





Deb Covell
Quicksilver

MOCA London
28 September - 25 October 2025



Quicksilver

“Deb Covell makes paint into three dimensional objects. Her works are still paintings, but they inhabit the world of sculpture. She starts by building up layer upon layer of paint on top of clear plastic sheets. She eventually peels the backing off, leaving only the acrylic paint, usually in a square or rectangular shape but often quite large as in her *Silver Drape*.” (Petry, *Mirror Mirror: the reflective surface in contemporary art*, 2025).

I included Covell’s work in my current Thames & Hudson book as it presents a completely different way of using paint as a material, and as a reflective surface. Her method of making allows her to create a malleable fabric of only paint that can then be draped as if it were velvet. It is also as visually and texturally seductive. Her large *Silver Drape* is over five meters long and has been draped in different ways in every location it has been shown, as well as in her new exhibition at MOCA London.

Covell works with gravity, allowing it to alter the form her works take after she has cut and folded them into shapes that she considers ready to employ. Covell revels in the physicality of the paint, she enjoys the rupture to our psyche when we see what should be two dimensional in three. She makes a dialogue between her paintings and their surroundings. The work often shimmers in the light from their base colour (silver) and her use of high gloss finishes.

Quicksilver brings together four of her works “all made from silver acrylic paint skins, formed using a systematic, intuitive and playful yet discerning process to give the forms a feeling of liquid mercurial states.” The works will include *Silver Drape* - a sheet of silver paint suspended from the ceiling with beautiful cascading ripples of paint, which barely touch the floor. *Silver Flux 1* and *2* are both wall based works whose right angled folds give way to freer floating unfixed forms that lean away from the wall into the gallery space. The final silver work *Silver Bloom* is arguably the most sculptural on display, as it is strong in form but paradoxically touches on the formless through an ‘undoing’ brought about by its silver reflective surface and the movement of the viewer as they walk round it.

All the works are caught in the act of ‘becoming’ - a non-fixed, suspended state. They all have a sensual and seductive inbuilt quality which has ‘the intention of awakening the senses through an alchemical, material transformation’.

Dr. Michael Petry





















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The artist would like to thank:

The artist would like to thank Michael Petry and Roberto Ekholm for believing in her work and for their generosity in giving her this wonderful opportunity to show at MOCA London. She would like to extend her gratitude to Maxwell Shirley for beautifully designing the catalogue to accompany the exhibition. She would like to say a special thank you to her family especially her two sons Danny and Mikey and her husband Cathal for their endless support and love.

Works list:

Front and back outside cover: *Silver Flux 2*, details, 2025, chrome lacquer on acrylic paint sheet, 50 x 140 x 13 cms

Front and back inside cover: *Silver Flux 2*, details (reversed image on inside back cover)

Pages 2, 4 and 5: *Silver Drape*, 2025, MOCA London exhibition view, chrome lacquer on acrylic paint sheet, 304.8 x 150 x 40 cms installed (518.16 x 152.4 cms)

Pages 6 and 7: *Silver Flux 1*, 2025, chrome lacquer on acrylic paint sheet, 39 x 74 x 9 cms

Pages 8 - 9: MOCA London exhibition view

Pages 10 - 11: *Silver Bloom*, 2025, chrome lacquer on acrylic paint sheet, 34 x 53 x 33 cms

Pages 12, 13: *Silver Bloom*, MOCA London exhibition view

Pages 14 and 15: *Silver Flux 2*

All images by: Cathal Carey

The exhibition will travel to Vessel at York St John.



www.debcovell.com

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Book design: Maxwell Shirley & EKCO Projects

ISBN: 978-1-912800-22-3

Published 2025

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