



Introducing *Brite Force*
A new arts initiative based in Marfa, Texas
Inaugural exhibition *Will Cotton: Marfa*

Founded by Yvonne Force Villareal, Brite Force is a multidisciplinary program designed to create cultural exchange between leading international artists and the unique Marfa community through residencies, exhibitions, and public projects.



The Brite House, Marfa, Texas



Will Cotton, "Airborne", 2020

MARFA, TX- *Brite Force* is an innovative new arts program founded by cultural entrepreneur and curator Yvonne Force Villareal, situated in the historical Brite House in the arts hub of Marfa, Texas. Each year, *Brite Force* will host artists in visits of various durations on the remarkable property, offering the opportunity to create within the famed town and creative oasis. Each residency will culminate in a public presentation that will take place on the premises, fostering a cultural exchange between leading international artists and the vibrant local Marfa community. The inaugural exhibition titled *Will Cotton: Marfa* will be installed within the vintage interior of the Brite House in May 2022, coinciding with the third edition of the Marfa Invitational.

"Brite Force is a personal passion project merging my career working in the art world and our own family history deeply rooted in Marfa dating back to the late 19th century," says founder Yvonne Force Villareal. "What makes this opportunity so unique is the fact that this is a home that has been passed down in my husband's (Leo Villareal III) maternal side of the family for over a century. My hope is that the participating artists contemplate the history of the Brite House and explore the remote Big Bend region and channel it into their creations. When

presented, this new contemporary art layer will deepen the dialogue with the past and bring forth an energized perspective.”

Throughout her career in facilitating artists' visions, Force Villareal has witnessed firsthand the transformative power of site-specific commissions, residencies, and exhibitions programs in unique settings. Welcoming all types of visionaries from poets to performance artists, *Brite Force* will become a home to the flourishing artistic community and amplify the Marfa art scene around the globe. With art studios built out of horse stables and vast landscapes overlooked by endless skies, the Brite House will continue to be a center of inspiration for generations to come.

Will Cotton (May - July 2022)

Will Cotton gained inspiration for his exhibition *Will Cotton: Marfa* while staying at the Brite House in August 2021. To hone his understanding of the skills, sportsmanship, and rituals of ranch culture, Cotton ventured to the nearby town of Alpine to attend and document the Big Bend Ranch Rodeo. Using tools such as a machine to spin his staple pink cotton candy and a camera (with collaborating photographer Tina Hejtmanek) to capture the breathtaking Chihuahuan Desert skyscape, Cotton transforms his experiences in far West Texas into a Western fairytale that is both fictitious and shockingly realistic.

“This was my first time visiting Marfa, and I will say there's no place I've been to that's like it,” says inaugural artist, Will Cotton. “The sight lines are vast and there's a palpable celestial architecture that inundates the landscape like a tub filling up with water. The Brite House is situated on the edge of town and feels deeply connected to the miles of ranch land and history beyond. With Yvonne's help I was able to find the real working ranch hands I'd been searching for as subject matter for a series of paintings I'm doing of Cowboys and Unicorns. This is a fantastic place to work, to devote yourself fully to your craft and immerse yourself in a welcoming community and infinite horizons that you can't help but feel inspired by.”

About the Brite House

The Brite House in Marfa, Texas was established in 1917 by Lucas Charles Brite and his wife, Eddie. Lucas Brite was a pioneer Big Bend rancher, arriving in 1885 and camping on Capote Peak while he founded a ranch, which is still in the family. They lived on the ranch until 1902, when they moved to Marfa and purchased a one-story, L-shaped house from Eddie's uncle, Robert Edward McMinn. In 1915 the Brites remodel the small 1800's McMinn adobe into a 16-room mansion overlooking an expansive pasture. Lucas Brite's great-great grandson, Leo Villareal III acquired the house from the Brite Family Trust in 2014 and he and his wife, Yvonne Force Villareal, began a restoration by engaging architect Louis Yoh and interior designer Fernando Santangelo to bring to fruition their idea of remaining a family home while becoming an artistically stimulating space they could share with creative visionaries from around the world.

Brite Force offers the unique opportunity for artists to become part of the lasting Brite legacy. Not only acting as a powerhouse attracting art and diversity to Marfa but also as a home away from home, the Brite House is an oasis to artists and audiences alike.

About Yvonne Force Villareal

Yvonne Force Villareal is a public arts leader and cultural entrepreneur based in New York City and Marfa, Texas. Ms. Force has launched three significant businesses over the span of her public career in the arts which began in 1995 with Yvonne Force Inc., an art advisory specializing in building and managing private collections and foundations, backed in-part by the late Mr. Laurance S. Rockefeller. In 2000, Ms. Force co-founded Art Production Fund (APF), a non-profit organization dedicated to commissioning and producing significant public art projects, reaching new audiences and expanding awareness through contemporary art. Together with co-founder Doreen Remen, the leaders grew APF into an ambitious national program of outdoor installations that include: Ugo Rondinone's "Seven Magic Mountains" in Las Vegas, NV; Elmgreen & Dragset's "Prada Marfa" in Marfa, Texas. Expanding on their practice, in 2014 the duo established Culture Corps, a creative firm offering art consultancy, artist brand collaboration, and cultural programming services with a focus in the hospitality, entertainment, and real estate industries. Ms. Force graduated from the Rhode Island School of Design in 1988 with a degree in Fine Arts, she serves on the Boards of Art Production Fund, White Columns and RISD's President's Alumni Advisory Council.

About Will Cotton

Will Cotton was born in Melrose, Massachusetts and raised in New Paltz, New York. He has a BFA from Cooper Union, and lives in New York City. His work often explores themes of desire, insatiability, and most recently the relationship between a cowboy and a pink unicorn. His paintings are in the permanent collections of the National Portrait Gallery, Washington, D.C.; Smithsonian American Art Museum, Washington, D.C.; Seattle Art Museum, Washington; Columbus Museum of Art, Ohio; and Orlando Museum of Art, Florida, as well as many prominent private collections. Cotton served as the artistic director of the California Gurls music video for pop singer Katy Perry. Cotton is the subject of a monograph published by Rizzoli, USA.

Will Cotton: Marfa opens on May 4 and is on view through September 2022. Brite Force exhibitions will be open when hosting events and welcome ongoing visitors by appointment. For more information please visit the website: BriteForceMarfa.com and Instagram @BriteMarfa

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**BRITE
HOUSE**

Brite Force is located at the Brite House 601 North Ridge, Marfa, TX

For hours please visit: BriteForceMarfa.com