas | 66 7/8 x 74 3/4 in, 170 x 190 cm | (PJE22.006)





*when weed blooms*, 2022 | Mixed media on paper | 17 x 20 5/8 in, 43.2 x 52.4 cm | (PJE22.026)







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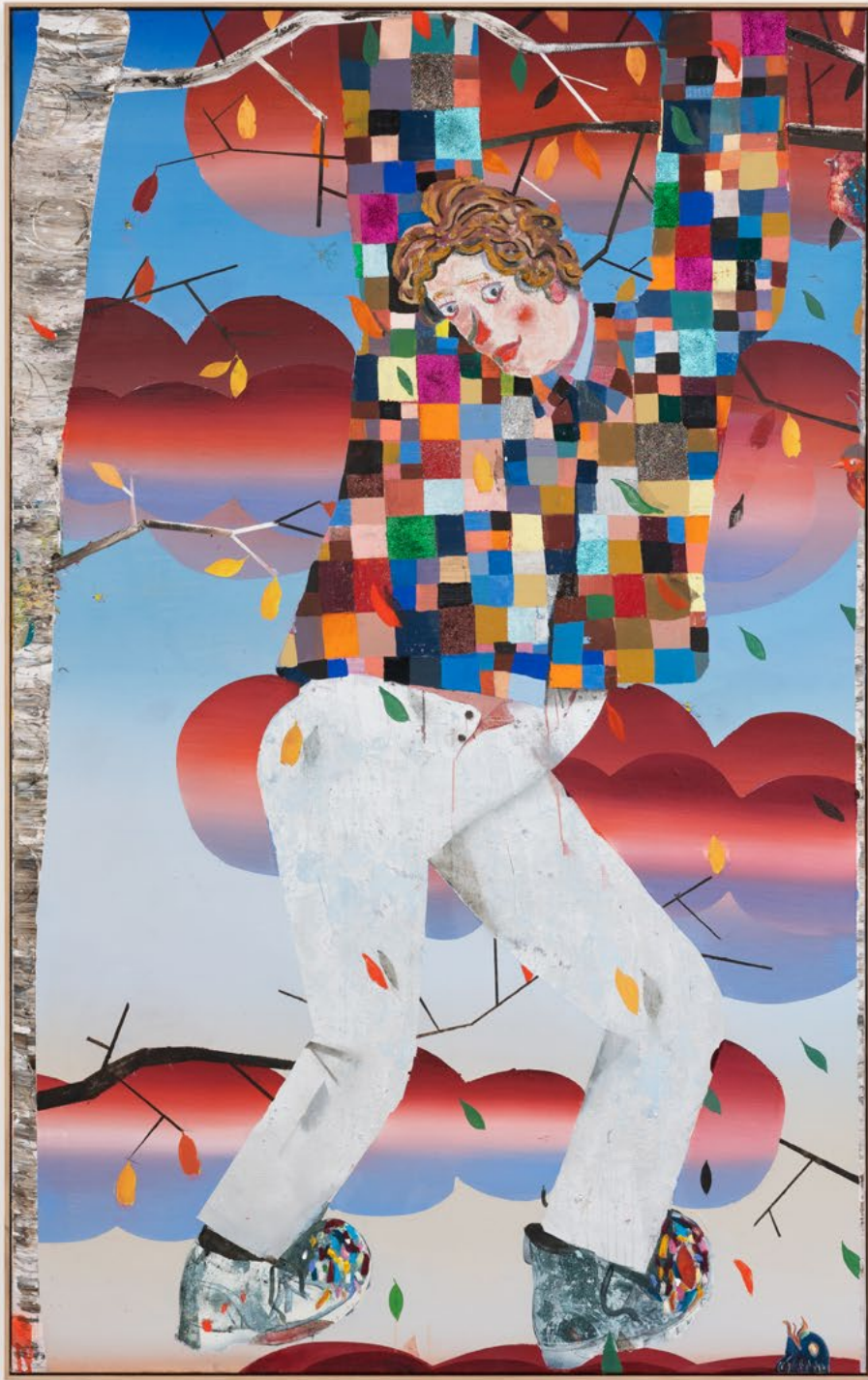


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*bow, shake, corners, begin*, 2022 | Oil on canvas | 59 1/8 x 70 7/8 in, 150 x 180 cm | (PJE22.018)





*dream of light*, 2022 | Oil on canvas | 78 3/4 x 49 1/4 in, 200 x 125 cm | (PJE22.016)







