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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Kim Dingle
OPEN CALL FOR BLUE LEMONS
6 January – 25 February 2023

Sperone Westwater is pleased to present *OPEN CALL FOR BLUE LEMONS*, Kim Dingle's sixth solo exhibition at the gallery. In her new series of paintings, Dingle's longstanding alter ego, Priss, thinks she is now old enough to audition for fashion week. Demure and ferocious, dolled up in her classic frilly white dresses, Priss twists her limbs and contorts her torso into runway-ready poses. Dingle's paintings pivot sharply on the contrast between the prim children she depicts and the adult behavior in which they engage—in this case, suggestive and provocative gestures of the body learned from the fashion industry's commodification of the female figure. The subjects are vehicles for self-portraiture, whether of Dingle herself or in the guise of her partner, the Haitian-born Aude Charles, who as a former model and modeling instructor advised each pose in this series.

Dingle's forty-part diptych, *Studies for the Last Supper at Fatty's (Wine Bar for Children)*, 2007, situates her *Blue Lemon* paintings within the context of her practice. Featured in the Modern Art Museum of Fort Worth's "Women Painting Women" exhibition in 2022, this work recalls Leonardo da Vinci's famous painting, except that Dingle's depicts mischievous, unsupervised little girls bellied up to a wine bar, their ruffled underskirts facing the viewer. These tots are perhaps younger than the fashionistas in her newer series—not yet old enough to drink, but with a thirst for mischief and Verdicchio (hand-painted bottles are installed nearby). This work references Dingle's years in the restaurant business—she and Charles inexplicably opened Fatty's & Co in the middle of her Los Angeles studio from 2000-2013, and Dingle later opened a "Wine Bar for Children," an installation with actual wine sales at Coagula Curatorial, Los Angeles (for which she was never arrested). With their absurd yet psychologically plausible scenarios, the works in this exhibition summon the monstrous psychological states associated with childhood. They testify to the difficulty of representing the complex and contradictory emotions universal to the experience of youth and to the identity-driven world children grow to inhabit. Peter Schjeldahl wrote: "Dingle babies don't cry. They are too busy enjoying the license of being pre-moral—not the same thing as innocent, as some geese that a gang of them insouciantly murder have reason to note."

Born in 1951 in Pomona, California, Kim Dingle lives and works in Los Angeles. She earned a BFA from California State University, Los Angeles (1988) and an MFA from Claremont Graduate School (1990). Dingle was included in the 2000 Whitney Biennial, and her work appeared in the major group exhibition "Sunshine and Noir: Art in L. A., 1960-1997," at the Louisiana Museum of Modern Art, Humlebaek, Denmark (1997), which traveled to several institutions in Europe and the United States. Among public collections owning her work are the Denver Museum of Contemporary Art; LACMA; MOCA Los Angeles; Museum of Contemporary Art, San Diego; National Gallery of Art, Washington D.C.; SFMOMA; Seattle Museum of Contemporary Art; Smithsonian American Art Museum, Washington D.C.; and the Whitney Museum of American Art. Dingle had her first solo show at Sperone Westwater in 1998 and subsequent exhibitions in 2000, 2007, 2012, and 2018.

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