

SONGS BUILD LITTLE ROOMS IN TIME FRIEDRICH KUNATH

DECEMBER 7, 2019 – JANUARY 24, 2020

Opening Reception
Saturday, Dec. 7th, from 7–11 PM

Drinks provided by **Land & Sea Dept.**
Musical Performance by **Cassie Berman**

Friedrich Kunath
Songs Build Little Rooms in Time (Purple Mountains)
2019
Acrylic and oil on canvas
72 x 84 inches

© Friedrich Kunath, courtesy of Blum & Poe,
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Drag City/Soccer Club Club, in collaboration with **Blum & Poe**, is pleased to announce **Friedrich Kunath's *Songs Build Little Rooms in Time***. Kunath has been making art for nearly thirty fucking years, finding the necessary abstraction for matters of the soul in a variety of visual approaches ranging from a single painting or drawing—yep oil on canvas, yep ink on paper, and what have you—to multimedia works including sculpture, photography, and video. He has shown in galleries and museums around the US, Europe and Asia, and monographs of his work have been published on the occasions of exhibitions with **Aspen Art Museum**; **Hammer Museum**, Los Angeles; **Sprengel Museum**, Hannover; **Blum & Poe**, Los Angeles; and **Modern Art Oxford**, among many others.

From the time of his first solo show ***Why Are My Friends Such Finks***, with **Dirk Bell** at the **BQ Gallery** in Cologne, **Friedrich** has drawn inspiration from all aspects of his everyday life including what was spinning on the turntable. The title for that first show, for instance, borrowed a line from song written by **Will Oldham** & **David Berman**. In a sense, this

was the beginning of the mind-meld that led to the collaboration between **David Berman** and **Friedrich Kunath**, ***Songs Build Little Rooms in Time***, opening at Soccer Club Club on December 7, 2019.

Around 2012, **David** and **Friedrich** collaborated actively together on the book, ***You Owe Me a Feeling***, with **David** providing notebooks to **Friedrich** from which he derived text for the finished work. Several years later, as **David** was struggling to make sense in music again for the first time in a decade, he noted the use of his lyrics in a later collection of **Kunath's** work. This discovery led to discussion between the two on the reasonable nature of such inclusion, developing from something that seemed almost antagonistic on **David's** part into an eventual understanding: they would find things to show and tell between themselves and in the process, create a collaborative show. **David** forwarded recordings that became the eventual **Purple Mountains** album, and between their shared interests—music, an obsession with tchotchkes, the writing of **Thomas Bernhard** and other favorite philosophic and rabbinical

texts—they had plenty of common ground. In the course of their correspondence, **David** sent additional words and images from his travels on the road toward finishing the **Purple Mountains** album as well as pictures of the **Soccer Club Club**, the space which he loved to commandeer when in Chicago (whether it was offered or not).

This collaboration was successful—with more than enough material to work with, **Friedrich** was deep in his process, relocating these expressions outside of their natural habitat. The painter was in the final stages of this work when **David** unexpectedly passed. The nature of the show is somber, as anything derived from the source material of **David's** final songs might be—but the playfulness, the romance of sudden discovery penetrating ennui that is central to both **Friedrich** and **David's** work is there as well. This work casts the contrasts of American life that fascinated **David**, with high and low values revolving in imperfect accord with the small details and dream-like juxtaposition of inner and outer landscapes that makes **Kunath's** work its own. All these things (and more that cannot be said here),

form the seventeen new works that make ***Songs Build Little Rooms in Time***—a remix album of sorts in the lives of **David Berman** and **Friedrich Kunath**.

A book produced on the occasion of the show will be released in spring 2020 at the LA Art Book Fair, designed by longtime mutual friend and collaborator **Michael Schmeling**.

Friedrich Kunath (b. 1974, Chemnitz, Germany) studied at the Braunschweig University of Arts, Braunschweig, Germany, and now lives and works in Los Angeles, CA. Kunath utilizes a personal style of romantic conceptualism, layering poetic phrases with poignant, often melancholy imagery. The work embraces comedy and pathos, evoking universal feelings of love, hope, longing, and despair. The artist's personal journey from Germany to Los Angeles plays a key role in his work, incorporating German Romanticism and western popular culture, with still life, cartoon imagery, commercial illustration, nature photography and lyrical references.