

LUKE BUTLER  
MMXVII



**CJG** CHARLIE JAMES GALLERY  
CHINATOWN, LOS ANGELES

969 CHUNG KING ROAD LOS ANGELES CA 90012  
www.cjamesgallery.com 213.687.0844  
info@cjamesgallery.com WED-SUN 12-5

# LUKE BUTLER

## MMXVII

MMXVII, Luke Butler's second show with the Charlie James Gallery, is an array of cultural landscapes and icons.

The exhibition features nine paintings of cinematic endings, dated from the venerable, anti-establishment era of 70's film, and credited to L Butler Pictures. THE END, in various guises, is the predominant figure within these landscapes. Removed from its classical, narrative role, THE END is both familiar and strange. As a fixed, static image, it seems contradictory, absurd, and poignant- an anti-picture. Its message strays, becoming evocative rather than declarative, no longer a functioning exit, but a memento mori. THE END is supposed to happen once, but here it is a refrain, a toll of pop despair. We find it in the air amidst the swirl of branches, and floating over the ever-changing world of the ocean- in place and out of time. These paintings are constructions. While meant to look and feel like iconic cinematic imagery, they do not refer to any actual narrative. They are made from the trees and ocean around San Francisco, where the artist lives and works.

A crosscurrent in the show is a series of pencil drawings of the landscape of print,

with emphasis on the authoritative New York Times obituaries of selected cinematic icons, recently departed, but alive forever in the firmament of cherished memory. The drawings describe the frailties of the printed page, which mirror the fleetingness of life itself.

Together, these series broaden Luke Butler's continuing investigations into the peculiar vitality of popular culture. In looking back, he somehow finds himself in the present.

**Luke Butler** was born in San Francisco and grew up in New York City. He attended the Cooper Union School of Art and the California College of the Arts. He has had solo exhibitions at 2nd Floor Projects and Jessica Silverman Gallery, San Francisco, and Charlie James Gallery, Los Angeles. He has participated in numerous group exhibitions, including "State of the Art: Discovering American Art Now" at Crystal Bridges Museum of American Art, "Approximately Infinite Universe" at the Museum of Contemporary Art San Diego, "Now What?" at the Norton Museum in West Palm Beach, the 2010 California Biennial at the Orange County Museum of Art, and "The Times" at the Flag Foundation in New York City. Luke Butler is represented by Jessica Silverman Gallery, San Francisco and Charlie James Gallery, Los Angeles.

# Los Angeles Times

## Review End times for Luke Butler at Charlie James Gallery

By Christopher Knight  
Art Critic

November 4, 2017

Nine new paintings and a dozen works on paper by San Francisco-based Luke Butler continue his keen foray into the vagaries of life lived amid ubiquitous media imagery. An emphatic element of morbidity has been injected into what had hitherto been a more playful mix, a move that may speak to grossly unsettled times when a minor TV celebrity sits atop the federal government.

The paintings in his second solo at Charlie James Gallery show landscapes of tangled tree limbs and churning seas along rocky coastlines — otherwise benign places where a Hitchcock thriller might unfold. Printed neatly across the center of each is an old cinematic tag from an American or European movie's closing — *The End*, *Finis*, *An L. Butler Picture*, *Fin* — together with a date in Roman numerals.

Most dates are from the vicinity of 1971, the year of the artist's birth. That was also a moment when painting was itself claimed to be experiencing death throes — the end, finis. The numbers in the nine pictures' titles, also Roman in format, don't correspond to the numbers in the images, but instead record the sequence in which Butler painted them. He's marking time.

Cinematic Ed Ruscha meets oceanic Vija Celmins, with a bit of Roman Opalka and On Kawara numerology mixed in for good measure. Butler has a sure hand in these works, although they haven't advanced much from similar paintings he showed at the gallery three years ago.



A potentially compelling new direction will be found in the drawings, which record pages torn from recent newspaper obituaries of movie and television stars — Gene Wilder, Adam West, Carrie Fisher, Roger Moore. What's odd about these heartfelt factual narratives of human beings now departed is the photographs chosen to top the stories of their lives. Willy Wonka, Batman, Princess Leia, James Bond — cloaked and collaborated fictions stare out from the page. The people are famous for wearing masks, so the masks are what we are shown to remember them by.

