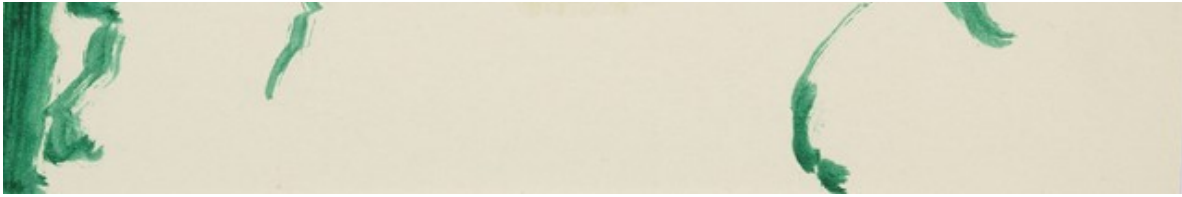


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Inside a Beautiful New Book of Drawings by Faye Wei Wei

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Faye Wei Wei, *Faye & Leo (Two Peach Stones)*, 2020
Courtesy the artist

Artist Faye Wei Wei has collaborated with Manon Lutanie on a small but mighty book of drawings, published with support from Cob Gallery

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The title of a new book from artist [Faye Wei Wei](#) takes its name from the shade of green used to create the drawing on its front cover: *Hooker's Green Lake*. "It's by Old Holland and is so strange and mesmerising as a colour, it sinks into paper so nicely and it leaks its binding oils out and becomes quite swampy," Wei Wei explains over email, ahead of the book's publication by [Éditions Lutanie](#), with support from London's [Cob Gallery](#). "I like the idea of looking out onto a green lake, and with that intensity of pigment it has to be a lake at night, possibly viewed by moonlight."

Produced in close collaboration with publisher Manon Lutanie, *Hooker's Green Lake* is a collection of Wei Wei's recent works on paper. "This is a very humble publication: it's staple-bound, with a deliberately uncomplicated graphic principle," says Lutanie. "We loved the idea of making the object look simple, but ultimately precious. It resonates with Faye's drawings, which often have a raw, almost naive aspect, and at the same time an inherent treasure-like quality." Having met through a mutual friend – Leopold, portraits of whom appear in *Hooker's Green Lake* as Wei

Wei was “trying to embrace him in some way and comfort him from afar” this year – the pair were quick to decide to work together, both admirers of the other’s work. Wei Wei notes Lutanie’s “eye for beauty”: “I knew about her [Rene Ricard book](#) in that wonderful off-pale green cover,” she says.

Wei Wei’s art is recognisable for its romance and lyricism, often featuring symbolic creatures drawn from myth and figures based on the artist’s close circle of friends. She has cited feeling inspired by stories, [films](#), poetry and paintings – musing on the colour Hooker’s *Green Lake*, she mentions Cy Twombly’s 1980s *Green Paintings*, and Virginia Woolf’s *Blue and Green* – but the restrictions imposed this year in London provided Wei Wei with alternative, and bittersweet, inspiration for these new pieces. “The drawings mostly came about from this year, during lockdown. My friend Dora passed away and it made a big hole in my heart. And so I just would draw and just fill leaf after leaf with love and felt a hunger for a new language,” she says. “I was transfixed into making and the drawings surprised me – they feel unexpected, they were born from real pain, but a real love too.” Tinged with the ache of separation and loss, the drawings in *Hooker’s Green Lake* take on a new tenderness. “You can’t possibly help but think about the people you love when you draw, it comes out before you even know what you feel, there is a magic in that I really believe in.”





Faye Wei Wei, Andi and Leo, 2020 Courtesy the artist

A [special edition](#) of 45 copies of *Hooker's Green Lake* will come with a photograph signed by Wei Wei. “The drawings have an almost atemporal quality, whereas the pictures are clearly of our time,” says Lutanie. “Faye often works from photographs of her friends, and it’s interesting to see how the photographs relate to the drawings in the book.” Where Wei Wei’s drawings have ethereal, sometimes otherworldly, qualities, the accompanying photographs are poignant in a different way; in the context of this year and the changes the Covid-19 pandemic has brought about,

they become reminders of this unique time.

The book, created with care during a year like no other, carries a hopeful message. Wei Wei compares *Hooker's Green Lake* to the calming rituals of making food: "Tonight I am cooking stuffed and rolled cabbages for dinner – it is a labour of love, nestling filling in every leaf and rolling carefully, tenderly, and this little book is the same I hope. It is something I really love and believe in, something a part of my heart that everyone can have a moment with." Lutanie adds: "An important aspect of Faye's work is to document and cherish a community of friends and loved ones. I am glad to finish this year of fear and distance by releasing our little book that brings together vibrant portraits of this community."

[*Hooker's Green Lake by Faye Wei Wei*](#) is out now, published by [*Éditions Lutanie*](#) with support from [*Cob Gallery*](#).

Coinciding with the publication of *Hooker's Green Lake*, Cob Gallery is launching new prints and etchings by Wei Wei, available to buy [online](#).





Faye Wei Wei, Andi and Leo, 2020 Courtesy the artist