

**PRESS RELEASE**

# **Thank You Universe, May I Delight You**

September 27 – November 8, 2025



Tess Jenkins, No Name, 2025

DON'T LOOK Projects is pleased to present Thank You Universe, May I Delight You, a solo exhibition by Tess Jenkins, whose work offers an ecstatic celebration of the chaotic, confusing, and paradoxical nature of the human experience. Through a joyfully excessive and texturally rich practice, Jenkins presents paintings that are the remnants of an intuitive and improvised process. Her work explores the profound and discrepant experience of living as souls condensed into temporary human forms.

Jenkins's process is one of obsessive material exploration, unfolding over months, and sometimes years. The surfaces of her paintings are built with thick layers of oil stick, which she scrapes, smears, and massages by hand. She buries surfaces in glitter, embeds them with confetti, and floods them with washes of paint, working and reworking the materials until they begin to achieve a living presence. These faces, at once comic and grotesque, leak memory and residue, recalling James Ensor's masks and Jean Dubuffet's raw hand while speaking to lineages of glam materiality from Lynda Benglis' Sparkle Knots of the 1970s, through Chris Ofili's paintings in the 1990s. Glitter here is not decoration but phenomenological device: light and the viewer's movement activate the surface, linking Jenkins' Mojave studio to the perceptual experiments of California's Light and Space artists. What results are enigmatic icons for a contemporary psyche—objects that oscillate between hilarity and horror, ornament and wound, intimacy and spectacle.

As Annie Dillard writes in *Holy the Firm*, "we are souls sprinkled at random like salt into time and dissolved here... The joke part is we forget it... We wake up a hundred times a day and laugh."

In her paintings, Jenkins taps into this very spirit, embracing the material and the metaphysical to create works that are both a joke and a sincere expression of delight. Thank You Universe, May I Delight You invites viewers to find joy in the messy, contradictory, and beautiful reality we've been given.

DON'T LOOK Projects is a contemporary art gallery in Los Angeles, CA. For press inquiries, contact [gallery@dontlookprojects.com](mailto:gallery@dontlookprojects.com)

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