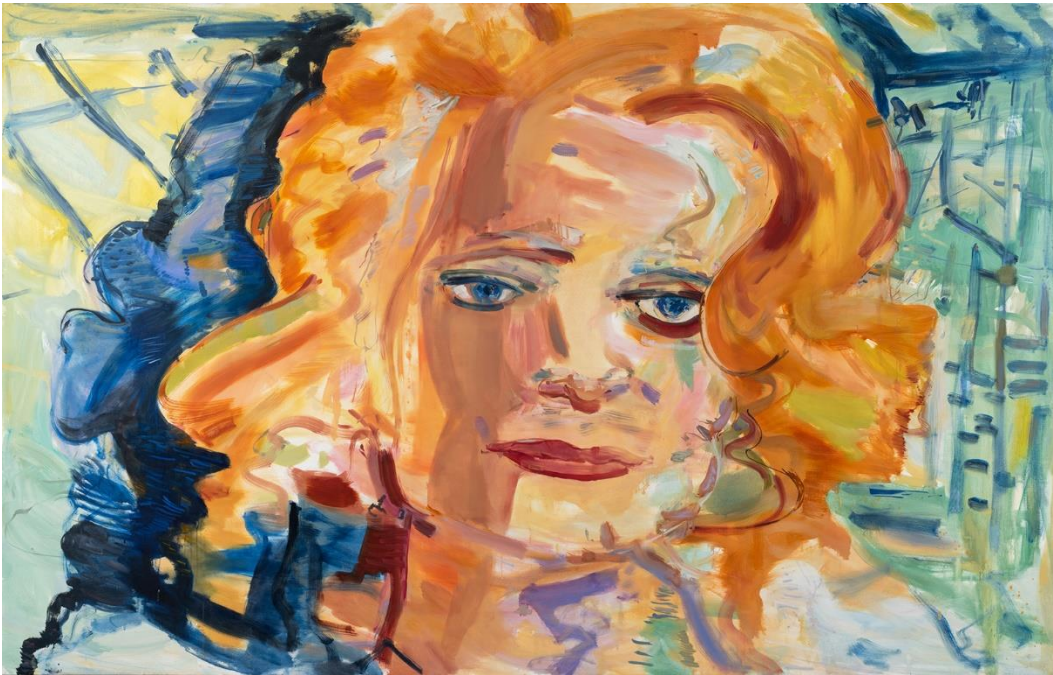


YOSSI MILO GALLERY

For Immediate Release:



Angela Dufresne

Long and Short Shots

January 14 – March 20, 2021

Artist's Reception: Thursday, January 14, 11 AM – 8 PM

Yossi Milo Gallery is pleased to present an exhibition of recent paintings by Angela Dufresne. *Long and Short Shots* will open on Thursday, January 14 with a reception for the artist from 11 AM – 8 PM and will be on view through Saturday, March 20. This is the artist's first exhibition at the gallery.

The paintings presented in Dufresne's *Long and Short Shots* are situated in the contradictory, sometimes sympathetic spaces, where individuality and community are forged. Closer to the way cinema functions than photography, painting, or printmaking—space is constantly in motion, in process, in dynamic transformation. Dufresne uses her painterly *long shot* to produce vast tableaux that vibrate with atomistic energy in which figure and atmosphere have equivalent force. However, these works also interrogate the social fabric that lurks outside the frame. Her bawdy, defiant figures, often depicted in *close-up shots*, relish the ambivalent spaces that exist in between the utopian diegesis of the canvas and the unknown, more abstract, off-screen sites of possible conflicts or risk-laden adventures. The construct of desire is central—to be wanted, to be recognized, to be taken. The internal emotional conditions of the subjects depend on, as well as inform, the swelling rise of group pathos and, often, unchecked erotic play.

Depictions of raucous crowds began to appear in Dufresne's 2014 paintings, increasing in number and intensity in 2017 after the 2016 U.S. election. As the COVID crisis struck, such works felt all the more prescient and their production accelerated. The viral attack upon individuals by the complex interfacing of diverse groups of people in, especially, urbanized areas has taken a central position in Dufresne's work. She develops fantasies of polymorphic utopias in which scenes of sociality and interconnectivity thrive, but also points to the current vulnerability of navigating one's health/subjectivity inside the vortexes of collective existence.

