

# rachel uffner



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Felix Art Fair, Los Angeles

Rachel Uffner Gallery, Tower A, Room 1128

Strauss Bourque-LaFrance, Anne Buckwalter, Bernadette Despujols,  
Erica Mao, Elbert Perez, Joshua Petker, and Julia Weist

February 17 - 20, 2022

For Felix Art Fair 2022, Rachel Uffner Gallery is pleased to present new and recent work by Strauss Bourque-LaFrance, Anne Buckwalter, Bernadette Despujols, Erica Mao, Elbert Perez, Joshua Petker, and Julia Weist.

Los Angeles-based artist, **Strauss Bourque LaFrance's** (b. 1983, Poland Spring, ME) work concentrates on the artist's ongoing interest in 'scapes', or difficult to define spaces that are part landscape, part mindscape, and part stage. Inspired by extensive time spent outside, his paintings celebrate the disparate aesthetic relationships, intense color, strange details, and functional applications of paint, which combine to shape any space or environment.

**Anne Buckwalter** (b. 1987, Lancaster, PA) is an artist exploring female identity and the coexistence of contradictory elements. Inspired by the folk art traditions of her Pennsylvania Dutch heritage, her work arranges disparate objects in mysterious rooms and ambiguous spaces. By imagining obscure narratives that embrace paradoxes, her paintings delve into questions about the female body, intimacy, and gender roles.

In her most recent body of work, **Bernadette Despujols** (b. 1986, Barquisimeto, Venezuela) traces the lives of Venezuelan migrants through the act of portraiture. This new series centers around the profound themes of home, migration, and displacement, and is based on photographs the artist has taken of friends and family, or images she's derived from the news. Though photography plays a significant role in Despujols' practice, the artist often combines multiple images or uses her own memory as source material for her paintings. In addition, the highly textured and thick surfaces of Despujols' paintings, combined with her loose reconstructions of space invoke emotional closeness, reminiscent of artists such as Alice Neel or Jenny Saville.

**Erica Mao** (b. 1994, Columbia, MD) is best known for her atmospheric layered paintings that stitch together disparate spaces into alternate realities. Depictions of wild, imaginative landscapes explore the feelings of fear, tension, and suspense by following the path of her characters as they weave their way in and out of the narrative. Mao's current exhibition *Buried and Deep* remains on view at Rachel Uffner Gallery through March 5, 2022.

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**Elbert Perez's** (b. 1991, Brooklyn, NY) oil paintings are characterized by a generous vulnerability, and often develop from difficult emotional spaces. Drawing from a personal vernacular which includes animals with symbolic significance, objects like tools and porcelain figurines, and references from art history, philosophy, and literature, Perez creates allegorical narratives that reflect on the fragility and strength of the human psyche. Perez's forthcoming solo exhibition *Just Living the Dream* will be on view at Rachel Uffner Gallery March 12 - May 7, 2022.

Drawing inspiration from historical works, which are intentionally kept anonymous, **Joshua Petker's** (b. 1979, Los Angeles, CA) paintings rely instead on their ability to evoke the familiar and uncanny, teasing and tantalizing. Rather than draw specific conclusions from these juxtapositions, his work unleashes an exhilarating proliferation of meanings and pictorial puzzles. The artist offers the history of art and visual culture reshuffled — Picabia, Bronzino, soviet era cartoons. Petker makes these his own and the outcome is a timeless dreamlike mix of perspective and emotionality. Petker's forthcoming solo exhibition will be on view at Rachel Uffner Gallery June 25 - August, 2022.

In 2019 **Julia Weist** (b. 1984, New York, NY) was commissioned by the New York City's Department of Cultural Affairs to create an artwork inspired by the Municipal Archives, the historic repository for city records. Weist's resulting series, *Public Record*, includes 11 photographic prints composed of archival images and texts as well as the retrieval slips submitted to access them. Each print focuses on a different theme related to the complex relationship between the city and its artists as documented in bureaucratic records spanning the last century. Weist's work has been collected by prominent institutions across the US, including MoMA, Brooklyn Museum, Art Institute of Chicago, and Los Angeles County Museum of Art, among others. Weist's forthcoming solo exhibition *Governing Body* will be on view at Rachel Uffner Gallery May 14 - June 18, 2022.

Image: Anne Buckwalter, *Soak*, 2021, gouache on panel, 20 x 24 in (50.8 x 61 cm)

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