These media-made characters have died a little bit too, of course. Or, perhaps with the passing of their celebrity human inhabitants they've grown a bit larger; fictional characters do have a life of their own.

<http://www.latimes.com/entertainment/arts/la-et-cm-luke-butler-charlie-james-review-20171104-htmstory.html>

LUKE BUTLER  
MMXVII





LUKE BUTLER  
MMXVII



LUKE BUTLER  
MMXVII



LUKE BUTLER  
MMXVII

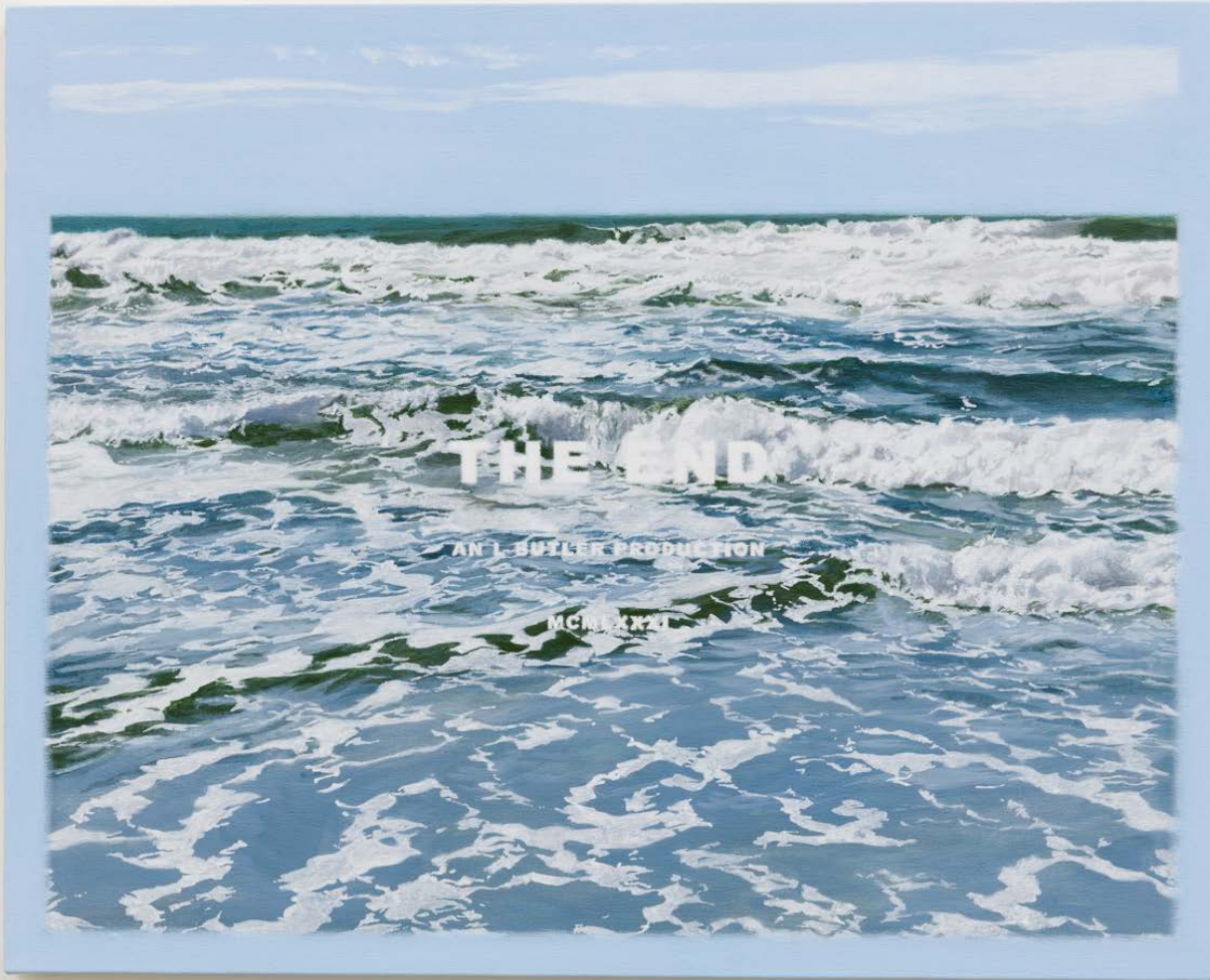


LUKE BUTLER  
MMXVII





LUKE BUTLER  
MMXVII



THE END XXIX  
Acrylic on canvas  
24 x 30 inches  
2017

LUKE BUTLER  
MMXVII



THE END XXXIII  
Acrylic on canvas  
44 x 60 inches  
2017



LUKE BUTLER  
MMXVII



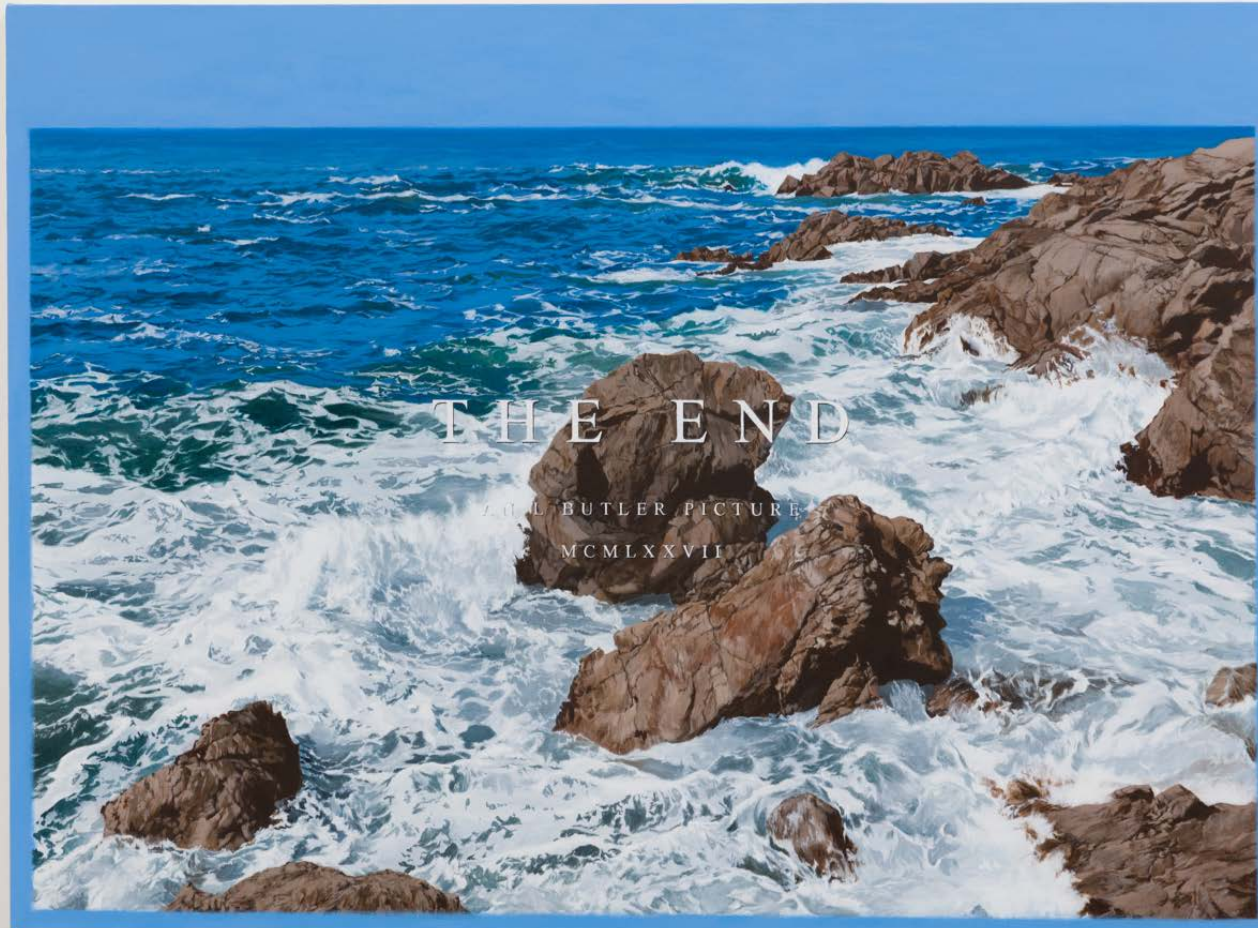
THE END XXXII  
Acrylic on canvas  
24 x 30 inches  
2017

