

02 October 2022



LG WILLIAMS / THE ESTATE OF LG WILLIAMS™
LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA USA
www.lgwilliams.com
@lgwilliams

Introduction To *Everyone Sucks*

EVERYONE SUCKS is LG Williams's daring 2002 commission (an outright obscenity of a Hail Mary, to be precise) created for a consortium of West Coast galleries — dai bak hap (Berkeley), Miracle (Beverly Hills), and Hi Gallery (Honolulu)... none of which are worthy of mention. Premiering in October 2002 with exhibitions across the U.S. and Europe, the work fuses utter desperation, razor-sharp criticism, and last-gasp artistic provocation.

As Dave Hickey once quipped, he loved teaching young artists because they assumed "*everyone sucks*" — an irreverent starting point that cleared the ground for genuine artistic risk... until they reached adulthood and started sucking themselves. Williams extends this provocation into a sweeping digital email intervention (i.e., free), colliding criticism, taboo, and aesthetic inheritance.

Influences range from the raw antagonism of Fragonard's *The Swing*, through Goya's *La maja desnuda* (and its clothed pendant), and Courbet's *Origin of the World*, to the more recent invective of *Most Art Sucks: Five Years of Coagula*. Alongside these, the work draws on the body art of Hennings (most notably), Klein, Bueys, Burden, Morris-Benglis, Acconci, and McCarthy, as well as the obscene California vernacular of Miller, Bukowski, Southern, Stahl, and Cooper.

This expansive "artwork" comprises exactly one hundred addressed, signed, and globally emailed "letters," with images that can be reproduced by high-definition digital printers (and purchased). Together, they constitute both invitation and affront, both provocation and desperate plea: a challenge for the beautiful, the brilliant, and the justly overlooked in the art world to confront art's endgame.

Although Williams's concerns revolve around sexuality, gender identity, race, and power, his remarkable lineage is directly tied to the great West Coast tradition. The *Everyone Sucks* poster unmistakably echoes Ed Ruscha's 1980s silhouette paintings (though scale in this case takes on greater significance, thus representation and articulation) — those whiteout voids against dark fields — as well as the esoteric gestures of Thiebaud's *Betty Jean Eating an Ice Cream Cone* and a little-known but remarkable painting by Wally Hedrick, *Julia (Nude Flipping Off The Viewer)*.

Commanding space, text, and emotion, Williams deploys technical mastery and moral urgency for his presumably last hurrah — before his sentencing to art prison. Sexual provocation, cultural taboo, and institutional demolition converge, leaving the viewer unsettled, aroused, and reflective. *Everyone Sucks* is another blistering indictment of the complacency in contemporary art.

#####

Dr. Xie Zhao Ping
The 798 Art District, Beijing

Source: www.lgwilliams.com