



Vojtěch Kovařík
Dusk of the Gods
09/09/22 – 10/08/22

Mendes Wood DM New York is proud to present *Dusk of the Gods*, Czech artist Vojtěch Kovařík's first solo exhibition in New York, following his previous shows with the gallery in São Paulo, Brazil, and Villa Era, Italy.

Kovařík's interest in Ancient Greek art and mythology serves as a point of departure for a new body of work inspired by the myth of the Golden Apple. As the myth goes, Eris, the Greek goddess of discord, presents a golden apple to Paris, a prince of Troy, which he would later give to one of three goddesses whom he considered the most beautiful—Aphrodite, Hera, or Athena. Aphrodite, the goddess of love, persuades Paris to choose her by promising him, in exchange, the most beautiful woman in the world as his wife: Helen of Argos. When Helen of Argos, soon to become Helen of Troy, subsequently falls in love with Paris, and he with her, the stage is set for the War of Troy.

Large scale, immersive paintings of these mythical scenes—gods, goddesses, and ancient heroes—are on view across both floors of the gallery space. In the artist's signature style, these figures appear set in stone, somehow frozen in the melancholy space of a pictorial frame that refuses to give their heaving bodies the space they need. Solidified by their own sculptural presence, they appear as tired and jaded as they are imposing and visually arresting, as if today's world does not allow room for the old gods.

Kovařík's new body of work is the result of extensive experimentation and development of his painterly technique. A more pronounced use of sand, mixed with acrylic and spray paint, gives the figures their mass and volume while an emotive application of oil paint accentuates color and space within each painting's composition.

Crucially, this exhibition includes a group of sculptures realized in wood, sand, and acrylic paint, which points to Kovařík's early training as a sculptor and ceramist, before he turned his hand to painting. The fil rouge remains evident, as we are confronted with real sculptures installed among paintings of sculptural bodies, showing the continuity and coherence of Kovařík's practice which, despite the artist's young age, displays an uncanny degree of maturity and artistic research.

Vojtěch Kovařík (Vlašské Meziříčí, Czechia, 1993) lives and works in Ivrea, Italy.

Recent solo exhibitions include *Dusk of the Gods*, Mendes Wood DM, New York, NY, USA; *Destinies of Stone Faces*, Galerie Derouillon, Paris, France; *In the Thickets of Unexplored Places*, Mendes Wood DM São Paulo, Brazil; *Vojtech Kovarik*, Mendes Wood DM at Villa Era, Vigliano Biellese, Italy, *Hidden Garden*, Galerie Derouillon, Paris, France. Recent group exhibitions include Baltic Triennial 14: The Endless Frontier, Contemporary Art Centre (Lithuania) and Ars22: Living Encounters, Kiasma (Finland).

The artist's work is present in museums and public collections worldwide, including National Gallery of Victoria (Australia); ICA Miami (USA); Blenheim Foundation (UK); Zuzeum Museum (Latvia); Fondazione Sandretto Re Rebaudengo (Italy); The Ekard Collection (Netherlands); Lafayette Collection (France); Jump Collection (Mexico); K11 Art Foundation (China). He is winner of the 12th Prize of Art Critique for Young Painting, Galerie Kritiku, Prague, Czechia.

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