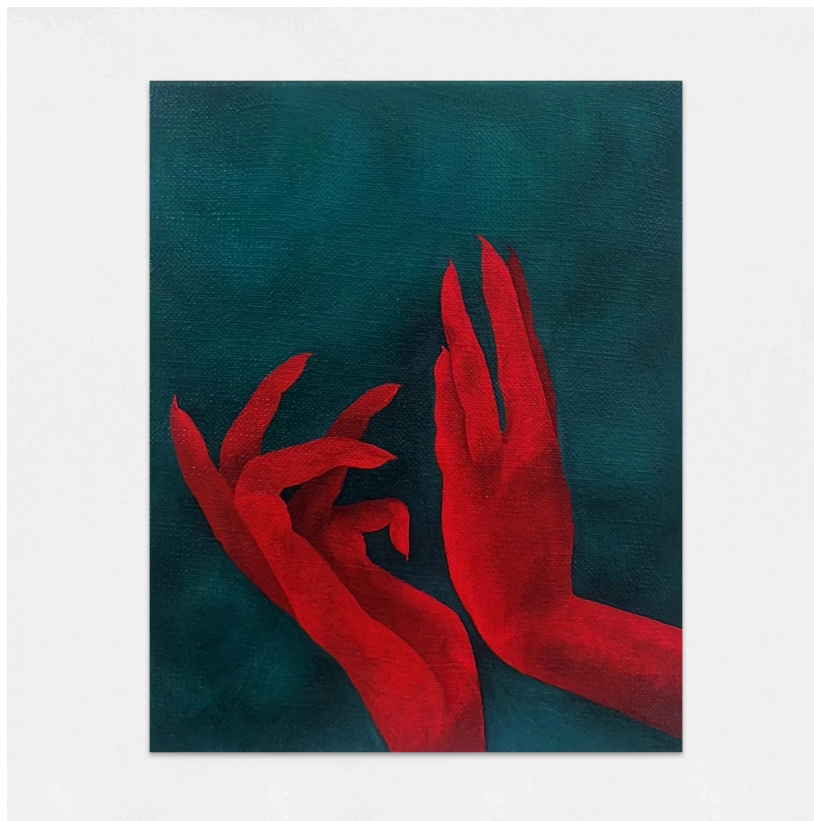


Sherbet Green



Danilo Stojanović, *Mystic Gestures II*, 2024, oil on linen, 20 x 25 cm

Picturing the Animal

Co-curated with Sonya Derviz

Sonya Derviz, Sof'ya Shpurova, Danilo Stojanović & Evangeline Turner

Opening reception: Thursday 26 September, 6-8pm

27 September - 2 November 2024

The group exhibition *Picturing the Animal* unites works by four international artists that gesture to the sentiment of human experience and the production of meaning (knowledge) around it. The matter-of-fact understanding of a picture as a representation of physical reality has been delineated within painting, and with this canonical evolution came an invitation to interrogate the less-easily-categorical processes of such fabrication. Among a million others: the bearing of soul.

“Linguistic relativity” refers to the hypothesis that a language’s structure influences a speaker’s output, an idea that, though originating in the field of linguistics, could be applied

Unit 1, 2 Treadway Street
London, UK
E2 6QW

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across artistic practice, as much as written and spoken language. What separates these latter outputs from visual languages is that they exist within a more controlled set of syntactic principles (illustrated by Noam Chomsky using “syntax trees”), requiring that we use words in certain orders, or in certain amalgamations, in order to be understood. Visual language does not seem bound by such rules, exemplifying that it either does not exist within human order as a purely communicative tool, or that we have yet to understand, more than vaguely, the laws of generating meaning inside of it.

Often, art is produced as a phenomenological tool, as Maurice Merleau-Ponty writes in his *Eye and Mind (Spirit)* (1964), in which he explores painting as a language for mining and depicting subjective existence. This is also reflected in Henri Bergson’s *Matter and Memory* (1988), a self-declared affirmation “of the reality of spirit and the reality of matter [and an attempt to determine] the relation of the one to the other by the study of a definite example, that of memory.” The works in this exhibition have been brought together for their shared evocation of this process of human experience. Not in the sense that they directly evoke human life, per se, but that they manifest its psyche within the direct context of painting.

