

Mirage City | Marcel Rusu | 10th September – 9th October 2025



Marcel Rusu, *Fame in the Rearview*, 2025. Acrylic and Oil on linen, 17 3/8 x 21 1/4 in, 44 x 54 cm

JD Malat Gallery London is excited to present *Mirage City*, a solo exhibition by Romanian artist Marcel Rusu (b. 1989, Mediaș, Romania), unveiling a striking new body of paintings that take us on a journey to sun-soaked Los Angeles as global fantasy and personal fiction. Rusu presents Los Angeles as a simulacrum; a construction of a city he has not been to, yet is informed on, through the glowing prism of cinema, video games, and mass media.

Blending oil, acrylic inks, airbrush, and digital manipulation, Rusu's process mirrors the fractured way we consume contemporary culture: at once tactile and synthetic, painterly and screen-like. The result is a hyperreal visual language that borrows the surface sheen of the West Coast, palm trees, pastel façades, neon signage, and reassembles it through

an Eastern European sensibility. Rusu's visual grammar is shaped by the collision of modernist ambition and Soviet-era architecture, the rise of consumerism after Communism, Black Sea holidays and the psychological weight of political transition. The result is Rusu's work conveying an eerily familiar yet dissonant reality, a visual echo chamber where dream and reality cohabit.

At the core of *Mirage City* lies a dispute with the camera as an objective recorder of reality. Rusu positions his painting practice in direct, mechanical competition with photography and film, challenging their claims to truth, and embracing instead a layered subjectivity.

These works do not depict Los Angeles so much as perform it. Rusu treats the city as a cinematic construct, a mirage of freedom, fame, and desire exported through visual soft power. In this way, *Mirage City* reflects on the deeper mechanics of identity in the digital age: how we internalise distant myths, how fantasy becomes architecture, and how global culture is consumed, manipulated, and remade.

With *Mirage City*, JD Malat Gallery presents a bold and timely meditation on mediated reality, a sun-drenched fiction assembled from pixels, paint, and projection.

For more information, images and comments, please contact: press@jdmalat.com

Opening hours: Monday – Friday, 10am – 6pm and Saturday's, 12pm – 6pm

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