

Niklas Asker

*A Sudden Increase in Mass*

22 May - 21 June 2025

Niklas Asker (b. 1979, Nordingrå, Sweden) thinks of his paintings in three-dimensional terms, as objects which exist beyond the boundaries of the canvas; those imbued with weight, or mass. Indeed, it is the idea of mass, which— as Einstein revealed— is inextricable from energy, that forms the starting point for the artist's second solo exhibition at Union Pacific. As an object's speed approaches that of light, its mass increases, much like the way in which life sweeps us all into its accelerating motion. Have you ever noticed the sensation of time passing more quickly as the days, weeks, and years go on?

'A Sudden Increase in Mass' is Asker's attempt— amidst the relentlessness of everyday life— to return to the foundations of his practice, grounded in the clay sculptures of his youth and the art historical and spiritual references which have continuously informed his work. The results are personal in both content and location, often incorporating items collected by the artist throughout the course of his career, and sometimes offering a glimpse of his studio or the forests of northern Sweden, where he was born. Many of the objects depicted are shown resting upon the grey table where the artist prepares his canvases and mixes his colours; though none of these paintings are self-portraits in the traditional sense of the word, they all contribute to a picture of Asker's life. Despite this, they retain a universality— an energy— which resonates across individual experience, revealing the stories which might be told by the objects, images and spaces which surround us.