LUKE BUTLER  
MMXVII



THE END XXX  
Acrylic on canvas  
24 x 30 inches  
2017

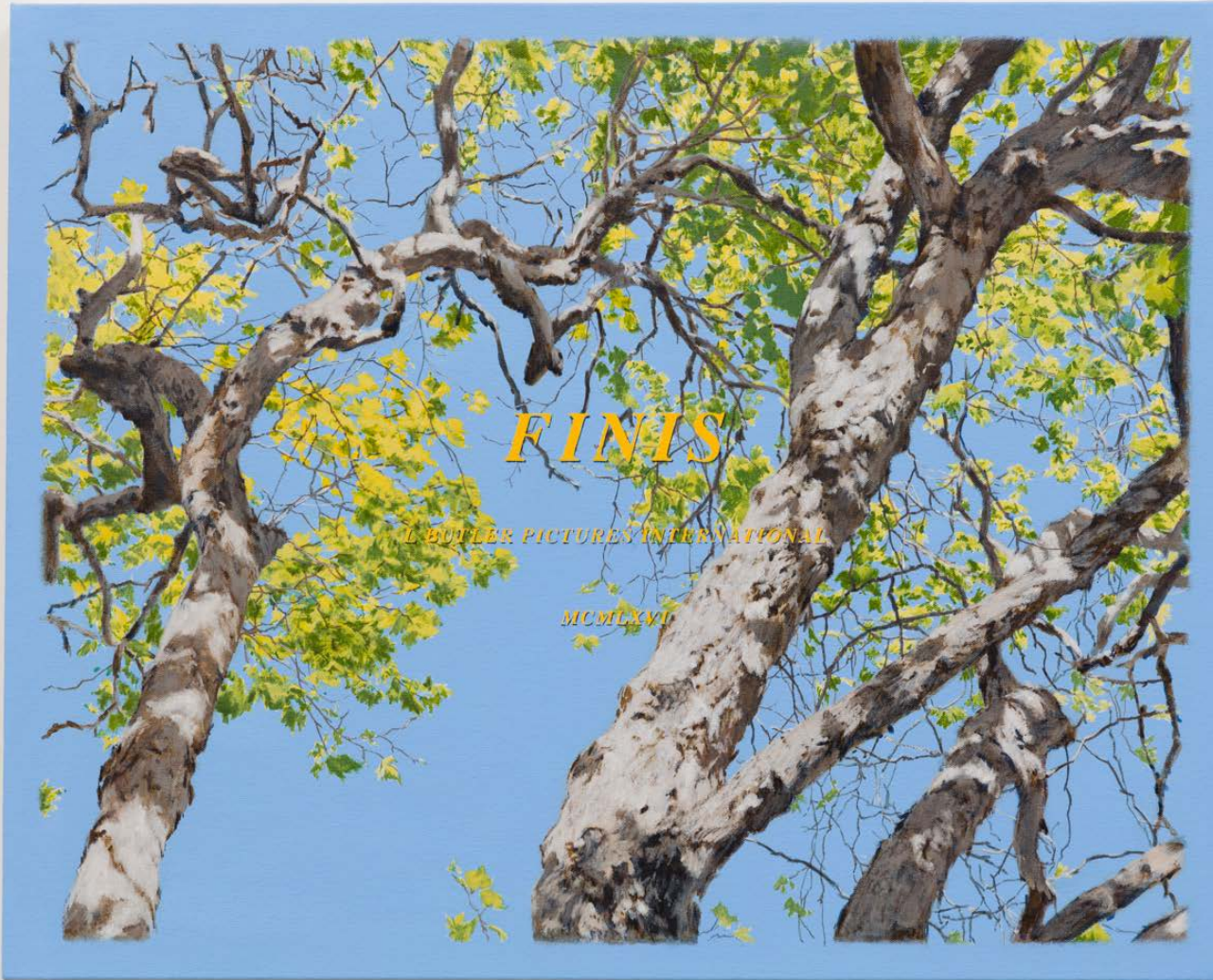
LUKE BUTLER  
MMXVII



THE END XXVII  
Acrylic on canvas  
44 x 60 inches  
2016



LUKE BUTLER  
MMXVII



THE END XXXI  
Acrylic on canvas  
24 x 30 inches  
2017

LUKE BUTLER  
MMXVII



An L Butler Picture VII  
Acrylic on canvas  
22 x 30 inches  
2017



LUKE BUTLER  
MMXVII

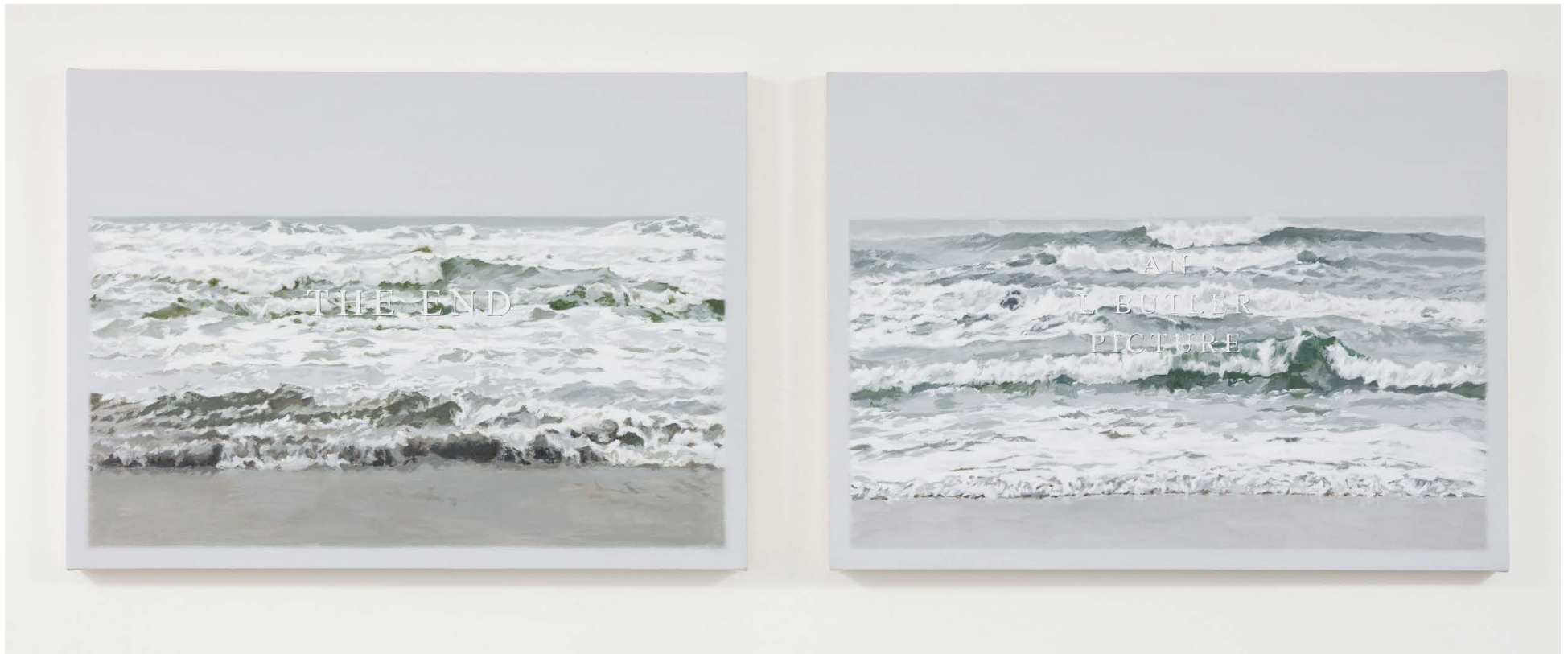


An L Butler Picture VI  
Acrylic on canvas  
44 x 60 inches  
2017

LUKE BUTLER  
MMXVII



LUKE BUTLER  
MMXVII



THE END XXV  
Acrylic on canvas  
Diptych  
22 x 62 inches  
2016



LUKE BUTLER  
MMXVII



Obituary (Doctor)  
Pencil on paper  
11.25 x 14.25 inches  
2017

LUKE BUTLER  
MMXVII



Obituary (Crusader)  
Pencil on paper  
11.25 x 16.25 inches  
2017

LUKE BUTLER  
MMXVII



Blue Notebook September 2014  
Gouache and graphite on  
Bristol paper  
12.5 x 13 inches  
2017

