

# JUPITER

**Bill Adams: *Homegrown***  
**Jupiter Contemporary**  
**August 27 – September 30, 2023**  
**Opening reception: August 27, 6-8 PM**  
**1217 71<sup>st</sup> Street, Miami Beach, FL 33141**



**Miami – August 14, 2023 – Jupiter Contemporary** is pleased to present *Homegrown*, a solo exhibition of new work by **Bill Adams**. Featuring drawings, ceramics, and paintings that diverge widely by way of style and technique, the exhibition showcases the perhaps unexpectedly political through-line at the core of Adam's practice—one marked and spurred on by three key events: 9/11, Trump's election, and the January 6 capitol insurrection.

As Adams played witness to these pivotal moments in national history and their irreparable effect on the public psyche, each of the three bodies of work that comprise the exhibition also evidence, whether via form or content, the measurable effect of these events on the artist and his attempt to make sense of such senselessness.

When on September 11, 2001, Adams and his family had to flee their New York City apartment, he took with him only a blue ballpoint pen and a notepad, not knowing what to expect, how long he might be gone, or where he was going. What resulted was a decades-long practice of creating pen and ink drawings of cartoonishly distorted animals—cats, dogs, owls, elephants—with wide eyes and drooping, loopy features. Since the adoption of his dog, Benny, six years ago, the subject of these drawings, and related oil paintings, have narrowed to feature only his beloved pet.

Benny thus serves as a character that emerges throughout Adams's various works and, much like the artist's other recurrent subjects, operates as a stand-in for himself. Thinking narratively and theatrically has prompted Adams to produce a refreshingly goofy cast of characters that can say more in their expressive features and unexpected juxtapositions than one might expect given their rather playful nature.

During the presidential election in 2016, for example, Adams found himself compelled to create what has become an army of ceramic ducks. Beautifully strange and innocent, they served as a sort of foil to the vile and crude rhetoric that characterized Trump's election. Various personified in a range of forms—some as solo ducklings, and others grouped as families—the ducks have continued to persist throughout Adams' practice, not only as ceramics, but in paintings and compositions that verge on abstraction, adding both a lightness and tinge of absurdity to an otherwise somber cultural moment.

It is, however, not only animals that populate Adams' world, but architectural sites—most notably, the U.S. Capitol building—which allude to the events of January 6, but simultaneously possess an underlying narrative about family, history, and the fear that history is doomed to repeat itself. When on January 6, Adams called his mother to wish her a happy birthday, the notes of terror that came through the receiver could only have been from someone who lived through past horrors of World War II. In paintings such as *Babble* (2023), *The Haunting* (2023), and *Mom's Birthday* (2023), Adams depictions of the Capitol Building thus conjure the precarity of the system that we've staked so much faith in. So, whether looming large or relegated to a mere shadow on the edge of the horizon, this iconic symbol of democracy and justice is in Adams' canvases distorted, flooded, and otherwise overrun.

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*Homegrown*, as both a title and exhibition, thus speaks to the origin of these societal ills and acts of terrorism that we as Americans continue to blame each other for—even as they are all, ultimately, bred right here in our very backyards.

## About the Artist

Bill Adams (b. 1957, New York, New York) earned his MFA from Indiana University and has had solo exhibitions at Shrine, New York; Marvin Gardens, Brooklyn; Freddy Gallery, New York; Jeff Baily Gallery, Hudson; Kerry Schuss, New York; Gorney Bravin Lee Gallery, New York; amongst others; as well as group exhibitions at Harper's, East Hampton; Sarasota Art Museum, Sarasota; Eighteen Gallery, Copenhagen; 56 Henry, New York; Galerie Hammelehle und Ahrens, Cologne; Fisher Parrish Gallery, Brooklyn; Rachel Uffner Gallery, New York; Underdone Gallery, Brooklyn; Capital Gallery, San Francisco; Leslie Heller Workspace, New York; White Columns Gallery, New York; The Aldrich Contemporary Art Museum, Ridgefield; and many others. His work has been reviewed by *The New York Times*, *The New Yorker*, *Time Out New York*, *artnet News*, and *Art Monthly*, amongst other publications. Adams lives and works in Long Island, New York.

**Caption:** Bill Adams, *The Haunting*, 2023, Oil on linen, 86 by 72 in. 218.44 by 182.88 cm., (BA019)

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