

Jessica Silverman Announces *Luke Butler: Overture, Melding Painting and the History of Cinema, Opening September 16, 2022*



Luke Butler, *Location IV*, 2020. Photo: Eric Ruby. Courtesy of the artist and Jessica Silverman, San Francisco.

SAN FRANCISCO, CA (August 2, 2022) – Jessica Silverman is pleased to announce “Overture,” the fourth solo exhibition at the gallery by San Francisco-based artist, Luke Butler, opening September 16 and on view through October 29, 2022. In his newest works, Butler probes his long-held affinity for 20th century film and television through a series of exquisitely detailed acrylic paintings of San Francisco cityscapes and shorelines, all made between 2019 and 2022.

With distinctive chromatic tones and cinematic framing, Butler creates moments of suspense and anticipation—a marked departure from earlier works that focused on endings. Indeed, the exhibition title alludes to this shift, borrowing from the text in two paintings wherein, “Overture,” rendered in the artist’s signature bold serif, overlays his realist imagery of condensing clouds and crashing waves.

Silvery black-and-white cityscapes cast the artist as the protagonist. *The Artist* (2019) shows a dead-end street juxtaposed with text reading "Luke Butler in The Artist," as if taken from the opening of a film noir. Cameo appearances by the artist and his peers come forth in the works, *Skylark* (2022), riffing on the 1967 Steve McQueen film *Bullitt* and its famous car chase sequence, as well as *Location III* (2020), in which the artist crosses a rainy street alongside a dump truck in San Francisco.



Luke Butler, "The Artist," 2019. Photo: Eric Ruby. Courtesy of the artist and Jessica Silverman, San Francisco.

Location V (2020) and *In Color V* (2021) take birds-eye-views of San Francisco's iconic architecture. Framed as if the viewer is looking from a top-floor window to the streets and buildings below, the paintings recall film scenes like those in Alfred Hitchcock's 1958 *Vertigo*. Depicted in color—the city's recognizable creamy taupes and cool grays—these works, along with the vibrantly painted *A Color Picture III* and *IV* (2021 and 2022) speak to Butler's fascination with the emergence of color television in the mid-20th century.

These new works are the result of an intensive, frequently monthslong process by the artist involving original research, photography, and documentation that he combines and collages with film or television stills. In what Butler refers to as "plastic realism," the process plays with truth and fiction, exploring the boundary between reality and picture. Like Hockney's

considerations of realism and illusion, Butler's paintings sample from direct experiences as well as what is imagined, drawn up, or staged. They reflect the self-narratives we create to understand the world and our place within it. "Overture" takes pop culture's film, television, and media as its center of gravity and brilliantly destabilizes a singular account of what is virtual, actual or neither.

ABOUT LUKE BUTLER

Luke Butler (b. 1971, San Francisco) has an MFA from California College of the Arts and a BFA from the Cooper Union. His work is in the permanent collections of the Berkeley Art Museum; Crystal Bridges Museum of American Art, AK; Museum of Contemporary Art San Diego; and Norton Museum of Art, Miami. His work has been included in group exhibitions at the Berkeley Art Museum, The FLAG Foundation Art Foundation, NY; Minnesota Street Project, San Francisco; Orange County Museum of Art, CA; Crystal Bridges Museum; and the ICA Boston, among others. Butler lives and works in San Francisco.

ABOUT JESSICA SILVERMAN

Jessica Silverman is an ambitious, innovative, and internationally renowned contemporary art gallery with a reputation for curating compelling exhibitions, building artists' careers, and collaborating with collectors who are keen on positive provenance.

Silverman founded her eponymous gallery in 2008 after obtaining an MA in Curatorial Practice from San Francisco's California College of the Arts on the heels of a BFA from Otis College in Los Angeles. Silverman sat on the San Francisco Arts Commission for nine years. She is a founding member of 8-bridges, a member of the Art Dealers Association of America (ADAA) and a member of the Selection Committee of Expo Chicago. The gallery represents prominent Californian and international artists at all stages of their careers. Works by the gallery's artists have been acquired by museums all over the world including Tate (London), Centre Pompidou (Paris), Reina Sofia (Madrid), MoMA (New York), MCA Chicago, Art Institute of Chicago, the Dallas Museum of Art, the Nasher Sculpture Center (Dallas), Los Angeles County Museum of Art, National Gallery of Canada, the Art Gallery of Ontario, not to mention SFMOMA and the De Young Museum (San Francisco).

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