

MIRROR OF DARKNESS
ZÜMRÜTOĞLU BRINGS FIRST UK EXHIBITION TO JD MALAT GALLERY

Celebrated Turkish artist, **Zümrütoğlu** is bringing his **first UK exhibition** to Mayfair's *JD Malat Gallery* from **1 October** until **10 November**.



The solo show, entitled *Mirror of Darkness*, is inspired by the fear and barbarism in novelist **Joseph Conrad**'s work, and is Zümrütoğlu's personal *Heart of Darkness*, turning a mirror to the shadows of modern society.

Fascinatingly, like Wassily Kandinsky, Zümrütoğlu has **Synesthesia** - the capacity to **see sound and hear colour** - and uses this to paint the dark and brooding soundtrack to his politically charged work.

He explained: "I have always been heavily inspired by Conrad and his work. This is my own *Heart of Darkness*, exploring existential fears about modernity, progress and capitalism.

"Humans become greedy and dissatisfied with what they have. Everything is too easy for us to access and we have become complacent.

"My artworks deal with the tragedy of so many opportunities failing to satisfy people, because they now want the impossible and are unable to lead a normal life."

Like Conrad, he is brutally honest in his expression - whether that is in his language or his art, which features harsh brushstrokes and a conscious decision to **make his subjects real, rather than beautiful**.

Zümrütoğlu's artistic influences are mostly **Russian Classical** artists like **Ilya Repin**, **German Expressionists**, and **Max Liebermann** and **Willem de Kooning**.

The show will feature **25 pieces** of varying sizes, using bold, light and dark colours, to balance the light and dark emotions he is conveying.

JD Malat Gallery founder, curator and world-renowned dealer, Jean-David Malat first fell in love with Zümrütoğlu's work when he saw it in Istanbul, and flew out to meet the artist at his Berlin studio, where he has divided his time for the past decade, when not at his Turkish HQ.

Jean-David said: "I knew instantly that I had to work with him. His pieces are so full of emotion and power - his talent is indisputable.

"From the way my collectors look at his work, I know there is something truly special about his paintings.

"He adds a new dimension to the gallery programme and I am very excited for his new exhibition this October."

The famous art historian, critic and professor, **David Bellingham** is writing an essay for the upcoming catalogue to be produced alongside Zümrütoğlu's exhibition

Zümrütoğlu was born in Konya, Turkey in 1970 and graduated from the Faculty of Fine Arts at *Dokuz Eylül University* in Izmir in 1996, when he headed to Belgium and Holland to continue his studies.

He is an established artist who has exhibited in museums and galleries and is being hailed as one of the most exciting artists to come out of Turkey.

Mirror of Darkness will be his first solo UK show.