LUKE BUTLER  
MMXVII



Obituary (Princess)  
Pencil on paper  
10 x 13.5 inches  
2017

LUKE BUTLER  
MMXVII



Obituary (Roger)  
Pencil on paper  
10 x 12.25 inches  
2017



LUKE BUTLER  
MMXVII

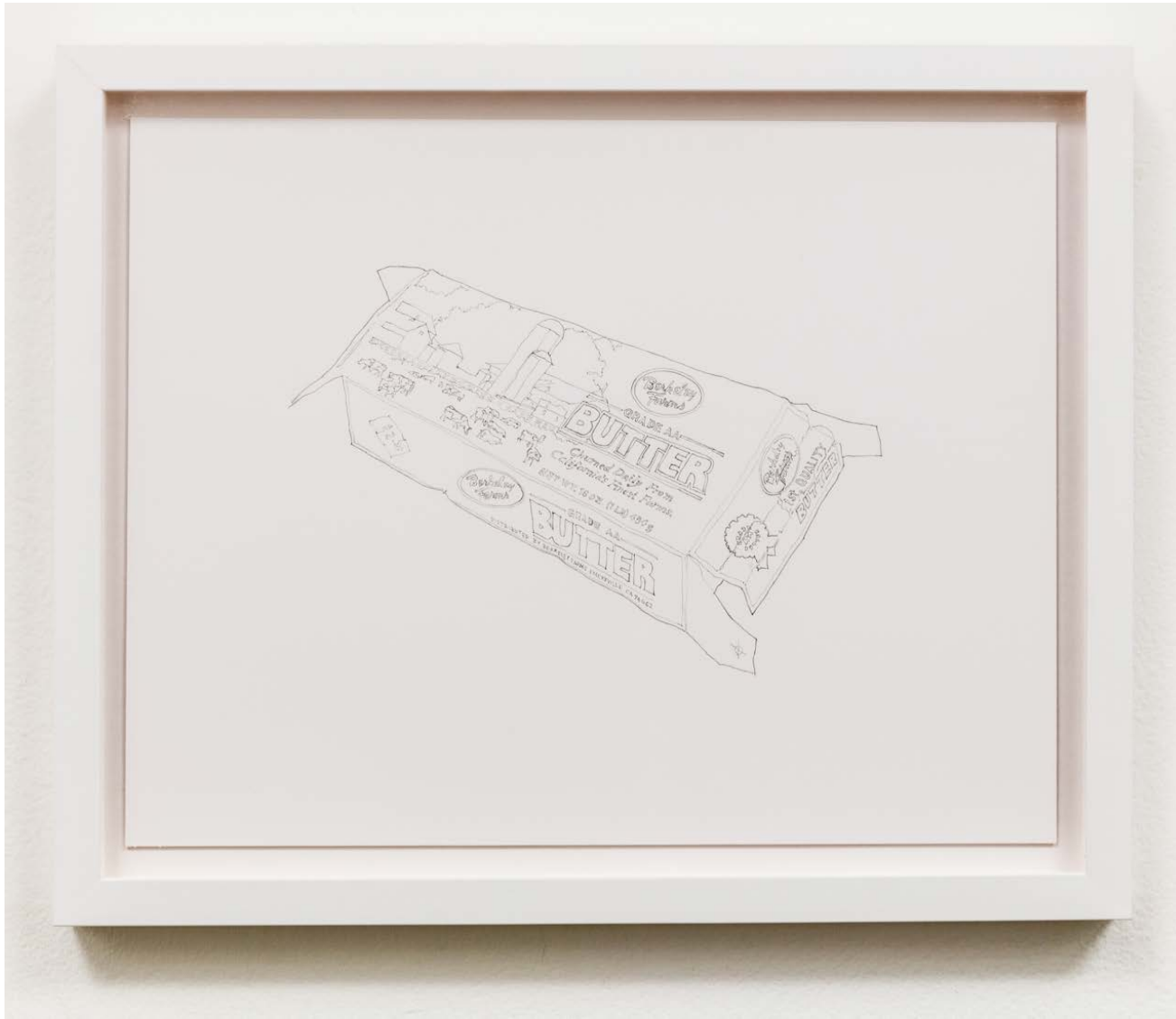


Postcard - Jasper Lake  
Gouache and graphite on  
Bristol paper  
8.5 x 12 inches  
2017

LUKE BUTLER  
MMXVII



LUKE BUTLER  
MMXVII



**Butter**  
Pencil on paper  
12 x 15.5 inches  
2017

LUKE BUTLER  
MMXVII



Postcard  
Pencil on paper  
11 x 13.75 inches  
2016

LUKE BUTLER  
MMXVII



Obituary (Emmanuelle)  
Pencil on paper  
12.75 x 10.75 inches  
2017



LUKE BUTLER  
MMXVII



Obituary (Pussycat)  
Pencil on paper  
10 x 11.75 inches  
2017

LUKE BUTLER  
MMXVII



MMXVII  
Silkscreen  
17.5 x 23.5 inches  
2017

# LUKE BUTLER

## MMXVII

Born 1971, San Francisco, CA

### Education

2006- 2008

MFA, California College of the Arts, San Francisco, CA

1989-1993

BFA, Cooper Union School of Art, NYC

### Solo Exhibitions

- 2017 "MMXVII", Charlie James Gallery, Los Angeles, CA
- 2016 "Afterimage", Jessica Silverman Gallery, San Francisco