There are moments of intense saturation, of movement, techniques of introversion and semi-fictitious, fragmented narratives in these paintings. Often, there is a lack of surety. A kind of paganism or philosophical mobility beset in unclear lines and powdered tones evocative of transcendentalism, but with an increased rooting in physicality. Turner’s *Androgenic hair scared the small children* (2024), for example, could be inferred as a kaleidoscopic rendering of tangible and illusory events surrounding childhood and adolescence, while Stojanović’s *Mystic Gestures II* (2024), which could read as hands in a position of conjuring, prayer or dance, juxtaposes symbols of devotion, madness and power with colours of passion, love and deceit. Shpurova’s paintings combine scales and elements to a perhaps nostalgic or melancholic internalised narrative; the way scenarios revolve psychologically and in dreams, and Derviz projects onto and recollects memory in landscapes and facial expressions inside a cropped vitrine, reflecting the complexity of feeling within both a face and as a body moving on the earth: wildness, understanding, surprise, and acceptance. A certain uncharacterised spirit occupies each work, having been constituted and expelled as such.

About the artists:

Sonya Derviz (b. 1994, Moscow) lives and works in London. She graduated with a BA in Fine Art from Slade School of Fine Art in 2018, having previously completed her Foundation Diploma at Central Saint Martins. Solo exhibitions include: *Closer*, Sherbet Green, London (2023); and *Pas de Corps*, V.O Curations, London (2018). Group exhibitions include: *Soft Focus*, Bradley Ertaskiran, Montreal (2024); *Bury a Friend*, Roman Road, London (2023); *Into My Arms*, Sherbet Green, London (2023); *First Light*, curated by Hector Campbell, Collective Ending, London (2022); *Inside Out*, The Artist Room, London (2022); *It*

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Seems So Long Ago, Matthew Brown, Los Angeles (2020); *Minimal | Maximal*, LVH Art, London (2019); *Parfum d'épines*, Phillips x V.O Curations, Paris (2019); and *Paintings by*, Alex Vardoxoglou, London (2019).

Sof'ya Shpurova (b. 1996, Moscow) lives and works in New York. She received her BFA in painting from Slade School of Fine Art UCL London (2019) and her MFA Painting from Columbia University (2024). Group exhibitions include: *Meet me by the lake*, Clearing, New York (2024); *Silvers in the Void*, MAMOTH, London (2023), *Now I've Said the Opposite of What I Mean*, Shoot the Lobster, New York (2023), *Le Grand show*, Glassbox, Paris (2023); *Listening to bonfires*, Indebt Gallery, Amsterdam (2021); *Re-enchanted*, Voshod gallery, curated by Alexander Burenkov, Basel (2021); *At the Stroke of Midnight*, Szena Gallery, Curated by Daria Yartseva, Moscow (2021); *No time like the present*, Public Gallery, London (2020); *Vegetables and Death*, Troy Town, Curated by Rob Tufnell and Aaron Angel, London (2019)

Danilo Stojanović (b. 1989, Pula, Croatia) lives and works in Milan, Italy. He studied Painting at the Accademia di Belle Arti di Venezia (BFA 2013/MFA 2018). Solo exhibitions include: *Night Cravings*, Allen & Eldridge, New York (2023); *Midnight Blossom*, CAR gallery, Bologna (2022); *Shoreline*, James Fuentes Online (2022); *Mourning the Red Cactus*, Andrea Festa Fine Art, Rome (2021). Group exhibitions include: *Prophetic Dreams*, Kutlesa Gallery, Goldau (2024); *Affection*, Marian Cramer Projects, Amsterdam (2024); *Beauty in Chaos*, Hew Hood Gallery, London (2024); *Phantom Brush*, A plus A gallery, Venice (2023); *SALON PALERMO II*, Rizzuto Gallery, Palermo (2022); *Carnival Dream*, G/ART/EN Gallery, Como (2022); *07, PM/AM*, London (2021); *Les Danses Nocturnes*, Eastcontemporary/Spread Museum, Entrevaux (2021); and *Sworm: Balla Balaclavas and the Shithead Baroque*, Super Dutchess, New York (2020).

Evangeline Turner (b. 1996, London, United Kingdom) is a painter. Recent exhibitions include *Hard scent salon*, Staldgade 11, Copenhagen (2024); *Chaff*, a. SQUIRE, London (2023); *Civil Twilight*, Ginny on Frederick, London (2022); and *What is it Like to be a bat?*, ADZ, Lisbon (2022).

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