

M+B

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE



ANGELA DUFRESNE

*Angela Dufresne as William E. Jones's
Painting Bottom*

January 23 – February 27, 2021

Opening Reception

Saturday, January 23 from 12 to 6 pm

**By appointment*

M+B is pleased to present our first solo exhibition with Angela Dufresne titled *Angela Dufresne as William E Jones' Painting Bottom*. The exhibition features recent paintings Dufresne made in collaboration with the Los Angeles based artist and writer William E. Jones and will be on view from January 23 through February 27, 2021, with an opening reception on Saturday, January 23 from noon to 6 pm.

Dufresne's paintings are expressions of our lived experiences, "the stuff of the world, in dialogue with media, cultural production, and history as performance." In her first Los Angeles exhibition in nine years, Dufresne will present paintings from an ongoing collaborative series born out of her close friendship and confidence with William E. Jones. This exhibition is a portrait of their conversation, of the unabashedly intellectual and queer bonds between Dufresne and Jones.

This series began well before the Covid crisis (the first works were made in the summer of 2017), but really took shape with the explosion of correspondence between the artists during isolation. What began as an irreverent conversation against moralizing, normalizing social trends turned into a perverse and hilarious space of refuge during the pandemic. Dufresne pounced on Jones' ideas, following the richness and courage of his wit, and the expanse of his knowledge with her instincts and passion.

Dufresne and Jones met in the summer of 2017, where they were both faculty at the Skowhegan School of Painting and Sculpture. The two immediately sparked an irreverent, theory-laced, film-infused conversation. Early on, Dufresne invited Jones to pose for a portrait in her studio (*William E Jones or "Why should I care about this?"*, 2017). The conversation sparked from there and has since been maintained by dozens of daily text messages, emails, FaceTime calls, and less clandestine forms such as Jones' commissioned essay for Dufresne's Kemper Museum exhibition catalog, *Making a Scene*. Both have since appeared in each other's work in various forms. Their dialog is based on a call and response that is indicative of the decision-making process for all the works included in this exhibition.

Dufresne and Jones' friendship thrives on inappropriate humor, lack of fear around representation and robust urges. Both are devoted fans of *The Fall*, Bill Nelson, Gena Rowlands as muse par excellence,

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Ulrike Ottinger, Chantel Ackerman, Rainer Werner Fassbinder and Michel Foucault. The artists share a disdain for the normalizing politeness that proliferates over social media and news sources and are critical of this era's aesthetic and moral policing that has significantly rendered most gay culture into a neutered, normalized marketing block. This ongoing body of work is a reminder that artists aren't moralists or nun-priests—sometimes they are whores who love wildly in the mess, the muck and the spooge of the economic terrors of this capitalist hell we're stuck in.

Many of Dufresne's works reference canonical history painting, but upend the narratives that have dominated the genre. The space and figuration in these tableaux vibrate with atomistic energy—constantly in motion, in process, in dynamic transformation. Works such as *Dolly Parton and Lord Byron*, *Stalin's Vagina*, *Neonbible*, *Sea Creature Sex Creature* and *Someone Eating the Head of an Asshole* are created with references generated by Jones and expanded upon by Dufresne. The artists enacted an absurdist process of commissioning works. As the series grew, Jones would send Dufresne written titles, Dufresne inquired when needed regarding Jones' sources and researched his subjects extensively. Dufresne would then generate drawings, after which she and Jones went through an unceremonious process of approving the compositions and later agreed upon when and if the works were complete. As of now there are over 25 works in the series that represent the range of subjects and attitudes Dufresne and Jones have taken on thus far.

Angela Dufresne (b. 1969) was born in Olathe, KS. Solo exhibitions of paintings by Dufresne have been presented at the Hammer Museum, Los Angeles, CA; Kemper Museum of Contemporary Art in Kansas City, MO; and at the Samuel Dorsky Museum of Art at the State University of New York, New Paltz. Her work has also been featured in exhibitions at MoMAPS1, New York, NY; deCordova Sculpture Park and Museum, Lincoln, MA; Portland Museum of Art, Portland, ME; RISD Museum, Providence, RI; National Academy of Arts and Letters, New York, NY; Leslie-Lohman Museum, New York, NY; Brooklyn Academy of Music, Brooklyn, NY; Cleveland Institute of Art, Cleveland, OH; Aldrich Contemporary Art Museum, Ridgefield, CT; and Rose Art Museum, Waltham, MA, among others. The artist is the recipient of numerous awards including the Civitella Ranieri Fellowship; Guggenheim Fellowship; Siena Art Institute Residency; Yaddo Residency; Purchase Award, National Academy of Arts and Letters; Headlands Center for the Arts Resident and Jerome Foundation Fellowship. Dufresne lives and works in Brooklyn, NY.

Location: **M+B**, 612 North Almont Drive, Los Angeles, California 90069
Show Title: *Angela Dufresne: Angela Dufresne as William E. Jones' Painting Bottom*
Exhibition Dates: January 23 – February 27, 2021
Opening Reception: Saturday, January 23, 2021, 12 – 6 pm by appointment
Gallery Hours: Tuesday – Saturday, 10 am – 6 pm, by appointment

For inquiries, please contact info@mbart.com.

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