

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

DEVON DIKEOU

“PRAY FOR ME”—POPE FRANCIS I

Opening June 28, 6-8pm

On view June 28-July 28, 2017



James Fuentes is pleased to announce its forthcoming solo exhibition with Devon Dikeou, *“Pray For Me”—Pope Francis I*, opening June 28th.

Seating at galleries, museums, and art fairs is always a conundrum. Gallerists, museum curators, and art booth proprietors either lack chairs to sit on, curate seating within their environments, rent chairs for their booths, and/or sell the chairs they use. There is rarely a place for the tired art-goer to settle for long, and because of this lack of seating in galleries, much less in antique establishments, museum period rooms, or antique fairs—one might mistakenly sit on a treasure, or worse, be silently admonished by tasteful placards displayed with phrases such as: Please Refrain from Sitting on Furniture, Do Not Touch, or simply an elegant ribbon tied from arm to arm.

“Pray For Me”—Pope Francis I is an installation in the form of ten 17th century Italian “monk” chairs, which function as random seating throughout the art gallery. These chairs were originally called *friarlero*—meaning “brothers”—due to their use by monks or higher religious actuary, even Popes. Each chair in the installation is named after an historical painting of a Pope: Raphael’s Julius II and Leo X, Sebastiano del Piombo’s Clement VII, Titian’s Paul III (twice) and Sixtus IV, El Greco’s Pius V, Caravaggio’s Paul V, Velázquez’s Innocent X, and Jacques Louis David’s Pius VII. Each chair has been individually photographed and positioned according to the respective painting, but without the seated subject—the absence of which conjures Papal ghosts.

The *friarleros* are all tagged with price tags alluding to their commercial value as antiques. Yet these are marked not with a price, but with the name of the painter and that of the Pope who ostensibly would sit in the chair represented. The photographic portraits of the chairs appropriate and cite the place of monetary and art historical value in real and literal terms by the photographs being reproduced to the sizes of their inspiration. Additionally, the installation features a reliquary housing “relics” shed by the chairs over the course of their

lives as artworks in the artists' possession. As the chairs lose these fragments of fabric, the artist will add them to the reliquary in another nod to the practices of the Catholic Church. So while the reliquary steadily grows and relics accumulate, the photos and chairs, with nothing in them, serve as backdrop—the negative space that defines what is there and not. In their emptiness, the images and chairs dismantle and play on ideas of portraiture, patronage, politics, art history, and memorial.

Devon Dikeou (b. 1963, Denver, CO) lives and works in Austin, TX. Recent solo exhibitions include *Please*, Outcasts Incorporated, Paris (2015); *Between the Acts: Virginia Woolf*, Nada Art Fair, Miami (2014); *Pray For Me*, Nada Art Fair, New York City (2014); and *Please*, The Contemporary, Austin (2013). Recent group exhibitions include *Group Exhibition*, James Fuentes LLC, New York City (2017); *Foundation Barbin Presents Redeux (Sort of)*, Kai Matsumiya, New York City (2016); *Inhabiting Ten Eyck*, Storefront Ten Eyck, New York City (2014); and *Game Changer*, Boulder Museum of Contemporary Art, Boulder, CO (2014). Devon Dikeou is the founder, editor and publisher of *zingmagazine*, and a co-founder of The Dikeou Collection in Downtown Denver.

For further inquiries, please contact Emily, Charlotte, Katrin or James at info@jamesfuentes.com.