

MAKE LIFE BEAUTIFUL

LEI LEI KUNG
29.10 - 15.11.22

It's the kind of surrealist image-dumping that can leave spectators in a state of interpretive delirium. Lei Lei stands for mayhem, never one to adhere to the rules of linearity or narrative stability. In this new series, the artist makes narrative a hostage of painting, summoning a radiant, humming spirit of paranoia.

Make Life Beautiful is the presentation of a life and its double. Each act is bustling with recurring figures, rooms, text, and objects that jostle for position in a clash of perspectives. Black lines depicting sets and models seen in previous work are hidden under thin accretions of white paint. The result is a barrage of images and twisted visions of reality that culminate in a series of vignettes, saturated in a volcanic shade of red.

A couple is at the centre of this fragmented world. They are uniformed companions, vagabonds traversing a theatre of violence. Together they make passage through a cityscape, bearing witness to the slowly erupting geometry of its crises. A soldier, or perhaps a shepherd in some charred scene from the Old Testament, emerges from no-mans-land to sweep the landscape, herding us along with the flock through a nuclear fog.

Pictures like these can only be the result of a deliberately obsessional method of making. A method which scrutinizes one's identity, place, and relationships, collecting and restaging images from life and mind again and again. The focus of these obsessions emerges as a palace of self-mythology, decorated with emblems that seek to escape themselves. Checking all the doors, tracing the cracks. Looking for an exit.

Liam Vaughan

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Clockwise from door:

Make Life Beautiful, 2022.

Oil and modelling paste on canvas, 87 x 82cm.

Room (Elephant), 2022.

Oil on canvas, 87 x 82cm.

Exile, 2022.

Oil on canvas, 87 x 82cm.

His: A Bathing Ape, 2022.

Oil on canvas, 96 x 137cm.

Hers: Hysteric Glamour, 2022.

Oil on canvas, 96 x 137cm.

Flock, 2022.

Oil on canvas, 87 x 82cm.

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