

Contemporary Figuration: Between Body & Metaphor

14 December 2023 – 27 January 2024



Ur Kasin, *Beach Scene*, 2023, Oil on canvas, 98 3/8 x 110 1/4 in, 250 x 280 cm

The body is a physical and material being. However, it can also reflect a person's spirit, sense of 'self' or embrace metaphors of our contemporary age. This exhibition seeks to bring together the work of contemporary painters who explore the body as material, and as the embodiment of the immaterial, engaging in themes ranging from the notion of 'self', identity, critical race, queer theory and the technological body. It also seeks to shed light on the varying ways in which different artistic styles of figuration can engage with the question: how do we picture the human subject today?

In an age where questions of embodied experience are continually accentuated by our relationship with cross-cultural exchange, media, new technologies, and socio-political change, the body has come to signify the transcendental. Different painterly styles that range from realism to abstraction, and technologically informed practices, seek to demonstrate the expansive breadth of contemporary figurative painting and its capacity to tell the stories of diverse bodies and their connotations – the polarised, the 'ideal', the natural, the technological, the liminal, and more – and help situate them within the nuanced frameworks of posthumanism, feminism, Otherness and diasporic memory.

To encourage an open-minded and all-embracing experience of the exhibition, the curatorial premise is guided by each artist's personal response to 'Body & Metaphor'. Both represented artists from the gallery's roster, and guest artists, have been invited to share their thoughts in the catalogue that accompanies the exhibition to champion an artist-centric model of the gallery space and highlight the gallery as platform, rather than mediator.

Participating artists:

Georgia Dymock (b.1998), Emily Gillbanks (b.1999), Andrew Litten (b.1970), Ayanfe Olarinde (b.1996), Yann Leto (b.1979), Celine Ali (b.1997), Cathy Tabbakh (b.1989), Richard Wathen (b.1971), Han Ji Min (b.1981), Sophie-Yen Bretez (b.1994), Natalia Ocerin (b.1989), Erin Holly (b.1986), Tega Tafadzwa (b.1985) and Ur Kasin (b.1998).

For further images and comment, please contact press@jdmalat.com

Gallery opening times:
Monday – Friday, 10am – 6pm
Saturday, 12pm – 6pm



Han Ji Min, *Shoulder*, 2023, Oil on linen, 51 1/8 x 51 1/8 in, 130 x 130 cm