

ANAT EBGI

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June Editor's Picks: Sarah Ann Weber at Anat Ebgi

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Sarah Ann Weber, *Strong Blossoming Thing Forever* (installation view) (2021).  
Image courtesy of the artist and Anat Ebgi. Photo: Matthew Kroening.

Sarah Ann Weber does not watch cartoons, a parallel I float during a walk-through of her handsome current exhibition at Anat Ebgi, *Strong Blossoming Thing Forever*. The exhibition title sounds like a Boredoms album, and Weber indulges in a similar vein of focused, maximal surreality throughout. If not cartoons, Weber's varying, vibrant PrismaColor forms and tones seem at least to have their roots in the rich values of an analog television image, one playing nature docs and gardening shows on a loop.

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The artist's works teeter away from a direct reading of the landscapes into which they at first seem to organize. Various dimensions of the natural overlap: ragged, alien blooms of mold, thorny, or poisonous ensnaring vines, blooming cascades of florals. "Florals? For spring?" an unhurried Meryl Streep utters contemptuously in *The Devil Wears Prada* (2006)—but Weber goes so hard on florals that they begin to mutate into something else, and something wonderfully not quite right. The abundance and swarming repetition of her imagery toggles disquietingly between the hum and chirp of birds and insects and the sickening drone of approaching cicadas. The shifting forms in her works are never quite identifiable, and seem more like plants colorfully misremembered.

*Return no More* (all works 2021) features nude figures that flesh out the Edenic landscape. The bell-like flowers of *There is no joy but calm* loom rather than bloom, while pinky, starfish-like forms hover, slouch, and drape over a central figure who is either ensnared or becoming. *Strong Blossoming Thing Forever* is above all Romantic, positing nature—even nature wholly imagined—as a beguiling terror.