

*Portraits: Through The Looking Glass* | 20<sup>th</sup> February – 22<sup>nd</sup> March 2025



Dannielle Hodson, *Woolgathering*, 2025, Oil on canvas, 60 x 50 cm

JD Malat Gallery is delighted to present *Portraits: Through The Looking Glass*, a group exhibition that reimagines conventional perceptions of portraiture, uniting twenty distinguished contemporary artists who redefine our understanding of representation, perception, and the human experience in this seemingly digital age.

Drawing profound inspiration from Lewis Carroll's seminal work *Through the Looking-Glass* (1871), the exhibition explores the looking glass as a multifaceted metaphor, simultaneously a mirror of reality, a window into imagination, and a transformative portal of perception. This concept resonates across historical and artistic contexts, from Narcissus's reflective pool in Greek mythology to Rembrandt's introspective self-portraits, underscoring the looking glass as a potent symbol of self-examination and metamorphosis.

The exhibition brings together artists working across diverse artistic approaches and techniques, presenting multiple styles including realism, digitally inspired designs, dreamlike surrealism, and figurative abstraction. Together, the artists interrogate how portraiture can continue to reveal hidden dimensions of the human experience, inviting viewers to step beyond conventional perceptions and reconsider their understanding of identity, perception, and representation.

**Artists:**

**Ian Cumberland (b. 1983, Northern Ireland)** is a contemporary Northern Irish artist who creates voyeuristic paintings and installations that capture private moments in everyday settings. Cumberland meticulously stages scenes before painting them, incorporating the canvases into larger installations that explore the human condition, media influence and surveillance.

**Sophie-Yen Bretez** is a self-taught Vietnamese-French artist based in Paris who transitioned from business management to full-time art in 2021. Her surrealist figurative work explores emotional recovery and identity through dream-like scenes featuring characters against illuminated horizons, often depicting nude female figures who assert agency by gazing directly at viewers.

**Máté Orr (b. 1985, Hungary)** combines traditional oil painting with contemporary vector graphics to create mystical images exploring human psychology. Orr draws 2D silhouette-like "notan" forms in Adobe Illustrator, then hand-paints them alongside realistic 3D details on canvas, creating a constant shift between the realistic and emblematic.

**Thierry Carrier (b. 1973, France)** is celebrated for his evocative portraits that challenge traditional notions of identity, through placing his solitary subjects in undefined, timeless spaces without traditional titles, inviting viewers to engage with the work on an introspective emotional level.

**Han Ji Min (b. 1978, Korea)** is a contemporary Seoul-based artist recognised for soft-edged compositions depicting figures in serene environments. Han focuses on backs and subtle body movements in boldly framed compositions, capturing the simultaneous sense of stability and inner anxiety of urban life through soft, mid-range hues.

**Dannielle Hodson (b. 1980, UK)** creates intricate, psychologically charged compositions inspired by carnivalesque traditions that blur boundaries between abstraction and figuration. Her paintings generate complex visual environments where multiple figures merge and transform, highlighting the mutable nature of human consciousness and embodied experience.

**Andrew Litten (b. 1970, UK)** is a self-taught British artist who explores raw human existence through large-scale figurative paintings, bronze sculpture and mixed media work. His portraits are characterised by a challenging intensity that represents dependence, breakdown and faith, peeling back civility to uncover animal instincts and fears.

**Cristina De Miguel (b. 1987, Spain)** large-scale compositions explore the relationship between material process and figurative representation. Her floor-placed impasto canvases have sculptural qualities, allowing her to amplify the dynamism of her ambiguous figures.

**Amélie Peace (b. 1997, France)** is a French-born queer artist based in London whose work examines physical connection, touch and embodiment. Peace uses vibrant colours and interwoven figures to explore the human touch.

**Marcela Flórido's (b. 1988, Brazil)** multifaceted paintings examine contemporary perspectives on identity, gender and cultural representation through richly layered narratives. Her spontaneous application onto the canvas generates complex visual dialogues that interrogate established perspectives on cultural identity.

**Kojo Marfo (b. 1980, Ghana)** is a Ghanaian artist based in London whose compositions reference traditional Akan art alongside Western influences to bridge cultural boundaries. His work provides distinct commentary on social issues including inequalities, religion, politics and spiritualism.

**Katia Lifshin (b. 1993, Ukraine)** explores identity, transformation and connection through surreal landscapes featuring young female figures navigating ethereal environments. Her distinctive blue-green palette compositions act as metaphorical representations of personal identity and environmental context.

**Yann Leto (b. 1979, France)** explores irony, sociopolitical criticism and equivocal topics through bridging traditional art historical motifs with a contemporary technique. He creates surreal collage-like narratives by combining vivid and murky colour palettes with cubism influence.

**Owain Hunt (b. 1994, UK)** approaches portraiture as a vehicle for exploring human connection and temporal experience. His methodological approach emphasises direct observation of subjects drawn from diverse personal relationships, creating pieces that function simultaneously as documentary evidence and interpretive exploration.

**Jade Ching-Yuk NG (b. 1992, Hong Kong)** examines physical intimacy and separation through overlapping layers of soft colours and subtle gradients. NG creates 'body puzzles' that combine personal experiences with mystical and alchemical symbolism, deconstructing and reconstructing these elements into ambiguous surrealist narratives.

**Henrik Aa. Uldalen (b. 1986, South Korea)** is a self-taught expressionist artist raised in Norway who blends contemporary painting with classic figurative painting. He examines themes like nihilism, existentialism and loneliness that juxtaposed the dream-like paintings.

**Celine Ali (b. 1997, Turkey)** work explores human connectivity, emotional intimacy and unconventional ideas of women's existence. Her paintings feature faceless figures that encourage viewers to shape their own narratives, incorporating cubist influences and surrealist aesthetics to create vibrant visual compositions that portray different facets of femininity.

**Erkut Terliksiz (b. 1978, Turkey)** vibrant compositions challenge conventional figurative representation by synthesising traditional and contemporary approaches to painting. His distinctive figures are characterised by exaggerated features alluding to psychological depth and vulnerability.

**Roberta Booth (b.1947, UK)** is an established artist who examines consciousness, through her work highlighting the intersection of machinery with nature. The anthropomorphic elements blended with a soft vulnerability address the relationship between humanity and creations of the machine.

**Jordy Kerwick (b.1982, Australia)** is a self taught sculptor and painter who, inspired by the palaeolithic period uses motifs such as cobras and quasi-mythical creatures to produce compelling work which shields itself from conventions in both adulthood and traditional art practice methodology.

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For more information, images and comments, please contact: [press@jdmalat.com](mailto:press@jdmalat.com)

Opening hours: 10am - 6pm Monday - Friday, 12pm - 6pm Saturday

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