

Adams and Ollman

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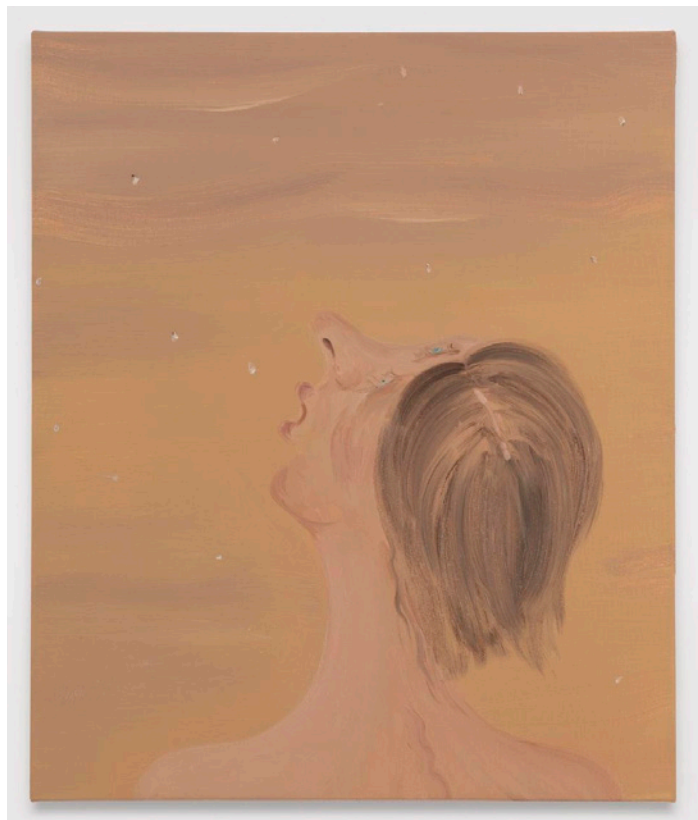
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Jose Bonell: *Ways of Measuring Twilight*
November 15–December 14, 2024
Opening: Friday, November 15, 5–7pm

Adams and Ollman is pleased to announce *Ways of Measuring Twilight*, a solo exhibition by Catalan artist Jose Bonell, marking his second presentation with the gallery. The exhibition's title refers to the impossible task of trying to quantify that which is incalculable such as fleeting sunsets or the transitional phases of life. The artist's paintings appear like dreams or apparitions, their erudite concepts and straightforward metaphors coming into focus with distinct clarity before they dissipate. Working in the shadowy space between magic and reality, Bonell paints a picture of a world engaged in lyrical anarchy.

Bonell's figurative paintings function like pictorial "what ifs," proposing questions, suggesting absurdities, sharing secrets, and hinting at moods and narratives. Driven by the pleasure of dreaming and attuned to both the extraordinary and banal encounters of daily life, the artist draws inspiration from his observations—overheard conversations, poetic turns of phrase, or compelling compositions of strangers crossing paths on the street. He is equally indebted to cinema, literature, and philosophy, building upon our collective cultural knowledge with paintings that seamlessly reference children's nursery rhymes, silent films, and radical philosophical theory. His paintings are populated with people and objects that serve as allegorical subjects, exploring themes of work and labor, class and taste, gender roles and expectations, comedy and tragedy, violence and desire. The works rupture our experience of ordinary life to offer glimpses of possibility lurking beneath the surface.

Ways of Measuring Twilight presents new works that further develop Bonell's unique painterly language,



capturing the magic and mystery, pain and pleasure, hope and hopelessness of existence. In *Howl*, a young man gazes skyward at something outside the picture plane in bewilderment or horror while in *Dreamer*, a figure closes their eyes and focuses inward, their eyelids protecting them from everything outside or unknown. In *Viva La Vida*, which shares its title with Frida Kahlo's final painting, Bonell imagines a revolutionary woman hanging her incendiary banner out to dry before returning to the front line. Distinctly, Bonell stakes his claim as a painter of visual non-sequiturs and poetic disruptions, crafting scenes that challenge our expectations of narrative coherence.

Jose Bonell (b. 1989, Barcelona, Spain where he continues to live and work) was awarded the Prix Novembre in Vitry-sur-Seine, France, in 2020. His work has been exhibited in numerous solo and group exhibitions including at Various Small Fires (VSF) in Los Angeles, CA and Semiose in Paris, France. Alongside Sara Bonache, he is the co-director of Unica Editions, founded in 2020, which publishes artists' books and objects in limited editions.

Jose Bonell, *Howl*, 2024, oil on linen, 21 5/8h x 18 1/8w in, 54.93h x 46.04w cm