

# JD MALAT GALLERY

## *After the Punch* By Georg Óskar

3 November – 30 November 2022



Georg Óskar, *Romeo and Juliet*, 2022, oil on canvas, 86 5/8 x 70 7/8 in, 220 x 180 cm

It's Berlin at night. The night is all-consuming, the darkness conceals the past and the future, leaving one in the present moment which can change everything. The artist is wandering in the sleepless city. In just one second the attack happens. The next day, he wakes up in hospital. His life after the punch will never be the same.

*Sometimes you just have to hit that brick wall to change your ways. That is what I did, and I have been grateful for that punch ever since.*

- Georg Óskar

JD Malat Gallery is thrilled to announce the first ever solo show *After the Punch* by Georg Óskar (b. 1985), an internationally-recognised Berlin-based artist from Iceland, whose large-scale canvases ignite a thought-provoking conversation on the complexities of contemporary life. On display from 3 November to 30 November, the exhibition encourages the viewers to embark on the journey of endless search for the balance between darkness and humour.

*After the Punch* presents an electrifying selection of seven brand new paintings, encompassing the signature visual vocabulary of Óskar's oeuvre. Suffused with the expressive painterly marks, dynamic and yet murky colour palette, his spontaneous and incandescent canvases highlight the mundane moments of life, which often remain unnoticed. Óskar explores the transcendental experience of ordinary events. Óskar's canvases act as mirrors for the viewers to reflect on the overwhelming experience of 'tapping into the void of being.' *After the Punch* marks Óskar's strongest and most introspective body of work to date. It unveils his signature sarcastic take on contemporary life on a more profound and deeper level than ever before.

This synergy of transcendence and humour is evident in the titles of his paintings. The artist claims, "The text cannot reveal too much. The text has to be more abstract rather than direct message." Hence, Óskar creates an imaginary room for the audience to freely interact with the exhibited pieces. Outlined through intentional satiric misspelling, scribbling technique, and the whirlwind of familiar but distorted shapes, Óskar's paintings generate a rebellious sense of protest against the darkness of mundanity.

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Georg Óskar, *The End of Everything*, 2022, oil on canvas, 78 3/4 x 98 3/8 in, 200 x 250 cm

*The End of Everything*, for example, conveys an amalgamation of distorted representations of pop culture and post-modern references, as the audience faces cubist-inspired figures of cartoonish creatures caught in the state of anguish. Even the figure which is synonymous with positivity - the Disney character Mickey Mouse - is exhausted and hopeless. This restlessness of the created shapes and forms produces a chaotic feeling, making the large canvas of *The End of Everything* an embodiment of the dilapidated world, erupting with madness, which will again consume the audience as soon as they leave the exhibition.

*Romeo and Juliet* presents a critique on modern love stories, as Óskar is rejecting the quintessential romantic view on the topic and showcases it from the perspective of detachment and miscommunication. One of the figures is evaporating, potentially referring to the ultimate fragility and instability of contemporary relationships. Crucially, in this series of paintings, it is evident that Óskar stresses loneliness and solitude as the key themes, as his characters are often captured wandering alone in the misty landscapes. Yet, the artist embraces his loneliness, and therefore, enters the stage of transition, fully accepting the crisis of the past. Overall, in the artworks of *After the Punch*, Óskar exercises and elevates his emotions and contemplation during the recovery process, yet fills the canvases with sarcastic representations of everyday life.

For the first time Óskar reveals a vulnerable part of himself with the array of works in *After the Punch*. This exhibition is a strong emotional rendering of Óskar's experience. His embrace of loneliness is exalted and transformed into a powerful solitude, which heals and offers a dynamic transition for the artist. The recovery process 'after the punch' gave the artist immense inspiration to reflect on his life, as well as the current state of the world and the time we live in. JD Malat Gallery is delighted to bring Georg Óskar's captivating works to the art scene of New York City, allowing his visceral narratives to awaken inner sensibilities within the New York audience.

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