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Many of Dufresne's works reference canonical history painting, but upend or make an inventive travesty of heroic narratives that have dominated the genre. Bodies frolic in promiscuous and cross-species fraternity—half psychedelic, cinematic dream-scape; half grandiose, mythical ritual. On rooftops, people keep company with skeletal apparitions and nude children piss on adults who catch the golden showers below, as if they were precious liquids, in terra-cotta bowls. In a grand opera hall, hundreds of naked people (some partially clothed) and hybrid beasts romp with abandon in and out of each other's sensual circuits.

Dufresne makes her scapes shimmer and move incessantly. Viewers of her large-scale, "long-shot" paintings are encouraged to take the position of a camera, panning across the canvas in order to catch all the glorious, sometimes hidden details, such as the sudden appearance of a James Ensor-like mask, with scary horns and a grimace or, tucked away in a thick crowd, a tiny scene of a monkey riding a dog, Kentucky Derby style. Erotic body parts, like so many prosthetic devices, pepper the canvas: fiery nipples; flying phalluses; muscular buttocks; exposed, sometimes non-gender specific genitals; beckoning eyes and hands. But we glimpse them as if through a zoetrope, flickering past us in phases of motion as we travel across the projection screen of Dufresne's quixotic mind. Like her favorite filmmakers Cassavetes, Fassbinder or Pasolini, Dufresne does not distinguish between "movie" or "theater" or "natural" setting. Cassavetes's hall-of-mirrors technique — in which he conflates acting and real life, as well as dramatic sets with banal, everyday street scenes (shooting from-the-hip, directly on site)—is a method Dufresne also employs.

Dufresne couples her "long shots" with equally important close-ups, jump cuts, and wipes. A detailed study of faces began in Dufresne's practice in 2000 and developed with special interest in the kinesthetic structures employed by actors in the films of Cassavetes. Gena Rowlands, whose roles in *Opening Night*, *Faces* and *Gloria* were portrayed through incessant emotional and physical movement, was and continues to be a particular focus. Dufresne's close-ups of Rowlands' face do not deliver any kind of emotional truth, per se, but an uncomfortable, awkward signal (caught in a momentary close-up) that one emotional state is about to collapse into another. This same principle is executed in *Witch* (2019), *Birth* (2020), and *Headshot* (2020) in which the constant state of emotional becoming and instability are merged with the longer shots of extending color that permeate each face and its surrounding atmosphere.

Solo exhibitions of paintings by Angela Dufresne have been presented at the Hammer Museum, Los Angeles, CA; Kemper Museum of Contemporary Art in Kansas City, MO; and at the Samuel Dorsky Museum of Art at the State University of New York, New Paltz. Her works have been on display in exhibitions at the MoMA PS1, New York, NY; deCordova Sculpture Park and Museum, Lincoln, MA; Portland Museum of Art, Portland, ME; RISD Museum, Providence, RI; American Academy of Arts and Letters, New York, NY; Leslie-Lohman Museum, New York, NY; Brooklyn Academy of Music, Brooklyn, NY; Cleveland Institute of Art, Cleveland, OH; Aldrich Contemporary Art Museum, Ridgefield, CT; and Rose Art Museum, Waltham, MA, among others. The artist is the recipient of numerous awards, including the Civitella Ranieri Fellowship; Guggenheim Fellowship; Siena Art Institute Residency; Yaddo Residency; Headlands Center for the Arts Resident and Jerome Foundation Fellowship. Dufresne (American, b. 1969) grew up in Olathe, Kansas. She currently lives and works in Brooklyn, NY.

—Text by Melissa Ragona

For more information, please contact Alissa Schoenfeld at 212.414.0370 or alissa@yossimilo.com, or visit the gallery's website at www.yossimilo.com.

Image: *Gena Rowlands*, 2019. Oil on canvas. 84" x 132" (213.5 x 335 cm).