

BLUE VELVET

MARIUS STEIGER

MONSIEUR HULOT

26 April – 6 June 2025

Marius Steiger's solo exhibition *Monsieur Hulot* at Blue Velvet draws from Jacques Tati's iconic film *PlayTime* to stage a surreal corporate interior that reflects on modernism's promises of order and progress. Tati's critique of mechanized routine and the erasure of individuality finds new form in Steiger's shaped paintings and spatial interventions, which merge hyperrealism with theatrical absurdity.

On the ground floor, Steiger constructs an immersive office-like environment. Bookcase-shaped paintings filled with abstract binders, books, and sterile office matter are interrupted by small relics of human activity — fruits, cigarettes, and pieces of memorabilia. These interventions break the monotony of bureaucratic order, suggesting a lingering human presence — traces of life within a system defined by repetition and function.

Paintings resembling wooden planks interrupt the space like corporate partitions, evoking labor, confinement, and control. Their placement filters the viewer's sense of orientation toward the outside, reframing what lies beyond as part of the constructed interior. The architecture becomes a prop — an image of structure that exposes its own rigidity.

Upstairs, the exhibition continues with Steiger's *Car* series — shaped canvases that reduce the automobile to pure iconography. These paintings reflect how luxury sports cars can transcend their function to become cultural symbols. With their bold design and status as emblems of aspiration, they raise questions about luxury, desire, and the value we assign to objects. They become projections of narrative: markers of personal ambition, cultural ideals, or collective nostalgia. Stripped of function and frozen in place, these car paintings sit between image, artifact, and showroom illusion.

Referencing the rigid systems of modernist efficiency, *Monsieur Hulot* turns corporate decor into a controlled environment where functional design becomes aesthetic language and perception is subtly directed. The exhibition reflects how the systems that structure our surroundings also shape how we see and behave.

Hovering between decoration and critique, these works expose the mechanics behind modern environments. What first appears orderly reveals its artificiality — disrupted by the quiet humour of leftover objects and the tension between surface and meaning. Steiger's works point to the fragility of these systems, where meaning slips at the edges and control gives way to ambiguity.