

SPRING/BREAK Art Show, Los Angeles

New Art Projects presents: The Magical World of Charles Williams

16 February — 20 February 2022

New Art Projects are delighted to return to the third SPRING/BREAK Art Show, Los Angeles with the solo exhibition by Charles Williams entitled 'The Magical World of Charles Williams'. Born in Evanston, Illinois, Charles Williams is a British artist who lives in semi-reclusion in a small town in rural Kent and was a founder member of the notorious Stuckist art movement.

The works included in his show for SPRING/BREAK see a flight from his usual depictions of people and rather focus on animals. These new works try to explain animals through their relationships with us, exploring the belief that our encounters with them are always doomed to be one-sided and that the relationships are metaphorical, allegorical and analogical. This change of direction stems from feeling the need to create a presence without telling a story about the cultural web which surrounds human beings or at least escapes it; relating to class, wealth and privilege. Through the paintings, Williams questions whether he can escape this cultural web and how this new world would look.

Williams makes references to a William Blake drawing called A Vision: The Inspiration of the Poet (Elisha in the Chamber on the Wall) which appears on the page as a vision of a tiny room like a trompe l'oeuil, as if you were seeing the actual room cut into the page with magical goings-on inside. It is this feeling that he wants for these paintings - as if these odd creatures were just there, floating in the space that hovers in front of you.

His work is compiled from a dialogue between him in his studio environment, alongside the stories and ideas that keep him company in both his imagination and memory. This dialogue also references paintings that have left a significant hold on him including Joseph Highmore's 'Mr Oldham And His Guests', Annibale Carracci's 'The Butcher's Shop' and Daniel Stringer's 1776 self-portrait. Writer Evelyn Waugh described his friend Anthony Powell's fictional characters as 'having an effect like an aquarium.' "One after another various specimens swim towards us; we see them clearly, then with a barely perceptible flick of fin or a tail they are off into the murk." This captures the feeling and is like an apt analogy to the act of looking at a Charles Williams painting, it is like looking into a tank, which gives you a view into an alternate reality.

Charles Williams studied at Maidstone College of Art and the Royal Academy Schools. He has been selected for juried group exhibitions including the Royal Academy Summer Exhibition, the Lynn Painter-Stainers Prize and the Threadneedle Prize. Charles Williams has exhibited in solo exhibitions in the UK, Netherlands and United States including 'The Death Of Joe Skipping', Studio 1:1, Shoreditch, London, 2019, 'Louise Bourgeois And Other Stories', Studio 1:1, Shoreditch, London, 2016, 'Memento Mori', Lilly Zeligmann Gallery, Laren, Netherlands 2015, 'Figure & Ground,' _SURFACE Gallery, Shoreditch, London, 2014 and 'Short Stories', Atrium Space, BAT, London, 2012. He has also been included in the John Moore's Painting Prize 2020 at Walker Art Gallery in Liverpool, Portrait Competition at National Portrait Gallery 2020, and Interesting Times at London Metropolitan University (with British Council) 2020.

Williams also writes and has been included in: Turps Painting Magazine: Issues 22 and 23, 2019 & 2020; Devlin, D, and Williams, C. The Lost Paintings Of Herzog Dellafiore, Spiralbound Press, London, 2019; Talking To Louise Bourgeois ed. 2, Spiralbound Press, London, 2019. Susak/Susak, Susak Press, London, 2018; Talking To Louise Bourgeois, Spiralbound Press, London, 2017; He is especially known for two 'how to guides' Charles Williams: Basic Watercolour: How to Paint What You See, Robert Hale, London, 2014; and Charles Williams: Basic Drawing: How to Draw What You See Robert Hale, London, 2011.