- 2014 "In Color And Black And White", Charlie James Gallery, Los Angeles, CA
- 2012 "Alas", Jessica Silverman Gallery, San Francisco, CA
- 2010 "DROP SHADOW", Kantor Gallery, Los Angeles CA
- 2009 "CAPTAIN!", Jessica Silverman Gallery, San Francisco, CA
- 2008 "LUKE BUTLER INVASION!", {2nd floor projects}, San Francisco, CA

### Selected Group Exhibitions

- 2017 "The Times", Flag Foundation, NYC
- "Resistance Training", Slide Space 123, Mills College, Oakland, CA
- 2016 "Fog A Mirror", CES Gallery, Los Angeles, CA
- "After Pop Life", Minnesota St Projects, San Francisco, CA
- "interlubes, An Appreciation of The Magazine", The Magazine, San Francisco, CA
- 2014 "State of the Art: Discovering American Art Now", Crystal Bridges Museum of American Art, Bentonville, AR
- 2013 "Sea Stories Between the Tides", Highlight Gallery, San Francisco, CA
- "Approximately Infinite Universe", Museum of Contemporary Art San Diego, La Jolla, CA
- 2012 "Mission Afterviews", Victoria Theater, San Francisco, CA
- "Up Against It", Munch Gallery, NYC

