

For Immediate Release

SUE WILLIAMS

November 21, 2020 – January 30, 2021
303 Gallery, New York

303 Gallery is proud to present our eleventh exhibition of new paintings by Sue Williams.



Entering her fifth decade of incendiary, uncompromising social critique through painting, Sue Williams is one of America's most quietly and consistently pertinent artists. From her early works as feminist provocatrice, to her middle period as tongue-in-cheek expressionist and her more recent paintings that symphonize critiques of American power structures with formal and chromatic experimentation, Williams has attuned herself to the insidious and unavoidable truths that stick in the craw of our supposedly benevolent universe.

In 2020, the brutal reality of living in the waning days of American Empire has allowed Williams to consider how we might have arrived at this point. Her new paintings are suffused with images of colonial times: disembodied Pilgrim clogs, Tudor cabins, horses outfitted with blinders, the literal nuts & bolts that prefigured the industrial revolution, Betsy Ross as a dinosaur. The suggestion that America is founded on violence and manipulation, that the post-truth, post-Trump, post-COVID world is not an anomaly but a continuation of a status quo built over the past 400 years, doesn't seem far-fetched. A painting titled "Land Of Profit and Coincidence" would resonate equally in 1620 or 2020.

There is a wry and impertinent classicism in Williams' compositions - at first glance, they suggest the kind of maps early land surveyors might use. They also may intimate the strewn wreckage of a natural disaster, here the relentless and sadistic subversion of democracy, the American dream, and E Pluribus Unum. Couched in the archetypal imagery of our noble forefathers, of amber waves of grain and purple mountain majesties, American idyll itself becomes Machiavellian. Williams herself sums it up with two quotes: "The American people are the most brainwashed in the world" (Adam Curtis), and a hopeful note courtesy of Woody Guthrie: "You fascists never gonna win."

Sue Williams was born 1954 in Chicago Heights, Illinois, and lives and works in Brooklyn, New York. Her work is represented in major museums and private collections worldwide, including the Museum of Modern Art, New York; Whitney Museum of American Art, New York; Hirschhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden, Washington D.C.; the Art Institute of Chicago; Sammlung Goetz, Munich. In the fall of 2015, her retrospective monograph was published by JRP|Ringier. Solo shows in public museums include Vienna Secession; IVAM Valencia, Spain; Geneva Center for Contemporary Art, and Staatliche Kunsthalle Baden-Baden, Germany. She participated in 3 consecutive Whitney Biennials, and has been included in the recent group shows *Comic Abstraction*, Museum of Modern Art New York (2007); *Rebelle*, Museum voor Moderne Kunst Arnhem (2009); *Keeping it Real*, Whitechapel Gallery, London (2010); *Figuring Color*, The Institute of Contemporary Art, Boston (2012); *Take it or leave it*, Hammer Museum, Los Angeles (2014); *America is Hard to See*, Whitney Museum of American Art New York (2015); *Painting 2.0*, Museum Brandhorst, Munich (2015-16); and *Everything Is Connected*, Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York (2018).

CONTACT:

For press inquiries, contact Renee Delosh at renee@303gallery.com.

For more information on Sue Williams, contact Kathryn Erdman at kathryn@303gallery.com.