



Brett Angell
#dutchfakes

January 19, 2024 - February 25, 2024

Opening Reception

Friday, January 19, from 6-8 pm

**Artist Talk with Brett Angell and
MFA Boston Curator Courtney Harris**

Saturday, February 3 at 3 pm
Registration details to come

(Brookline, MA – November 9, 2023) For Praise Shadow's first show of 2024, the gallery is thrilled to announce *#dutchfakes*, an exhibition of small-scale sculptural collage by Boston-based Brett Angell. Featuring more than 70 Surrealist-inspired works contained within cigar boxes created over the last three years, this is the artist's first solo exhibition at the gallery.

An artist talk between Angell and Courtney Harris, Assistant Curator of Decorative Arts and Sculpture, Art of Europe at the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, will take place at 3 pm on February 3 at the Coolidge Corner Theatre, across the street from the gallery. Registration information will be available soon.

Angell has long been fascinated with alternative histories. According to the artist: "Facts remain facts, but I love thinking about what could have happened if history had played out differently. People like Erich von Däniken [the Swiss author whose books make claims about extraterrestrial influences on early human culture] and the Ancient Alien Theory fascinate me. I don't necessarily believe what is being proposed but it is thoroughly entertaining to think about the prospect of that 'other' world. I am also a fan of alternative histories in fiction with writers such as Gregory Maguire, the author of *Wicked*, playfully riffing off *The Wizard of Oz*. Adult takes on childhood stories is nothing new, but these individuals bring fresh life to now accepted standards."

In his own way, Angell is adding to this canon by proposing alternative histories from the Dutch "Golden Age" with visual, rather than written stories. While he approaches the collages in a tongue-in-cheek

manner, this body of work also proposes a fresh look at iconic images of this time period: lushly painted portraiture, Delft porcelain patterns, sumptuous rare tulips and ornate floral arrangements. Historians have recently taken into account the violent mechanisms of colonialism and slave trading, which greatly benefited the European patrons of the Netherlands during the 17th to 19th centuries. In many ways, the “Golden Age” is a misnomer, and Angell’s humorous and absurdist imaginings of this time period reignites that assessment of Dutch art history. Playing along with these new findings, Angell’s collages feature wealthy patrons who proudly display visible tattoos on their faces and necks for their expensive painted portraits. Other collages by Angell reveal stories of the secret Dutch space program that beat the Russian and American attempts by many centuries.

Why were the Dutch so successful in their creativity in so many fields and why are we first hearing about it now? Maybe if there had been hand held personal devices and social media in the seventeenth century then we would have #dutchfakes.

About the artist

Brett Angell is a Chelsea, Massachusetts-based artist. He received his MFA in painting at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, studying under the noted landscape painter Tom Uttech. Angell often travels internationally in his job as a museum professional for the MFA Boston, most extensively in Japan, North America and the Netherlands. Influences from Japan and the Netherlands in particular have informed his collages and paintings. He hoards precious materials and decorative papers from his favorite shops and flea markets throughout the world, storing them in his studio until a specific project calls for their use. Angell’s work is in the permanent collections of the Chazen Museum of Art in Madison Wisconsin, The Springfield Art Museum in Missouri, The Sioux City Art Center in Iowa, and the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, where his collages were recently exhibited with Joseph Cornell’s work. His collages were included in the 2022 Praise Shadows group exhibition *Little Windows*.

About Praise Shadows Art Gallery

Praise Shadows Art Gallery is a contemporary art program based in the Boston area with a focus on exceptional artists working in all artistic disciplines. Our worldview is informed by the notion that the artworld’s untapped and unrecognized potential is worth cultivating, supporting, and championing. Since our founding in December 2020, the gallery has placed artworks by our artists in esteemed public collections, and our exhibitions have been covered widely in major international media outlets. Our work is grounded by partnering closely with artists to develop opportunities in traditional and emerging models of creativity and entrepreneurship — exhibitions, commissions, brand partnerships, new technologies, and original concepts that no one has ever tried before. www.praiseshadows.com

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Image: Brett Angell, *Lunar Faith*, 2022, Assemblage, 12 x 5 1/2 x 3 ¼ inches, courtesy the artist and Praise Shadows Art Gallery.