

CHAPTER NY



For immediate release

Joseph Jones
January 9 – February 21, 2026

Chapter NY is thrilled to present Joseph Jones' first exhibition in the New York, featuring a new series of paintings.

Joseph Jones's paintings pulse with stillness. In their intimate scale and meticulous detail, they sit between portraiture and still life, acting both as mirrors of self-reflection and windows onto the nature of contemporary representation in the digital age.

Jones constructs his subjects – often cats and flowers – from composites. Jones manipulates their environments and their embellishments much as a pet owner would, transporting these creatures into compositions that he thinks will be interesting to paint. The satin of an Adidas tracksuit burnishes a lustrous backdrop for the subject of *Gold cat*, whose white velvet fur appears even softer, flatter, in contrast. This is a lesson in both texture and time in painting, as nodded to by the watch. In Jones's recent series, this is the most a human figure has featured, although they are always present in the life cycle of the image, from creation, to internet circulation to its slowed reproduction and reading as painting.

The artist uses a layered technique of priming, painting, and then sanding back to expose the linen weave. The result – seen clearly in *Cat in rainbow light* – lends the dual impression of the subject's vivid presence, and that it has always been there. The color palette, at once subtle and saturated, implies the dream-like quality of representation. Is the rainbow light surface or image, illusion or material? In suffusing his paintings with an unreal glow, seen also in his works of flowers at peak bloom, Jones emphasises the unlikely surreality of photorealism.

Jones selects his subjects as windows onto the nature of painting. They are vehicles to experiment with and master techniques, such as the trompe l'œil corrugated cardboard border of *White cat with gemstones*, or the creases of a clothed elbow. The artist's subjects are also mirrors. They might be mirrors of our own reflections, our own affections, and nostalgia. In *Rose*, the symbol of England is captured mid-bloom, on the precipice of revealing the secrets of its inner form.

In Joris-Karl Huysmans's 1884 novel *Against Nature* (À Rebours), the reclusive aesthete Des Esseintes retreats into a world of his own artistic creation. As part of this project, he sets precious gemstones into the shell of a tortoise, which, "unable to bear the dazzling splendour imposed upon it," ultimately dies. Jones embellishes his *White cat with gemstones* – not precious ones, but plastic stickers mass-manufactured for children. Rather than weighing it down or overwhelming it, the cat appears only minorly perturbed by this intervention. These gems are instead for us, the viewers, and they wink out toward us. They interrupt the soft blankness of the cat's fur, and the black depth of the box, and, in doing so, ask what we value and embellish – what we make unnatural, unreal, in our attentions. Jones's vernacular uses these subjects as diversions, from belief in nature towards our new kind of longing: one governed by the pleasure and sentimentality of images.

– *Phoebe Cripps*

Joseph Jones lives and works in Sussex, UK. He graduated from the Royal College of Art London in 2010 and the University of Arts, London in 2008. Jones has had solo exhibitions at Ehrlich Steinberg, Los Angeles; The Artists Room, London; and Roland Ross, Margate. His work has been included in group exhibitions at Overduin & Co, Los Angeles; Workplace, London; and Shophouse, Hong Kong, amongst others.