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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Sarah Martin-Nuss

Pouring Water Into Water

July 11 - August 16, 2024

Opening Reception: Thursday, July 11, 6 - 8pm

Rachel Uffner Gallery is pleased to present *Pouring Water into Water*, Sarah Martin-Nuss' first solo exhibition at the gallery. The exhibition will be on view from July 11 through August 16, 2024. An opening reception will take place on Thursday, July 11 from 6–8pm.

To look upon Martin-Nuss' lyrical, crepuscular abstractions is to be conscious of constant transmutation – the unraveling of a ribbon of paint, the flicker of a speckle of oil pastel, the myriad of lines, marks, and colors in unceasing states of becoming. The consequence of pouring water into water is immeasurable – will it be a drop or a cascade? Will it create a ripple or a splash? Will it hurl and plunder like the tempests in Turner's seascapes? In the same way, Martin-Nuss' mark-making is a generative act of infinite variations. Each brushstroke is open-ended, emerging anew amidst various environments, colors, and textures, reimagining itself as it builds and transforms the worlds it enters. Like drops of water into a vessel, a single mark in her paintings simultaneously adds to and disappears into the canvas.

To borrow the language of the land, Martin-Nuss' waterscapes are atypical ecosystems, mined from the artist's memories of growing up on the Texas Gulf Coast, where marshes line coastal bays. Expansive passages of aqua and green are strewn with gestural scrawls of oil pastel, hinting of reeds in wetlands and the glassy, sun-dappled surface of still water. Martin-Nuss' fascination with water originates in the distinctive environment of her hometown but is nurtured by the medium's mutability and generative nature. Water is capable of hosting life on every scale, from microorganisms dwelling in shallow lagoons to marine megafauna. Martin-Nuss' sweeping abstractions remind us, through expressive washes of smoky color and exquisite renderings of light, that there is no such thing as empty space.

The artist's process of painting is often led by her hands, an approach she likens to choreography that animates the surface of her canvas. What follows is an iterative exercise of layering, flattening, erasing, and remaking, a method of activation through which landscape comes alive and painting takes on the labor of a living organism. The pulsing dynamism of Martin-Nuss' abstractions can be felt particularly strongly in *Are We Holding?*, where richly-hued moments of calm are punctuated by bursts of feverish mark-making. Pale scratches of cross-hatched lines in the upper left corner evoke pixels and digital grids, alluding to landscapes beyond the physical.

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In addition to the paintings, the exhibition presents a collection of Martin-Nuss' works on paper, which provide further insight into the artist's multidisciplinary practice. The drawings are both studies and independent works, serving primarily as platforms for experimentation. The miniature, notecard size allows Martin-Nuss to execute them on the go, articulating her unique visual language with an instinct-driven speed and immediacy. The drawings' varying densities and calligraphic line-work are echoed in her larger works on canvas, which incorporate similar techniques to create texture and dimensionality.

A student of posthumanist writing, Martin-Nuss deconstructs theories of anthropocentrism and hierarchies of life, pursuing instead a reimagination of the world order as a single, interwoven plane. To that end, each painting dissolves the spatial relationship between foreground and background, figuration and abstraction, natural and technological, absorbed wholly in the ecologies of their own metamorphosis, growth, and decay.

Sarah Martin-Nuss (b. 1992, Corpus Christi, Texas) is an interdisciplinary artist working across painting, drawing, performance and sound. Her work draws inspiration from a wide spectrum, spanning biological systems, philosophical post-humanist thought, and the intricate web of ecological relationships. Martin-Nuss received her BA in Fine Art and English Literature from Austin College in 2014, and her MFA in Painting and Drawing from Pratt Institute in 2024. Martin-Nuss also studied visual arts at College International De Cannes, and performance, sound and video art at the School of Visual Arts in New York. She is a producer, songwriter and lead vocalist for the experimental pop duo Dancing In Tongues. In 2021, Martin-Nuss was commissioned to create a sound installation, in collaboration with Katya Grokhovsky, for Fantasyland at Smack Mellon, Brooklyn, New York. Her recent group exhibitions include *What in the World*, at The Steuben Gallery, Brooklyn, New York (2023); and *Creative Distancing*, at Art Museum of South Texas, Corpus Christi, Texas (2020). Her recent solo exhibitions include *Open Systems*, at Prince & Wooster, New York, New York (2023). Martin-Nuss lives and works in Brooklyn, New York.

Image: Sarah Martin-Nuss, *Pouring Water Into Water*, oil and oil pastel on canvas, 2024, 66 x 56 in (167.64 x 142.24 cm)

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