

**CENTRAL FINE**  
**José Delgado Zuñiga**

*Noises*

February 7, 2021–April 7, 2021

Visits by appointment only, Tuesday–Saturday

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José Delgado Zuñiga 's *Noises*” explores Painting as an additive process focused on free association, pluralities and confines. In a painting titled *No Exit*, a staircase ascends, and a man with closed eyes is depicted as if a large figure carries him upwards (*The Pieta* comes to mind).<sup>[1]</sup> Praying hands crown the top of the scene. Religion and Death are inscribed in a domestic space, next to an electrical outlet, while a figure (might be Zuñiga, or Death?) appears, rendered in grayscale and autobiographical undertones. This particular painting brings to mind images of Zuñiga’s first solo presentation at CENTRAL FINE, titled “Quotidian”—In the scenes presented in that exhibition, Death was *another* participant, encountering bodies dancing, or fighting. It was clearly depicted in a funeral scene where a self-portrait of Zuñiga, painted in greens and yellows, was housed in a coffin, while being serenaded by a singer resembling his father.

The paintings in “*Noises*” accumulate concepts and influences, *piling* them up, as sound and bodies are often found, in the mass grave of white noise. Zuñiga is presenting paintings that evoke the bombardment of love and loss, hope and its musicality; all brought together by an artist set on observing dialectical relationships. This effort ...”*implies conflating two distinct notions: impossibility and Interdiction. To declare that a given subject is unrepresentable by artistic means is, in fact, to say several things at once*”<sup>[2]</sup>

Below, some notes written by José Delgado Zuñiga on his work:

*"Painting transforms and transitions, exploring with various formal approaches, opening new perspectives and insights. In my work, I attempt to paint representation, abstraction, realism, and illusion in a single frame, a momentary 'presentness'. This approach enables me to hack into my identity and mind without worrying about authenticity. The work synthesizes painting styles of North American and European cultures. My heritage is built from those regions; one is a conquered history, the other attempts to shape my present and future. Painting nourishes me, redefining symbols and forms that are both empowering and oppressive to me.*

*Summoned by the hollowness of objects, I use "still life" to power up and transform personal memories, traumas, and desires into large painting formats, reinterpreting traditional themes such as vanitas and memento mori. I am also inspired by the Mexican "Corrido" ballad format, which builds narratives and stories composed of symbols and signs; and by the sound of music, lyrics, onomatopoeia, and interjections jam packed against each other. Or by perpetual fractured rhythms, forms, colors, and rhyming compositions that activate visual scores. I paint symbols and faces of power, identity, affect, memory, domesticity, and transience.*

*My body of work functions like a choir sobbing, grunting, chuckling, sighing, panting, sniffing, murmuring... I wrestle with the notion of painting a fixed iconography, because its density and opacity enclose my being, identity, and seeing. It is important to me that meaning is never fixed; it must be fluid, transparent, in flux like paint's materiality. It must dissolve and transform."*

José Delgado Zuñiga was born in 1988, in Ventura, California. He lives and works in New York. He completed his MFA in painting in 2017 at Columbia University, New York, where he was an adjunct professor of Painting from 2017-2019. He is currently the Lead Teaching Artist and Muralist at Groundswell, Brooklyn, New York.

Zuñiga was awarded the Rema Hort Mann Emerging Artist Grant; and the Rema Hort Mann Emerging Community Grant both in 2018.

He has presented his first Solo show “Quotidian”, in 2019, at CENTRAL FINE, Miami Beach; and exhibited his paintings at the Yale Divinity School of Sacred Music, in New Haven, Connecticut; The Ventura Museum, California; the Otis College of Art and Design, Los Angeles, California; The Miriam and Ira D Wallach Gallery, at Columbia University, New York City; East Projects, New York; and has participated at the Bronx Museum program: Artists in the MarketPlace. (AIM), New York. His paintings are in numerous international collections. This is his second solo presentation at CENTRAL FINE, Miami Beach.

In Arial Normal: Diego Singh  
in Italics: José Delgado Zuñiga  
Editing: Zelmira Rizo-Patron

<sup>[1]</sup> *The Pietà* by Michelangelo Buonarroti is a Renaissance sculpture housed in St. Peter's Basilica, Vatican City.

<sup>[2]</sup> Ranciere, Jacques: *Aesthetics and its Discontents*, Polity Press, Cambridge, 2009.

