

For Immediate Release:
DAINA MATTIS | FAMILY STYLE

August 6 - September 13, 2020

Though if a kitchen and a plate of macaroni cheese are a phantasm, maybe, just maybe, they are more exciting than when they stretch before you as your settled and invariable fate. - A.S. Byatt

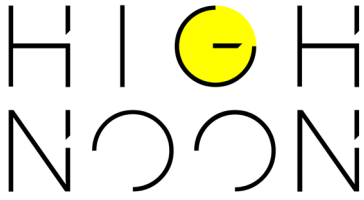
High Noon's new location at 124 Forsyth Street will open with **Family Style, Daina Mattis's** second exhibition with the gallery, consisting of experimental paintings, food, sculpture, and design. Originally scheduled to open in April, the show's content takes on new meaning in a post-quarantine New York City, as all the work is connected through the compulsion to domesticate nature by bringing the Great Outdoors into our homes through imitation, alteration, and possession. Mattis postures this emulation of nature through faux-marbleized paintings, flocked floral wallpaper, a modified drop-leaf table, and ivy wreaths around university brands reimagined as cookies created from production molds. **Family Style** borrows its name from a cross-cultural style of dining with shared serving plates, wherein proportions are individually established. Through use of material and metaphor, the works in the exhibition become conduits of discussion around perceived value and how social/familial practices and priorities are shaped and impacted in the current cultural and economic climate.

Ross Douhat, author of *The Decadent Society* wrote that, "Stagnation is often a consequence of previous development: The decadent society is, by definition, a victim of its own success." Taking their titles from precious/semi-precious stones gemstones (they mean the same thing), the flocked, faux-marble paintings— a dozen in the total series— intentionally decorate and embrace kitsch and garishness, unpacking fashion, craft, and excess. Layers of stylistic flare indicative of various trends are peeled away or hap-hazardously covered over, the repetition connecting patterns of domesticity to patterns of nature. The colors are saturated to an almost sickly point and the flocked walls strut like costume jewelry, suggesting the home as the flocked interior of a jewelry box. The vents, placed life-sized at the bottom of the composition create the illusion of space and use it to link representational painting and design as a type of camouflage, each relying on the creators influence over unconscious perception.

The largest painting, *Descent*, is a standalone piece highlighting Mattis's layered surrealist narratives. Picture frames hang salon-style on a faux-marbleized wall scattered with the ghostly shapes of past hangings, their silhouettes revealed by the portion of wall they preserved from discoloration. Within the frames, flocked mats border nothing but a blank linen foundation, the contrast of velvety and raw surfaces accentuate the absence of photographs. Set against the scene is the soft cast shadow of a railing, eerily defining the vacuity of the space while implying mobility as an illusion.

Mattis's 2D work acts as a blueprint for her 3D work. Everyday generic objects are reconfigured through scale, shape, or media to emphasize corporate branding's dominion over societal contracts. *Legacy Cookies* are edible Oreo-style cookies embossed with Ivy League seals. Both brands' etymology is speculative— one tied to ivy, the other laurel leaves; one destructive, the other symbolizing victory. Both brands are their industry's zenith— prestige, legacy, nepotism, and celebrity bribery scandals are topics clouting these accessible cookies feigning exclusivity, while the actual cost of higher education provides a questionable return on its investment.

Anchoring the exhibition is *Wounded Table*, a title derived from Frida Kahlo's 1940 painting of the same name, which depicts the artist seated at a bleeding table with human legs following her divorce from Diego Rivera. Like Kahlo's painting, which also serves as a commentary on performative culture, Mattis's sculpture references a socio-political superstructure designed to give the illusion of order. Like much of her work, it explores the boundary between highbrow and lowbrow. She alters an antique, mahogany dining room table by replacing the original leaves with CNC-machined high-density polyethylene, cut to appear as two halves of an enlarged plastic, disposable plate. When both leaves are up, the oval shape of the table is whole, the mechanics and material of the work highlighting space and consumption.



Encouraged by corporate interests, urgency of consumption branded as luxury and freedom is an inescapable negotiation of capitalism, the failures of which have never been more apparent than in the U.S. government's mishandling of the COVID-19 pandemic. While more than 45 million Americans lost their jobs, the country's richest citizens saw their wealth increase by more than half a trillion dollars. Now, exhibited post-lockdown but still in the midst of a pandemic and a looming financial meltdown that the federal government seems remiss to resolve, the work in ***Family Style*** echoes the past systems which generated and perpetuate these 21st century concerns of wealth inequality, social and environmental justice, and fair housing, and asks the viewer to reconsider "value" in navigating towards a more sustainable future.

Daina Mattis (b. 1984) is a Brooklyn-based artist born in Los Angeles, CA. She is the youngest of four children to Lithuanian immigrants. Her experiences in a bilingual, culturally rich home in Los Angeles greatly influence her work and how she explores visual language. Mattis was a Cooper Union A.I.R. (2016) and shows extensively. Notable exhibitions include *Vessels*, High Noon Gallery, New York (solo), 2018; *Bona Fide*, AMAG at St. Thomas Aquinas College, New York (solo), 2019; The Everson Museum of Art, Syracuse, NY; The Charles Allis Art Museum, Milwaukee, WI; Art Miami - Context, Miami, FL; The Cooper Union A.I.R. Exhibition, New York, NY; Marymount University of California, San Pedro, CA; Mt. San Antonio College, Walnut, CA; J. Cacciola Gallery, NY, NY and Frances Keevil Gallery, Sydney, Australia. Her work is found in private and public collections. Mattis has instructed as an Adjunct Professor at Syracuse University, as a Visiting Assistant Professor at Kutztown University, PA, and as a Drawing Instructor at The Cooper Union Outreach Program. She is currently a lecturer at Parsons School of Design, at The New School in New York, NY.

A full color, limited edition catalog of the exhibition will be published and available for purchase. For additional information about the exhibition or **High Noon Gallery's** programming, please contact Jared Linge at jared@highnoongallery.com or call 760.519.1956.