

BLUM & POE

Los Angeles, New York, Tokyo

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Anna Weyant

Loose Screw

Blum & Poe, Los Angeles

March 23 – May 1, 2021

March 3, 2021, Los Angeles—Blum & Poe is pleased to present *Loose Screw*, an exhibition of new paintings by New York-based artist Anna Weyant. This show marks Weyant's first solo presentation with Blum & Poe.

Anna Weyant's figurative paintings and still lifes bring to mind childhood bedtime stories and nursery rhymes. Both familiar and ominous, Weyant's versions of these stories feature young female characters trapped in tragicomic narratives. Their stories take unexpected twists at each turn, illustrating complex personalities and attitudes, and an awareness of life's irony. With round and prominent faces, Weyant's characters echo the mischievous dolls of the famed Madeline children's book series, featuring girls in a Catholic boarding school in Paris. Often autobiographical, Weyant's characters are amusing and endearing, though simultaneously moody and dark.

Weyant's palette prioritizes dark greens and yellows, neutral hues that highlight juxtapositions of humor and solemnity, rebellion and repression. Once an idea emerges, Weyant sketches it on paper in different combinations before settling on a scenario, which she then stage-designs with dolls. Her elaborate and meticulous process culminates in rendering the dramatically lit scenes onto canvas. She references an eclectic range of art historical influences, from seventeenth-century Dutch painters like Gerrit van Honthorst to contemporary artists Lisa Yuskavage and Will Cotton, and pop culture references such as New Yorker cartoons, Bugs Bunny, and the Grinch.

Presenting paintings made in 2020 and 2021, *Loose Screw* is also a meditation on the current state of humanity during the pandemic, dealing with complicated emotions such as fear, desperation, isolation, ignorance, and aggression. Giving its title to the show, one of the central works *Loose Screw* (2020), inspired by Otto Dix's painting *Woman With A Red Hat* (1921) and Ellen Berkenblit's portraits, depicts a woman seated at a bar, looking lonely and unhinged. Fascinated with Dix's depiction of a column emerging from a dark void in the painting's background, Weyant incorporates it into her own composition, approaching the column as a humorous stand-in for another figure—a reflection on what dialogue looks like in the age of self-isolation.

One still life features a slice of bread stuck with a butter knife, a basket of eggs, and dead fish, eyes open, presented on a silver platter; another, a bouquet of white roses, the flowers cut from the stems. Her characters—some presented upside down, others mouth open, appearing to fall down from a wooden staircase, with spilling breasts—accompany these still lifes to tell an eerie and unsettling story in fragmented vignettes. If followed carefully, these scenes come together to form a magical realist narrative.

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Loose Screw invites viewers to a therapy session, a look at episodes and memories from childhood—an exorcism of thoughts and experiences at emotional heights.

Anna Weyant (b. 1995, Calgary, Canada) received her BFA from Rhode Island School of Design, Providence, RI. Weyant's work was the subject of the solo exhibition *Welcome to the Dollhouse* at 56 Henry, New York, NY (2019). Her work has been featured in group exhibitions, including *Life Still*, C L E A R I N G, New York, NY (2020); *Sit Still*, Anna Zorina Gallery, New York, NY (2020); *Humanmakes*, Recharge Foundation, Singapore (2020); *Historicity*, Ochi Projects, Los Angeles, CA (2019); *Of Pursism*, Nina Johnson Gallery, Miami, FL (2018); and *Circles without Breaks*, Local Projects, Long Island City, NY (2017).

About Blum & Poe

Blum & Poe was founded by Timothy Blum and Jeffrey Poe in Santa Monica in September of 1994 as a space to show local and international contemporary art in all media. Blum's extensive experience in the Japanese art world combined with Poe's keen knowledge of emerging artists in Los Angeles, together resulted in an international program of influential artists. Throughout a twenty-six-year history, Blum & Poe has shaped the trajectory of contemporary art by championing artists at all stages of their careers—cultivating the lineages that run between emerging and established practices, and working with artist estates to generate new discourse surrounding historical work.

In 2003 the gallery moved to a larger space in Culver City, and in 2009 Blum & Poe purchased and renovated its current 22,000 square foot complex on La Cienega Boulevard. In this location the gallery has since held museum-caliber surveys, examining the historical work of such movements as the Japanese Mono-ha school (2012); the Korean Dansaekhwa monochrome painters (2014); the European postwar movement CoBrA (2015); Japanese art of 1980s and '90s (2019); a rereading of Brazilian Modernism (2019); and a revisionist take on the 1959 MoMA exhibition, *New Images of Man* (2020). To produce these exhibitions, Blum & Poe has worked with celebrated curators such as Joan Kee, Mika Yoshitake, Sofia Gotti, and Alison M. Gingeras.

In 2014, Blum & Poe opened galleries in New York and Tokyo to focus on intimately scaled projects in tandem with an expansive program of exhibitions, lectures, performance series, screenings, and an annual art book fair at its base in Los Angeles. In 2015, Blum & Poe was certified as an Arts:Earth Partnership (AEP) green art gallery and consequently became one of the first green certified galleries in the United States. Blum & Poe's own publishing division focuses on sharing aspects of its program via original scholarship and accessible media ranging from academic monographs, audio series, magazines, and artists' books. In 2020, the gallery launched Blum & Poe Broadcasts, an online platform showcasing artists' projects in conjunction with physical installations or as standalone digital endeavors.

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