

## *The Garden*

**Luis Olaso**

July 13 - August 12



Luis Olaso, *Composition for red and yellow flowers*, 2023, oil, acrylic, oil bar, oil pastel on canvas, 78 3/4 x 114 1/8 in, 200 x 290 cm

JD Malat Gallery is excited to announce the opening of *The Garden*, a solo-show by Bilbao-based artist Luis Olaso (b. 1986), on view July 13th until August 8th. Following *Physis*, Olaso's immensely successful 2021 show in London, *The Garden*, invites viewers to journey through snapshots of Olaso's memories through this array of his colourful and lush abstract still lifes.

Having exhibited in Finland, Spain, France, Portugal, the United Kingdom, the United States, and Japan, Olaso is undeniably a powerful force driving contemporary abstraction with his colourful and expressive still lifes. His second solo show in London with JD Malat Gallery, *The Garden*, showcases the latest developments in Olaso's work and inspirations.

Presenting ten large-scale works, *The Garden* is packed with bold colours and natural motifs and transforms the exhibition space into a representation of Olaso's daily life and surroundings.

*"I am in a personal moment in which I feel fascinated by nature. I live surrounded by it: my passions are my garden, where I grow my own plants and eat them, and my sailing boat. The fascination for life and nature is present in all of my works, I think it is my greatest source of inspiration." – Luis Olaso*

Exhibition opening hours: Monday to Friday, 10am – 6pm; Saturday, 12pm – 6pm

Bursting with energy and colour, Olaso's lively reinterpretation of the still life painting turns the traditionally foreboding genre on its head. Mixing the abstract with the representational, his "unstill" lifes reflect the vibrant Spanish dining culture in the artist's local Bilbao.

Identifying his paintings as a form of abstract self-portrait, Olaso has defined his process as akin to therapy – a moment where he is free of social conditioning, obligations, and pretenses. In order to allow for absolute expression and freedom within his work, Olaso's two-step approach to painting, dubbed Action and Analysis, bridges chaos and order. Initially painting on pure instinct, Olaso creates raw shapes, patterns, and maps of colour across the canvas. Then, after hours of inspection and analysis, he grades what works for the painting and what doesn't. Through this method, Olaso is able to create uninhibited, emotive, and visceral paintings reflecting his irrational subconscious self, while still evolving as an artist piece by piece and collection by collection.



**Luis Olaso**, *Composition for sunflower and jug.*, 2022,  
oil, acrylic, spray, oil bar, oil pastel and stitched  
fabrics, 47 1/4 x 47 1/4 in, 120 x 120 cm

*"My work is always a self-portrait. Not a self-portrait at the level of representation, but a self-portrait of emotions and personal state. From there comes the colour, the viscosity, the expression in the brushstrokes that help me to represent the iconographic imagery of the close elements of my day to day – in this case, plants, still lifes and different elements of my life."*

– Luis Olaso

The body of work behind *The Garden* expands on Olaso's signature elements into bolder, more saturated colours as the artist plays with forced contrasts and chromatic amplitude. He pays fine attention to the whites and lightnesses of the canvas, utilizing the blank spaces and brushstrokes to float his naturalistic elements and build tension for his dramatic use of colour.

Challenging the exhibition as a "blank canvas", Olaso has created an all-encompassing experience where each work connects into a wall-to-wall abstract rendition of his environment. With *The Garden*, Olaso offers a space to stop and connect with his works, as "just as [my paintings] come from a specific personal moment on my part, the viewer will connect either with my message, or seek to travel to your own 'Garden' and make your personal journey."