- 2011 "B-B-B-BAD", Anna Kustera Gallery, NYC
- "Mise-en-Scene", Elizabeth Leach Gallery, Portland, OR
- 2010 "Now What?", Norton Museum of Art, West Palm Beach, FL
- "2010 California Biennial", Orange County Museum of Art
- "Front and Center", Headlands Center for the Arts, Sausalito, CA
- 2009 "Back to Front", Queen's Nails Projects, San Francisco, CA
- "Summer Reading", Invisible Exports, New York, NY
- "Curated By-Vienna 2009- Beginnings, Middles, and Ends", Galerie Georg Kargl, Vienna, Austria
- "Sketchbook Show", Orange Alley Projects, San Francisco, CA
- 2008 "Capital Jewelers", Dust Gallery, Las Vegas, NV
- "MINI MARKET", Silverman Gallery, San Francisco, CA
- "Ready To Pop", Blank Space Gallery, Oakland, CA
- 2007 "Walls of Glory", Eagle Tavern Bathrooms, San Francisco, CA
- "DEATHCLASS", CCA PLAYSPACE Gallery, San Francisco, CA
- "The Notebook Show", CCA PLAYSPACE Gallery, San Francisco, CA
- "The World is Yours", Oliver Kamm 5BE Gallery, NYC
- "Optimism", Hardware Store Gallery, San Francisco, CA
- "Faction", CCA PLAYSPACE Gallery, San Francisco, CA
- "Making Space", Crucible Steel Gallery @ Cellspace, San Francisco, CA
- "We Are Where We Are Not", G-A-S-P, Brookline, MA
- "Remnants II", Crucible Steel Gallery @ Cellspace, San Francisco, San Francisco, CA
- 2006 "Ides of March", ABCNoRio, NYC
- "Restless Natives! Art of Native New Yorkers", Local Project, LIC, NY
- 2005 "September Show", Center Gallery, Fordham University at Lincoln Center, NYC
- 2000 "\$20 Drawing Show", The Luggage Store Gallery, San Francisco, CA
- 1996 "Central Industrial Supply Hardware Show", Central Industrial Supply Hardware Store, NYC
- "Crest Hardware Show", Crest Hardware Store, Brooklyn, NY
- 1994 "Guys and Dolls", Institute For Contemporary Art, Boston, MA

# LUKE BUTLER

## MMXVII

### Publications

ELEPHANT Magazine, Issue 26, Spring 2016, New Establishment, page 61

SHIFTER 18: INTENTION, conversation between Bhanu Kapil and Luke Butler, page 7; edited by Sreshta Rit Premnath and Matthew Metzger, Shifter Magazine, New York, 2012

GRAPHITE Interdisciplinary Journal of the Arts, Issue # 2, illustrations, pages 90, 91; edited by Christine Haroutounian and Leela Subramaniam, Hammer Museum and the Hammer Student Association of UCLA, Los Angeles, 2011

L.A. Times, January 6, 2011, Art review: California Biennial at the Orange County Museum of Art, by Christopher Knight, page D1

2010 California Biennial, catalogue, interview with Stacie Martinez, pages 32-35; edited by Karen Jacobson, the Orange County Museum of Art, Newport Beach/ DelMonico Books, New York, 2011

ARTFORUM, December 2009, review of "Captain!" by Glen Helfand, page 241

San Francisco Bay Guardian, Vol. 44 No. 5, November 4-10, 2009, 21st Annual Goldie (Guardian Outstanding Local Talent) Awards, citation by Matt Sussman, page 31

New American Paintings #79, 2008 Pacific Coast Edition, page 35, The Open Studios Press, Boston, 2008

The Body That Doesn't Belong To You Anymore, by Bhanu Khapil, printed and published by Margaret Tedesco for "LUKE BUTLER INVASION!" at {2nd floor projects}, San Francisco, 2008

### Collections

Berkeley Art Museum, Berkeley, CA  
Museum of Contemporary Art San Diego, La Jolla, CA  
Norton Museum of Art, West Palm Beach, FL  
Artnow International/Kadist Foundation, San Francisco, CA  
Crystal Bridges Museum of American Art, Bentonville, AK

### Represented by

Jessica Silverman Gallery, San Francisco  
[jessicasilvermangallery.com](http://jessicasilvermangallery.com)  
Charlie James Gallery, Los Angeles  
[cjamesgallery.com](http://cjamesgallery.com)