*when weed blooms*, 2022 | Mixed media on paper | 26 3/8 x 30 1/8 in, 67 x 76.5 cm | (PJE22.023)





*good for the bones*, 2021 | Oil and glitter on canvas | 59 1/8 x 66 7/8 in, 150 x 170 cm | (PJE22.004)





*on the patio, my mother bets her boyfriend she can pour wine upside*, 2021 | Oil on canvas | 66 7/8 x 78 3/4 in, 170 x 200 cm | (PJE22.014)

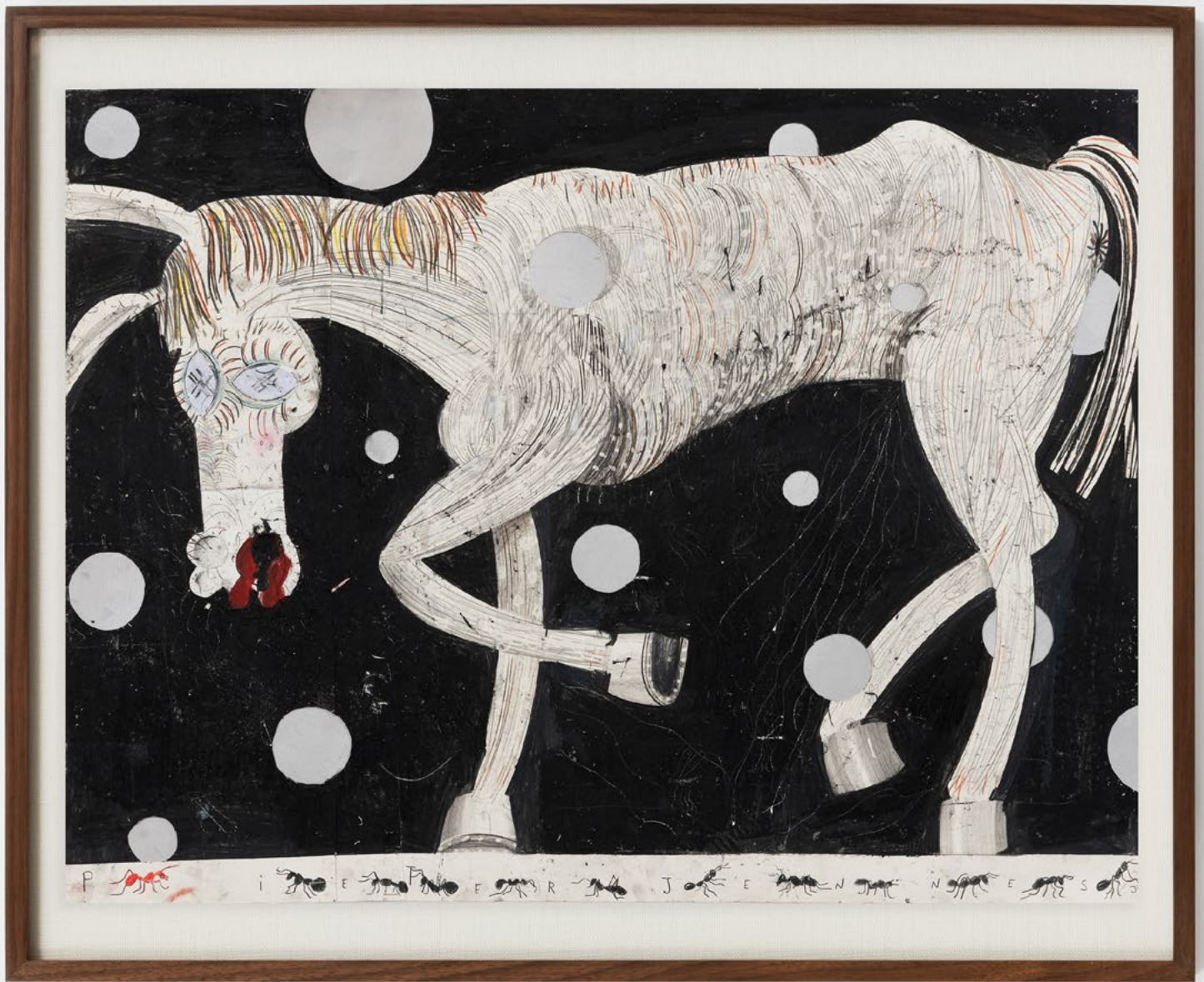




*I just won't move*, 2021 | Oil on canvas | 27 1/8 x 19 1/4 in 69 x 49 cm | (PJE22.020)







when weed blooms, 2022 | Mixed media on paper | 26 3/8 x 30 1/8 in, 67 x 76.5 cm | (PJE22.023)





