

LUIS DE JESUS LOS ANGELES

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MELISSA HUDDLESTON

Huddleston's paintings are steeped in historic print and papermaking processes and suffused with her ruminations on primordial origins and the sublime happenstance of life. Through an experimental monoprint-style method, paint is not applied, but transferred, through marbling water baths to achieve layered organic shapes, swooshes, and swirls of opalescent color floating with mysterious levity. In these paintings, single-celled organisms and humanoid amphibians encounter each other in a luminous swamp. In ancient times, terrestrial life emerged capriciously through swamps. The imagery in the paintings teems with procreation, decay, mutation, sex, death, and the magnificent messiness of life. Huddleston's processes are informed by the cultural, social, and feminist histories of works on paper and its previous segmentation from fine arts materials, with associations to minor arts, craft, and ephemera. Paper marbling is commonly connected with ancient Asian and European scriptural arts as well as the Japanese art of *suminagashi*. Huddleston's paintings intersect aspects of these traditions with the idiom of modernist abstract expressionist painting.

Melissa Huddleston (b.1981, Elm Springs, AR) lives and works in Los Angeles. She received her B.A. from Western Washington University, Bellingham, WA, where she studied painting under Ed Bereal. Huddleston is a member of the board at Monte Vista Projects and works as an Assistant Conservator at the Getty Research Institute. Huddleston's *The Beautician* was featured in a solo exhibition at the Los Angeles Contemporary Archive (LACE) in April 2016. Group exhibitions include *Chapters: Book Arts in Southern California* at the Craft Folk Art Museum in Los Angeles, *The Collectivists* at the Brand Gallery and an artist residency at the Sam and Adele Golden Foundation for the Arts *Language of Landscape* at the Annenberg Community Beach House, and *¡Dígame!* at the Obracadobra Residency in Oaxaca, MX.