

LISSON

CEAL FLOYER Will Return

PRESS RELEASE

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2/F, 27 HUQIU ROAD, HUANGPU DISTRICT, SHANGHAI

Lisson is pleased to present the first solo exhibition of Ceal Floyer (1968 – 2025) with the gallery in China. Coinciding with her presentation *Unfinished* at Berggruen Arts & Culture, Palazzo Diedo, Venice, the exhibition features a rigorously concise grouping of sculptural works and readymades showcasing Floyer's conceptual precision and dry wit.

Floyer's practice interrogates familiar objects through a subtle defamiliarisation, exposing the disjunction between linguistic and visual registers. Characterised by a deceptive simplicity, her propositions employ double-takes and shifting perspectives to compel perceptual renegotiation. The resulting oeuvre achieves a distinctive tone of quiet resonance, wherein minimal gestures result in a reconsideration of the quotidian that is at once playful and profound.

Upon entering, visitors encounter the floor-based work *Meeting Point* (2013), which comprises a circular arrangement of red arrows mimicking universal signage seen in public spaces. Whilst the work delivers a directive, the configuration leads nowhere, with the language of orientation providing no actual destination. This intervention renders a familiar navigational tool functionally absurd, generating cognitive dislocation.

On a nearby wall, Floyer's everyday poetics continues in *Will Return* (2018), a work that comprises a readymade commercial clock sign stripped of its hands. This alteration negates the object's intended function, bringing the viewer into an existential mediation on presence and absence. Elsewhere in the gallery, *Day for Night* (2001) positions two desk lamps on a shelf; projecting overlapping beams of cold blue and warm orange light, each lamp cancels out the other in a deadpan visual loop.

Along the length of the gallery, *Domino Effect* (2015) presents a continuous row of upright dominoes, each piece placed flush against the next. By closing the gaps that would normally allow a chain reaction to unfold, Floyer arrests a symbol of cause and effect into a static, self-contained sculpture – a small act of sabotage that results in a study of suspended potential. On the opposite wall, *Hinges* (2021) consists of two metal door hinges installed directly into a 90-degree corner of the gallery. As with the dominoes, the hinges are stripped of function through their subtle misappropriation, redirecting attention to the architecture and charging it with an unresolved tension.

Suspended from the ceiling, *Untitled (Static)* (2018) takes the form of a parabolic dome fitted with a speaker that plays recorded static, the texture of the sound resembling falling rain. The associative qualities of the white noise transform the installation, composed from the most economical of means, into a sonic and visual illusion replete with both humour and pathos.

Collectively, these works distill Floyer's singular ability to transform the overlooked and the ordinary into profound perceptual enquiries. Through restrained gestures that suspend function, the work situates the viewer within a state of productive ambiguity, where the familiar is bestowed with a contemplative weight through being made strange.

ABOUT THE ARTIST

Conceptual artist Ceal Floyer is celebrated for her deft manoeuvres in everyday situations, testing the slippage between function and implication, the literal and the imagined. Working in film and installation, she reconfigures familiar objects as sources of surprise and humour. In *Light* (1994), for example, a solitary unconnected bulb is lit up from four sides by slide projectors; in *Hammer and Nail* (2018), stock footage of a nail being hammered is edited so that the footage rises with each blow, the frame of the film and wood plank coming up to meet the hammer. Such adjustments in usage draw on an acute sense of the



absurd, with an economy of language that makes a powerful argument for beauty in the detail. Viewers are nudged to double take, and on closer inspection, recognise a sparse kind of poetry. Floyer's clarity of thought and the elegantly concise presentation of her ideas resonate through all areas of her practice. The deceptive simplicity of the work is informed by Floyer's particular sense of humour and an awareness of the absurd. Using double-takes and shifting points of view, Floyer forces the viewer to renegotiate their perception of the world.

Ceal Floyer was born in 1968 and passed away in 2025. She lived and worked in Berlin, Germany. She completed a BFA at Goldsmiths College, London, UK (1994). Recent solo exhibitions include: Museum of Contemporary Art, Toronto, Canada (2024); Base / Progetti per l'arte, Florence, Italy (2022); Lisson Gallery, East Hampton, USA (2021), University of Michigan Museum of Art, Ann Arbor, USA (2019), Lisson Gallery, London, UK (2018), Aspen Art Museum, USA and Aargauer Kunsthaut, Aarau, Switzerland (both 2016), Kunstmuseum Bonn, Germany (2015), Kolnischer Kunstverein, Germany (2013), DHC/ART Foundation for Contemporary Art, Montreal, Canada (2011), Museum of Contemporary Art North Miami, USA (2010), Palais de Tokyo, Paris, France and KW Institute for Contemporary Art, Berlin, Germany (both 2009), and Museo d'Arte Contemporanea Donnaregina (MADRE), Naples, Italy (2008).

Among many group exhibitions, she has been featured in exhibitions at: Jüdisches Museum, Berlin, Germany (2024); Kunsthalle Bern, Bern, Switzerland (2023); Musée d'Art Moderne de Paris, Paris, France (2022); Monash University Museum of Art, Caulfield East, Australia (2021), South London Gallery, London, UK and the Hammer Museum, UCLA, Los Angeles, USA (both 2018), at the Broad Art Museum, Lansing, USA (2017) and at the Hamburger Bahnhof, Berlin and the Hamburger Kunsthalle, Hamburg (Germany, both 2017). She participated in Aichi Triennale, Nagoya City and Toyota City, Aichi, Japan (2019), Guangzhou Triennial, Guangdong, China and documenta 13, Kassel, Germany (both 2012), and the 53rd Venice Biennale (2009). She won the Preis der Nationalgalerie für Junge Kunst, Hamburger Bahnhof, Berlin, Germany (2007) and the Nam June Paik Art Centre Prize, North Rhine-Westphalia, Germany (2009).

ABOUT LISSON

Lisson is a global gallery dedicated to shaping the art of today. Creating meaningful dialogues and robust markets between artists and audiences across six venues in the US, UK and China, Lisson exhibits the most engaging and challenging work, adding value and narrative through decades of experience and innovation.

Building significance and reputation with our artists, Lisson nurtures and amplifies their vision at every turn, supporting opportunities to show beyond the gallery's walls in museums, the public realm and through international partnerships. The gallery's heritage and its foundational role in contemporary art since 1967, allows for a deeper perspective and more thoughtful relationships when furthering the career and voice of an artist.