



## JAMIE ADAMS

### *Dollhouse*

September 9 – October 15, 2022

My figurative works are largely autobiographical, functioning as personal memoir. Loosely based on recollections, dreams, and aspirations, I think of them as visual correspondences or notes to family, friends, and intimates. In this respect, the *jeannie* paintings (2005-2012) are love letters to my wife. The *blondie bubbas* (2016-) are notes to my father as I re-imagine his youth. The most recent series, *Dollhouse*, are reflections of family life past, present, and future.

My paintings and drawings often develop as a discrete group or series. This process happens organically as a conceptual framework, like a group of storyboard frames or actors on the stage collectively forming a narrative thread. With these ideas, my artistic inclinations continue to lead me to the solitary processes of drawing and painting, and the strategy of figuration. Media forms such as these, embodying the trace of touch and sensual materiality, seem suitable conveyers of love, desire, and loss.

My painted characters probe contemporary notions of identity. They're rather like portrait projections fashioned out of sculptural maquettes and borrowed imagery reminiscent of cinematic culture of the 1950s and 60s, other paintings, photos, or vintage books. I construct them to consciously mirror cinematic effects—its projective

nature, image-flow, use of montage, and celebrity personae—as a way to insinuate a complication or disturbance. Increasingly their intrusion or mediation affect a redressing of the figural form. *Misfitted men* (2003-2005), an earlier series, proposes the portrait dispersed across a time-line. From the *blondie bubba* series, *bubba green shirt* (2016) exhibits scale shifts referencing art history and cinematic montage to create a fractured figure. The body as multiplicity is mobilized. Feigning coherency, it exhibits conditions of flux, transience, or transformation.

For me the practice of painting is inherently an intimate act, as self-reflexive to the body as any form of expression. From wooden strainer to canvas substrate to the properties of paint, the bones, buoyancy of skin, and epidermal layers are easily referenced. The delivery of paint to canvas in layers of glaze and scumbling—especially for the figurative painter—is not unlike the way we apply viscous creams and oily lotions to our own bodies. I think about how the manipulation of paint over a surface take this bodily evocation even further...with stroking, rubbing, smearing, scraping. Paint dispersion or viscosity problems and surface irregularities call to mind issues of body maintenance—caking, cracking, peeling, leaking, sinking in, etc...

In painting the body is the mind's tool for the production of ideas. The presence of the body and its active role as maker is the constant. The touch, the reach, activates the body's presence. The most basic instrument, the brush (the long finger), is simply a means of extension, the point of contact, making visible the traces of the painter. For me painting's expressive potency is bound up in its bi-locations—the complication intrinsically bound within the painting's illusion and it's own material *presence*. In my view this is not unlike the function of other kinds of power images or objects in the world meant to embody some significant individual, event, or belief, such as the death mask, or the physical remains preserved in Catholic reliquaries, or Buddhist stupa.