

MARIANNE BOESKY GALLERY
NEW YORK | ASPEN

**Suzanne McClelland to Present *PLAYLIST*,
the Artist's First Solo Exhibition at Marianne Boesky Gallery**

**On View May 4 – June 5, 2021
507 West 24th Street, New York**



Suzanne McClelland, *PLAYLIST: Diamanda Galas with Junglepussy*, 2021. Acrylic, oil and graphite on linen, 59 x 49 inches.
Courtesy of the artist and Marianne Boesky Gallery, New York and Aspen. © Suzanne McClelland.

New York City (April 21, 2021) – Marianne Boesky Gallery is pleased to present *PLAYLIST*, Suzanne McClelland's first solo exhibition at the gallery, on view May 4 – June 5, 2021 at 507 West 24th Street in New York. For the past 30 years, Suzanne McClelland's paintings, drawing, collaborative unbound books, multiples and prints have explored the visual, linguistic and acoustic dimensions of language.

In her newest series of paintings, *Playlist*, McClelland approaches language through music, organizing lists and conjoining names of musicians to suggest language as a form of portraiture. Performers are paired based on aural affinities in their music, dissolving the factors of genre or category. McClelland approaches text as abstraction bringing to light the porous nature of identity. Since names are inherently abstract, and in this case proper names, they are only imbued with meaning once attached to a person. McClelland's interest lies in parsing the gap between a name and its physicality; searching for what a

name represents. The canvases become a place for inscription, akin to graffiti, a map, or initials carved into a tree. The materiality of McClelland's paintings echoes this gesture as she employs polymers, dry pigments, archival glitter, and graphite to excavate meaning within their surface.

Reflecting back on her early experience as a photographer and the chemistry in the dark room, McClelland's material dissection similarly allows the final image to come into view almost magically as her framed subject emerges. The visual qualities of the names themselves create formal relationships within the canvas, asking the traditional structure of the grid to dissolve, shifting to accommodate pure color and the form of the letters. On the backs of the canvases, McClelland has collaged a collection of photographs of each performer, providing another set of data to inform the abstraction while relegating any direct representation.

The very act of creating a playlist is a personal one, and here, McClelland posits playlists as a form of both personal and collective memoir. In offering a list of names, the artist invites the viewer to bring their own memories and experiences to the work, suggesting a shared history built through music. Through recalling her own memories of musical history, abstracted on the canvas, McClelland implies a greater reverence for aural history, naming names, noting who listened to whom, and the performers' recording history.

About Suzanne McClelland

McClelland participated in the 1993 and 2014 Whitney Biennials where she worked closely with Education/Outreach programs. She has been the subject of solo museum presentations at The Aldrich Museum of Contemporary Art, The University of Virginia Museum of Art, and The Whitney Museum of American Art. Awards and residencies include the Guggenheim Fellowship (2019), Anonymous Was A Woman, Nancy Graves Foundation, PS1-Clocktower, American Academy of Arts and Letters, Lab Grant Residency-Dieu Donne Papermill, Urban Glass, and residencies in Stykkisholmur, Iceland, and Troedsson Villa, Nikko, Japan. McClelland is deeply invested in her work as a long-standing educator and visiting artist at Rutgers University, Columbia University, Yale University, MICA, SVA and Cooper Union and served on the board of Skowhegan School of Painting and Sculpture.

About Marianne Boesky Gallery

Since its inception in 1996, Marianne Boesky Gallery has represented and supported the work of emerging and established contemporary international artists of all media. In its first decade, the gallery was instrumental in launching the careers of major artists through an innovative exhibition program; and in 2016, the gallery expanded its flagship location to its adjacent space on West 24th Street. Now, the gallery continues to actively represent many significant artists such as Ghada Amer, Donald Moffett, Sanford Biggers and Frank Stella, among others.

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the gallery has transitioned its 509 layout in Chelsea into four gallery spaces to allow for regularly rotating presentations that can be experienced in a more intimate and semiprivate manner. The 507 gallery footprint continues to host ambitious solo and group shows open to the public that highlight the dynamic narratives and parallels across artist, media, and theme. Boesky West, opened in 2017 in Aspen, CO also continues its rotating exhibition program showing both gallery

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artists and artists invited to present special projects. These recent changes highlight the gallery's ongoing experimentation with space and architecture as well as its continued commitment to the health and safety of its dynamic roster of artists and dedicated audience from around the globe.

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