

Ehrlich Steinberg
5540 Santa Monica Blvd
Los Angeles, CA 90038
+1 (213) 584-1709
Wednesday - Saturday 12-6pm

April 12 - May 24 2025
Opening: Saturday April 12 6-9pm

Joseph Jones
Natural language

Ehrlich Steinberg is pleased to present the solo exhibition *Natural language* by UK-based artist Joseph Jones. The exhibition features a new series of paintings which continue the artist’s careful depictions of cats and flowers. Known for his highly skilled and technical painting, Jones’s practice equally engages with philosophical enquiries into the nature of images, self-reflection, and the phenomenon of contemporary representation.

Jones works consistently at smallscale, adopting a logic of seriality—a system that reveals, over time, the oppositional qualities that cause images to dissolve into one another, or else remain resolutely distinct. Each painting, in its uniqueness, both returns to and resists the form of the rest of the artist’s work. The reduced subjects within Jones’s practice emerge from a vast archive of thousands of collected images, both from personal and online repositories. While the subjects are real, the artist often constructs his paintings using composite images. The resulting works, while suggestive of the art historic lineage of portraiture or still life, move beyond this direct biographical or realist inclination. Behaving instead like reflections, the paintings subtly transition between specificity and archetype, reality and dream.

Indeed, the question of indexicality—the trace of a thing that both evidences and obscures its source—is central to Jones’s practice. The artist’s academic background in philosophy informs an approach to representation that considers the ontology of the painted image alongside its cultural circulation. The twenty billion cat and flower images that circulate online reach the viewer, not as detached banalities, but as oblique indices of human care, longing, and attention.

Each piece holds a distinct, print-like quality, emphasised through the artist’s technique of sanding back the painted surface until the weave of the linen reemerges. The linen is primed with clear acrylic, allowing the substrate to absorb and refract the early layers of oil paint, which builds depth while resisting illusionism. This conceptual friction—between surface and image, illusion and material—is embedded within the works and exhibition. While Jones’s practice suggests a careful sentimentality, it too functions as a structure for considering contemporary representation, accumulation, and the recursive demands of attention within an image-saturated culture.

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Joseph Jones (b. 1985, London, UK) lives and works in Sussex, UK. Jones received a BA in Fine Art Painting from University of the Arts, London in 2008, with a year at the Gerrit Reitveld Academie, Amsterdam in 2007 and received his MA in Fine Art Painting from the Royal College of Art, London in 2010. Recent solo exhibitions include *Joseph Jones* at The Artists Room, London, UK (2024) and *Index* at Roland Ross, Margate, UK (2024). Jones is a Senior Lecturer in the School of Art and Design at University of Brighton.



Joseph Jones
Shadow, 2025
Oil and acrylic on linen
8.25 x 5.5 in. (21 x 14 cm)