

Robin F. Williams

*Out Lookers*

October 15 - November 13, 2021



P·P·O·W is pleased to present Robin F. Williams' *Out Lookers*. Known for her large-scale paintings of stylized, sentient, yet ambiguously generated female figures, Williams employs a variety of techniques, including oil, airbrush, poured paint, marbling, and staining of raw canvas to create deeply textured and complexly constructed paintings. Building upon previous visual investigations into the coded narratives of American media, *Out Lookers* extends Williams' oeuvre into the supernatural with a new cohort of ghosts, cryptids, witches, and trolls. The paranormal subjects on view in this exhibition serve as prisms, casting light on a spectrum of female identities that contemporary society has all too often mistrusted, scapegoated, and demonized.

Combining a masterful technical understanding with an innate sense of curiosity, Williams imbues her atmospheric portraits with a distinctly contemporary sensibility. Williams draws much of her inspiration from social media platforms such as Instagram, TikTok and YouTube. This new frontier for what Williams defines as contemporary folk art enriches her already layered approach to painting. Using an assortment of materials, including Flashe vinyl paint which gives a matte effect often used for industrial signage, Williams fuses practices from these social media channels with references to early modernism, pop culture, advertising, and cinema, to challenge the systemic conventions around representations of women.

Ebbing between abstraction and figuration, Williams subverts the conventional figure-ground relationship to transform restrictive female tropes into expanded matrices that transcend the body. Williams' assembly of apparitions reclaim their consciousness, gazing outward at the viewer, they do not seek to be known. Williams explains, "Their bodies are windows into systems. They are unsolid and can't be understood or blamed, but instead reveal something bigger than themselves." In *Out Lookers*, Williams explores the flawed, malicious, menacing, and wild female characters from B-movies and cult classics which tend to argue that the flaws of women are inherently more dangerous than the flaws of men. "They make tidy stories out of this belief," Williams asserts. "My paintings are looking to untidy those stories and test these cultural contradictions."

Subverting these cultural contradictions and fundamentalist dichotomies surrounding women's bodies, Williams also examines the parallels between the policing of non-binary identities and the rampant destruction of our broader ecological body. Aligning with Williams commitment to environmental justice, *Out Lookers* marks the first carbon-conscious exhibition at P·P·O·W. As part of ongoing efforts to support Galleries Commit and a climate-conscious future, P·P·O·W will track the carbon output throughout the planning and execution of Williams' *Out Lookers*. At the end of the show, the gallery will make a donation to permanent, old-growth forest conservation with [Galleries Commit x Art to Acres](#). To learn more about Galleries Commit, and sustainable gallery practices please [click here](#).

In conjunction with *Out Lookers*, Pace Prints will present *Final Resting Face*, Williams' first exhibition of fine art prints. These exhibitions will be accompanied by a collaboratively produced monograph featuring an essay by acclaimed author Carmen Maria Machado as well as a dialogue between Williams and Pace Editions' master intaglio printer Sarah Carpenter.

Robin F. Williams (b. 1984) received her BFA from the Rhode Island School of Design. Williams has presented solo exhibitions at P·P·O·W, New York, NY; Various Small Fires, Los Angeles, CA; Bard College at Simon's Rock, Great Barrington, MA; and Jack the Pelican Presents, Brooklyn, NY. Her work has been featured in numerous group exhibitions nationally and internationally including *Present Generations*, Columbus Museum of Art, Columbus, OH; *Bitter Nest*, Galerie Perrotin, Tokyo, Japan; *XENIA: Crossroads in Portrait Painting*, Marianne Boesky Gallery, New York, NY; *Nicolas Party: Pastel*, Flag Art Foundation, New York, NY; SEED, curated by Yvonne Force, Paul Kasmin Gallery, New York, NY; and more. Her work is currently in the permanent collections of the Brooklyn Museum, Brooklyn, NY; Collection Majudia, Montreal, Canada; Columbus Museum of Art, Columbus, OH; Institute of Contemporary Art, Miami, FL; X Museum, Beijing, China; among others.