

**William E. Jones**  
**It Only Looks As If It Hurts**  
**The Modern Institute, Aird's Lane**  
**7<sup>th</sup> November 2025 – 14<sup>th</sup> January 2026**  
**Preview: Thursday 6<sup>th</sup> November, 5.30 – 7.30pm**

During the first Trump administration and the Covid lockdown, I was unable to pursue filmmaking, the medium I was trained to practice. I spent those years writing fiction, which had the advantages of being free and private – a field of pure invention. I eventually published three novels between 2019 and 2023. Over the course of the trilogy, the narrator becomes a painter. I followed the path of my fictional character and started painting seriously in 2022, almost immediately after the writing was finished. As a friend of mine put it, I wrote a future for myself, and it came true.

To make the *No Product* series (2010), I scratched and painted 16mm advertising films from the 1960s by hand, frame by frame. This defacement obliterated the objects being sold. Before the digital era, multiple film prints of commercials used to be shipped to television stations for broadcast. Consequently, a large number of copies of these films are still in existence, often in a state of considerable deterioration. At the time of their production these advertisements were seen by millions of spectators. Now they are obsolete, without commercial value, and shadows of their former selves, virtual garbage that is available to be transformed into something else.

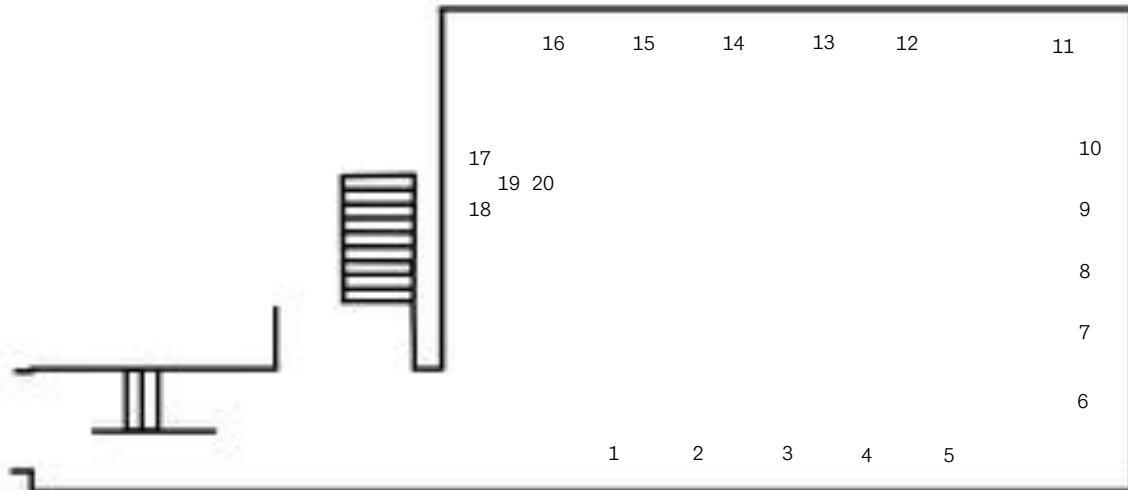
The original inspiration for the *No Product* series was *Traité de bave et d'éternité* (Treatise of Slobber and Eternity), the only film made by Romanian/French writer Isidore Isou, completed in 1951. The film's narration includes a manifesto of what Isou called *cinéma discrepant*, or discrepant cinema. The images of discrepant cinema (usually appropriated from historical sources) are 'chiselled,' to use Isou's word – scratched, distressed, dirtied, splattered with ink, and altered beyond recognition. Isou argued that he did violence to images in order to renew the film medium. In a sense, the *No Product* films, and by extension *Treatise of Slobber and Eternity*, are the precursors of my current painting practice. I make use of appropriated material and distress it through blurring.

-William E. Jones

William E. Jones (b.1962, Canton, Ohio) lives and works in Los Angeles. He is an artist, filmmaker, and writer. His work has been featured in international solo screenings and exhibitions, including: 'Fall Into Ruin and Villa Iolas', The Gund at Kenyon College, Ohio (2023); The Modern Institute, Osborne Street, Glasgow (2017); 'The Long Take - Mariah Garnett and William E. Jones', LACA, Los Angeles (2016); 'Midcentury', Wexner Center for the Arts, Ohio (2014); The Modern Institute, Aird's Lane, Glasgow (2013); 'Artists Film Club: William E. Jones', ICA, London (2012); '"Killed" and Resurrected', Austrian Film Museum, Vienna (2011); 'Modern Monday', Museum of Modern Art, New York (2010); 'Retrospective', Anthology Film Archives, New York (2010); ar/ge kunst, Bolzano (2009); 'Extracted: Recent Films by William E. Jones', Walker Art Center, Minneapolis (2007); 'Retrospective', Tate Modern, London (2005). He has participated in international film festivals and numerous group exhibitions, including at: Museum of Contemporary Art San Diego, San Diego (2022); Kunsthall Charlottenborg, Copenhagen (2019); Museum of Contemporary Art Detroit, Detroit (2013); Palais de Tokyo, Paris (2012); Mathildenhöhe, Darmstadt (2011); MOCA, Los Angeles (2010); Carnegie Museum, Pittsburgh (2010). Jones exhibited at the 12th Istanbul Biennale (2011); the 53rd Venice Biennale (2009); and the Whitney Biennale, Whitney Museum of American Art, New York (2008, 1993).

