

\m/

Jasper Marsalis

26 September – 21 November 2024

Emalin is pleased to present \m/, a solo exhibition by Jasper Marsalis (b. 1995 in Los Angeles, CA, US, lives and works in London, UK). This is the artist's second solo exhibition with the gallery. Marsalis combines painting, drawing, sculpture, and live video feed coded onto an LED screen to draw the parallel that runs throughout his practice: that of being looked at as a performer, and consumed as an object.

In \m/, a miniature camera captures the gaze of viewers who walk up the staircase at the gallery. A live video feed of their face displays on an LED screen upstairs, out of sight. Projecting into the opposite direction, with its towering back cables and exposed metal rigging facing the entrance, the oversized screen forms an obstacle to their view of the space. Another screen displays just the crop of their eye. While the gaze of a casual gallery visitor is appropriated by the camera's motion sensors, they can only see themselves on the screen after the event of walking up – once inside the exhibition. At the same time, when facing the screen, we are confronted with the abstracted stare of a stranger walking upstairs the same way we just did – fractured and unaware. As they find themselves performing, we find ourselves an audience.

Marsalis is interested in a type of amplification that happens in popular music – where technology is used to overcompensate for the human limitations of our senses – screens and sounds larger than life, leading to transhumanistic distortions broadcast to be consumed by mainstream audiences. Blown-up, pixelated images and warped sounds stem from this interest, as do the methods: the instruments and synthesisers he uses in his musical performances are programmed using the same software as the camera's motion capture, collapsing the qualities of human and cyborgian, digital and analog, natural and distorted.

In his works on canvas – each titled *Event* or *Face* and numbered sequentially – Marsalis abstracts performative spaces and their motifs. The shapes recall microphones, the heads of an audience and their shiny eyes, concert halls and cinema seats, beads of sweat and glaring stage lights in dark arenas. Rather than depicting these elements, he crops and defamiliarises them to draw out the phenomenological experience of vision: as consuming and being consumed, projecting outwards and being impenetrable inwards.

Marsalis renders these events in oil – sometimes – but often through found reflective materials: soldering metal used to connect musical wires, flattened tin foil packaging picked up in the street, and mirrored squares detached from disco balls and reassembled on flat surfaces. The shine of the spotlights he depicts

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are echoed by the shiny specs of metal he incorporates, introducing literal moments of reflected light, incorporated as a painted subject as well as material itself – preventing access to the canvas and instead reflecting the viewer back at themself. The tension of impermeability is mirrored in the opaque surfaces of the sculptures, chiselled at, hollowed and crumbled with wedges and pointed intrusions.

Whether working in the medium of music, performance, or exhibition-making, Marsalis poetically – often cheekily, sometimes dead seriously – abstracts the persistence of visual consumption, of our incessant looking. Switching between an illegibility that refuses and a naivety that submits, he scores the political stakes of performing to that gaze.

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Jasper Marsalis lives and works in Los Angeles and London. He graduated with a BFA from The Cooper Union, NY, in 2017. His selected solo exhibitions include Kristina Kite Gallery, Los Angeles, US (2023); Emalin, London, UK (2022); Midway Contemporary Art, Minneapolis, US (2020); and Svetlana, New York, US (2018). Recent and upcoming group exhibitions include the Hammer Museum, Los Angeles, US (upcoming 2025); the Zurich Biennial, Kunsthalle Zurich, CH (2023); Nicoletta Fiorucci Collection, Monaco, MC (2023); Galerie Buchholz, Cologne, DE (2022); Gladstone Gallery, New York, US (2022); Emalin, London, UK (2021); Lehman College Art Gallery, New York, US (2020); cfcp, New York, US (2019); and The Cooper Union, New York, US (2017).

As a musician, Marsalis performs under the moniker Slauson Malone 1. Recent performances have taken place at Haus der Kunst, Munich, DE (2024); Bourse de Commerce - Pinault Collection, Paris, FR (2024); Volksbühne, Berlin, DE (2024); Park Avenue Armory, New York, NY, US (2024); C2C, Turin, IT (2023); Le Guess Who?, Utrecht, NL (2023); ICA, London, UK (2022); Barbican, London, UK (2022); Abron Arts Center, New York, NY, US (2022); Cafe OTO, London, UK (2022); PhilaMOCA, Philadelphia, US (2021); and The Underground Museum, Los Angeles, US (2019). His publications include the albums EXCELSIOR (2023); for Star (Crater Speak) (2022); Vergangenheitsbewältigung (Crater Speak) (2020); and A Quiet Farwell, 2016–2018 (Crater Speak) (2019), as well as the book Crater Speak (2020).

GROUND FLOOR

1

Untitled, 2024
pen on paper
21 x 30 cm
8 ¼ x 11 ¾ inches

9

Mark, 2024
broomsticks and bowling ball
219.7 x 22.9 x 22.9 cm
86 ½ x 9 x 9 inches

FIRST FLOOR

2

Mother, 2024
tree branch and bowling ball
191.8 x 22.9 x 22.9 cm
75 ½ x 9 x 9 inches

10

Super Trev, 2024
wooden boat stand and bowling ball
44.5 x 22.9 x 22.9 cm
17 ½ x 9 x 9 inches

3

Eye 1, 2024
Max MSP patch, camera, screen, lights
and laser
dimensions variable

11

Rachel, 2024
wood and bowling ball
22.9 x 47 x 22.9 cm
9 x 18 ½ x 9 inches

4

Performer, 2024
trousers, selfie stick tripod, coat hanger
and wire
107 x 31 x 41 cm
42 ½ x 12 ¼ x 16 ½ inches

12

Event 54, 2024
oil on canvas
160 x 230 x 4 cm
63 x 90 ½ x 1 ⅝ inches

5

Face 8, 2024
Max MSP patch, camera, computer,
LED screen, truss, stage weights
and ratchet straps
dimensions variable

13

Face 6, 2024
mirror, tinfoil and solder on canvas
20.3 x 25.4 x 2.3 cm
8 x 10 x 7/8 inches

6

Fission, 2024
paper
30 x 21 cm
11 ¾ x 8 ¼ inches

14

Event 56 (The Zone of Interest), 2024
oil on canvas
20.3 x 25.4 x 4 cm
8 x 10 x 1 ⅝ inches

7

Face 7, 2024
mirror and solder on canvas
25.4 x 20.3 x 2.3 cm
10 x 8 x 7/8 inches

15

Face 4, 2024
mirror and solder on canvas
20.3 x 25.4 x 2.3 cm
8 x 10 x 7/8 inches

8

6x12", 2024
120 x 80.5 x 10 cm
47 ¼ x 31 ¾ x 4 inches

16

Event 53 (Cinema), 2024
oil on canvas
160 x 230 x 4 cm
63 x 90 ½ x 1 ⅝ inches

