

ESOPUS

RANDY S. JONES AT ESOPUS SPACE [POP-UP]

Opening reception and *Esopus 25* launch on Wednesday, May 9th, from 7 to 9 p.m.



For Immediate Release: Brooklyn, NY, March 30, 2018

The Esopus Foundation Ltd. is excited to announce an exhibition of paintings and collages by the Decatur, Georgia-based artist Randy S. Jones. The exhibition opening coincides with the launch of *Esopus 25*—the most recent issue of the nonprofit arts annual published by the Foundation—which features a 16-page portfolio of Jones's work (along with artists' projects by Tina Barney, Anish Kapoor, and John Edmonds, among others). The show will take place at Esopus Space [Pop-Up] at 64 West Third Street, #210, in New York's Greenwich Village, from May 9th to June 2nd, 2018, with an opening reception and issue launch at the space on Wednesday, May 9th, from 7 to 9 p.m.

It's tempting to apply the overused (and, some might argue, reductive) term of "outsider art" to the work of Randy S. Jones, but it seems more fitting to describe this 78-year-old Decatur, Georgia, resident as an "insider artist," in the most literal sense: For more than three decades, the retired lawyer has been diligently at work in the confines of his house on hundreds of boldly rendered abstract artworks that virtually no one has ever seen.

The Esopus Space exhibition will feature several large-scale oil paintings, which at a distance appear to be rigorous hard-edge abstractions in the manner of Frank Stella or Richard Anuszkiewicz. Upon closer examination, it becomes apparent that Jones has painted all of these with a free hand, imbuing the work with an expressive quality that isn't typically associated with geometric abstraction. Jones describes his improvisatory process in the interview in *Esopus 25*: "When you start doing a picture, you don't know how it's going to end up. Because one mark, one expression, may lead to another avenue. That's the reason I like abstraction, because it gives you so much freedom. There are no limits." Jones employs a similar spontaneity with his collages—cool, nuanced abstractions that at first glance evoke works by

Agnes Martin or Peter Halley—which he creates with duct tape, drywall joint tape, scraps of wood, and other materials he has scavenged “from the curb” in his suburban neighborhood. “You’d be surprised what people throw out,” he says. “Anything can be used as artwork.”

Jones happens to live across the street from photographer David Naugle, who, when he was living in upstate New York more than a decade ago, introduced *Esopus* to the stunning photographs of his neighbor Mark Hogancamp, which the publication debuted in *Esopus 5* (“Marwencol on My Mind”). Naugle similarly brought Jones and his art to the attention of *Esopus* late last year. The Esopus Foundation is thrilled to be able to introduce a representative sampling of this unknown artist’s work to the public for the first time at Esopus Space and in the pages of *Esopus 25*, which will be in bookstores in early May.

About Randy S. Jones

Randy S. Jones was born in 1940 in Gastonia, NC, and graduated from the University of Georgia School of Law in 1965. He practiced law in the Atlanta area for a decade before retiring in the last 1970s to focus solely on art-making. Jones attended the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts in 1980 for nine months, then returned to Georgia, where over the ensuing years his practice shifted from figuration to abstraction. This exhibition represents the public debut of Jones’s work.

About Esopus Space

In June 2009, a capacity-building grant from The Andy Warhol Foundation for the Arts enabled the Esopus Foundation to take a three-year lease on a combined office and exhibition venue in downtown New York. From 2009 to 2012, Esopus Space hosted 18 one-person exhibitions and group shows, as well as more than 30 readings, musical and theatrical performances, panel discussions, lectures, and screenings of film and video. This spring, from May 9th to June 2, the Esopus Foundation Ltd. will reoccupy the same space (at 64 West Third Street, #210, in the heart of Greenwich Village) as a pop-up venue. Esopus Space [Pop-Up] will be open to the public from 11am to 5pm, Tuesday to Saturday, and also by appointment.

About *Esopus*

Called “a thing of lavish, eccentric beauty” by *The New York Times*, *Esopus* has garnered critical praise and a fervent following for its unfiltered, dynamic presentation of a wide range of creative expression since its founding in 2003. Past issues have featured projects by prominent contemporary artists, including Jenny Holzer, Ed Ruscha, and Kerry James Marshall; themed CDs of brand-new music contributed by the likes of Grizzly Bear and Neko Case; and, fiction, poetry, filmmaking, playwriting and art from hundreds of emerging and established voices, ranging from playwright Stephen Adly Guirgis to choreographer Christopher Wheeldon. The annual publication, which has subscribers in 49 states and 27 countries, was founded with the goal of providing an unmediated space for a wide variety of creative disciplines, and as a result never includes commercially driven editorial content or advertisements. Single issues are offered at a deeply subsidized cover price in order to make *Esopus* available to a wider audience.

About The Esopus Foundation Ltd.

Founded in 2003, The Esopus Foundation Ltd. is a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit organization dedicated to providing a forum through which artists, writers and musicians can make a direct connection with the general public. In addition to publishing *Esopus*, the Foundation has programmed exhibitions, events, and performances with institutions including the Kitchen, the Museum of Modern Art, P.S.1/MoMA, White Columns, the New York Public Library, the Nasher Sculpture Center, Pioneer Works, and the Museum of the Moving Image. Institutional supporters include the NEA, NYSCA, NYC’s Department of Cultural Affairs, and the Emerson Collective.

#

For more information, please visit esopus.org or contact:

Tod Lippy

T: +1 (212) 473-0919

E: tod@esopus.org