Jones is the author of the novels *I Didn't See It Coming* (2023), *I Should Have Known Better* (2021) and *I'm Open to Anything* (2019). He has also published the following non-fiction books: *True Homosexual Experiences: Boyd McDonald and 'Straight to Hell'* (2016); *Flesh and the Cosmos* (2014); *Between Artists: Thom Andersen and William E. Jones* (2013); *Halsted Plays Himself* (2011); *Killed: Rejected Images of the Farm Security Administration* (2010); *Tearoom* (2008); *Is It Really So Strange?* (2006).

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|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1 <i>Jackson Pollock</i> , 2025<br>Oil on canvas<br>66.3 x 41.1 x 3.4 cm<br>26 1/8 x 16 1/8 x 1 3/8 in                         | 2 <i>Contortionist</i> , 2025<br>Oil on canvas<br>53.7 x 53.9 x 3.4 cm<br>21 1/8 x 21 1/4 x 1 3/8 in                     | 3 <i>Blessed Boy Getting Fucked</i> , 2025<br>Oil on canvas<br>66.3 x 41.1 x 3.4 cm<br>26 1/8 x 16 1/8 x 1 3/8 in    |
| 4 <i>Jean-Michel Basquiat Napping</i> , 2024<br>Oil on canvas<br>43.4 x 53.9 x 3.4 cm<br>17 1/8 x 21 1/4 x 1 3/8 in            | 5 <i>Male Nudes</i> , 2025<br>Oil on canvas<br>43.6 x 33.5 x 3.4 cm<br>17 1/8 x 13 1/4 x 1 3/8 in                        | 6 <i>Foot Worship</i> , 2024<br>Oil on canvas<br>43.6 x 33.4 x 3.4 cm<br>17 1/8 x 13 1/8 x 1 3/8 in                  |
| 7 <i>After Warhol (Man Bound with Duct Tape)</i> , 2025<br>Oil on canvas<br>33.5 x 43.6 x 3.4 cm<br>13 1/4 x 17 1/8 x 1 3/8 in | 8 <i>Smoke Break</i> , 2025<br>Oil on canvas<br>64.4 x 64.4 x 5.6 cm<br>25 3/8 x 25 3/8 x 2 1/4 in                       | 9 <i>Man Shouting</i> , 2025<br>Oil on canvas<br>28.3 x 23.2 x 3.4 cm<br>11 1/8 x 9 1/8 x 1 3/8 in                   |
| 10 <i>Collar and Duct Tape</i> , 2025<br>Oil on canvas<br>43.5 x 33.5 x 3.4 cm<br>17 1/8 x 13 1/4 x 1 3/8 in                   | 11 <i>Judy Blame</i> , 2024<br>Oil on canvas<br>28.3 x 23.2 x 3.4 cm<br>11 1/8 x 9 1/8 x 1 3/8 in                        | 12 <i>Manacled Man</i> , 2025<br>Oil on canvas<br>53.8 x 53.8 x 3.4 cm<br>21 1/8 x 21 1/8 x 1 3/8 in                 |
| 13 <i>Two Nude Men</i> , 2025<br>Oil on canvas<br>74 x 58.9 x 3.4 cm<br>29 1/8 x 23 1/4 x 1 3/8 in                             | 14 <i>Piet Mondrian</i> , 2025<br>Oil on canvas<br>43.5 x 53.8 x 3.4 cm<br>17 1/8 x 21 1/8 x 1 3/8 in                    | 15 <i>After Sorolla (Seated Youth)</i> , 2025<br>Oil on canvas<br>64.5 x 48.7 x 3.4 cm<br>25 3/8 x 19 1/8 x 1 3/8 in |
| 16 <i>Lucian Freud</i> , 2025<br>Oil on canvas<br>63.9 x 43.7 x 3.4 cm<br>25 1/8 x 17 1/4 x 1 3/8 in                           | 17 <i>No Product, #5 (Steam Room)</i> , 2010<br>Sequence of digital files, colour, silent<br>Duration: 1:27 mins, looped | 18 <i>No Product, #3 (Dogs)</i> , 2010<br>Sequence of digital files, colour, silent<br>Duration: 2:14 mins, looped   |
| 19 <i>No Product, #7 (Dentures)</i> , 2010<br>Sequence of digital files, colour, silent<br>Duration: 1:11 mins, looped         | 20 <i>No Product, #2 (Shower)</i> , 2010<br>Sequence of digital files, colour, silent<br>Duration: 1:12 mins, looped     |                                                                                                                      |