

Sam Bornstein

*Astral Blue*

Opening July 8, 2023

Embajada is pleased to present *Astral Blue*, artist Sam Bornstein's first solo exhibition with the gallery opening July 8, 2023.



The New York based painter assembles a cast of real and imagined characters to perform in dreamlike vignettes inspired in part by a recent trip to San Juan. With transportive images of window gazing, miraculous transportation, and musicians en route to the ultimate gig, the artist reflects the colors of Puerto Rico's vast skies and painted architecture with his signature diaphanous reverie. *Astral Blue* is the blue of the stars and heavens, but also the blue of the imagination, suggesting a spiritual realm.

Drawing on his background as a musician, and contemplating various diasporic traditions, Bornstein is interested in the sensation of being in two places at once and spiritual travel, revealing a collage of cultural influences. The paintings likewise mix real and imagined people, as well as figures from Ashkenazi and classical mythology and folklore, among images from the artists' Puerto Rican and New York sketches.

In small, intimate paintings, the open sky and window serves as a portal of mental and spiritual travel, merging the exterior with the interior, as well as invented, observed, and recalled imagery. The paintings themselves evolve from layers of abstraction, with images emerging from color and light, a process that the artist developed over time to match his process of writing and jamming with fellow musicians, where it's common to fuse predetermined figures with improvisation and chance.

Sam Bornstein (b. 1983, New York City) received his MFA from Hunter College in 2017 and BFA from Bard College in 2005. Bornstein's layered figurative paintings evoke an invented world that reflects contemporary life and personal narratives through from the filter of the imagined. Bornstein had his first solo show at Charles Moffett in New York in 2018, which was highlighted in ARTFORUM Critics' Picks. In 2022, Charles Moffett presented his second solo show at the gallery. He has exhibited nationally and internationally since 2005 in galleries and institutions, including 8 Salon, Hamburg, Germany (2023, 2022), Underdonk, Brooklyn (2020, 2018), Bass & Reiner, San Francisco (2020, 2018), Galerie Moderne Silkeborg, Silkeborg, Denmark (2018), Calico, Brooklyn (2017). Bornstein lives and works in New York and is represented by Charles Moffett Gallery in New York.