*When weed blooms*, 2021 | Mixed Media on paper | 23 1/4 x 17 5/8 in, 59.1 x 44.8 cm | (PJE22.034)





*wallflowers*, 2021 | Oil and glitter on canvas | 66 7/8 x 78 3/4 in, 170 x 200 cm | (PJE22.003)





*I'm scared my toes are blue*, 2022 | Oil on canvas | 78 3/4 x 90 1/2 in, 200 x 230 cm | (PJE22.015)









*when weed blooms*, 2022 | Mixed media on paper | 19 1/2 x 23 in, 49.5 x 58.4 cm | (PJE22.024)



E N N E S



## **PIETER JENNES**

Born in 1990 in Mortsel, BE  
Lives and works in Antwerp, BE

### **EDUCATION**

2014 University of Ghent, School of Arts Ghent, KASK, Ghent, BE  
2013 Master Arts and Design, The Royal Academy of Fine Arts, Antwerp, BE

### **SOLO EXHIBITIONS**

2023 Gallery Sofie Van de Velde, Antwerp, BE (forthcoming)  
BPart, Waregem, BE (forthcoming)

2022 When Weeds Bloom, Nino Mier Gallery, Los Angeles, CA (forthcoming)

2021 I can tell you stories, Gallery Sofie Van de Velde, Antwerp, BE  
Everybody's heard about the bird, PUBLIC Gallery, London, UK

2019 Tomorrow is so far away, Gallery Sofie Van de Velde, Antwerp, BE  
Opwaartse spuwende fonteinen en dwarrelende regen, AIP, Hoboken, BE

2018 I eat her lips and she eats mine, The White House Gallery, Lovenjoel, BE

2016 False Nonsense, CIAP, Hasselt, BE  
The marvelous strange chime of the clocks, Tweede Verdieping Antwerp, BE

2014 Hark hark the dogs do bark, Edition Populaire, Antwerp, BE

### **GROUP EXHIBITIONS**

2022 Group exhibition curated by Folkert de Jong (forthcoming)  
Vacancy Gallery, Shanghai, CN (forthcoming)

2021 Rewilding, Nino Mier Gallery, Los Angeles, CA, US

2020 Danser Brut, Bozar, Brussels, BE  
De Nacht, De Warande, Turnhout, BE  
L'heure bleue, Gallery Sofie Van de Velde & PLUS-ONE Gallery, Antwerp, BE  
Investec Cape Town Artfair, Gallery Sofie Van de Velde, Cape Town, SA  
NO TIME LIKE THE PRESENT, PUBLIC Gallery, London, UK

2019 Coup de foudre, Belfius collectie, Art Brussels, BE  
Looking at the world through rose colored glasses, Gallery Sofie Van de Velde, Antwerp, BE

2018 SOFT?, Gallery Sofie Van de Velde, Antwerp, BE  
Showhouse JayJay, Antwerp, BE  
Red to brown, ABC klubhuis, Antwerp, BE

- 2017 FRONT, Concertgebouw Bruges, BE
- 2016 False nonsense, CIAP, Hasselt, BE  
Crobox, Ghent, BE
- 2015 &co, CC Stroombeek, BE  
Fungus, CC Aarschot, Aarschot, BE
- 2014 Hotel Charleroi 2014, Ville Basse, Charleroi, BE  
DE KIEINE DINGEN, Middelheim Museum, Antwerp, BE  
A Poem a day, MuZee, Ostend, BE  
Artists by night, Lokaal 01, Antwerp, BE  
Traffic#1, I'm a lousy conformist, so I put it here. Lokaal 01, Antwerp, BE  
Traffic#2, Have you seen this exhibition? De Kunstvlaai, Amsterdam, NL
- 2013 'The campus is sparkling and so are the arts', Royal Academy of Fine Arts, Antwerp, BE  
'Tovenaars met het penseel,' Royal Academy of Fine Arts, Antwerp, BE

## **AWARDS**

- 2018 Nomination for Gavere prize
- 2012 Prize "Schildersprijs" for Painting of the Royal Academy of Fine Arts  
Nomination for Horlait Daphsens prize
- 2010 Proost de Barys prize for Painting of the Royal Academy of fine arts

## **PUBLICATIONS**

- 2021 Pieter Jennes: Gezelligheid Op Een Druilerige Dag, Sophie Van de Velde Gallery, Posture Editions

