

Georg Óskar

Pain Thing

13 October – 13 November



Georg Óskar, *The Existentialism Man*, 2021,
oil, spray, acrylic on canvas, 175 x 175 cm

“Life is a one big inspiration” – Georg Óskar

JD Malat Gallery is pleased to present *Pain Thing*, a solo exhibition by Icelandic artist Georg Óskar. *Pain Thing* is a play on words, which refers to both the act of painting and the resulting challenges involved in the process.

On display from 13 October until 13 November 2021, *Pain Thing* coincides with the much anticipated return of Frieze London and Frieze Masters 2021, marking a defining moment for the city’s creative community as it emerges from the global pandemic.

Pain Thing presents an introspective body of work comprising 16 new paintings. Infused with a distinct sarcastic twist, Óskar’s artistic practice is a visual diary of his personal observations of the mundane. Óskar’s work is saturated with humour and wit as well as a melancholic quality that channels the artist’s long-standing interest in the extremes of human existence.

The quotidian, fleeting moments of the everyday life, inspire the work of the Icelandic artist. Relatable and real, Óskar’s paintings offer his often sarcastic, but always genuine observations of the mundane. The artist absorbs something from each day, glimpses into the human condition, and visually translates this in his paintings. The subject matters are both a

simplified caricature of humankind as well as an extensive analysis of human emotions such as grief, pain, joy, and vitality. Óskar aims to examine and measure the space between the extremes that go from the good to the bad, from happiness to loneliness; and locate the necessary equilibrium in life. Óskar's work represents a balancing act. Allowing multiple entry points, it invites the viewers to take time and space to reflect on the vernacular and the complexity of contemporary life.

Although Óskar has been creating art since his early teens: doing drawings, doodles, spray paintings, playing music, and recreating art from his favourite skateboard brands. It wasn't until his early twenties that he had his very first painting class in school. This was a pivotal moment for the artist: 'I fell in love with the whole thing, the brush and the paint, I just felt this was something I had been longing for without really knowing about it.' Óskar enrolled at a private art school that same summer to pursue his life's calling. He graduated with a Diploma in Fine Arts from Akureyri School of visual arts in 2009 and subsequently obtained his MFA from the Faculty of the Fine Art, Music and Design in Bergen, Norway in 2016.

In the span of the 17 years of his artistic career, Óskar's work evolved immensely from being 'pretty waves of colours', as the artist explains himself, to becoming more substantial, introspective with a murkier and more muted colour palette.

Óskar allows ideas to pour out onto the canvas organically, paints over, sometimes multiple times until he reaches a transcendent connection with the work – until that focal moment of deep and personal connection, it's all about destruction and construction.

Having experimented with different materials, and often using a range of mixed materials in his paintings, the artist's material of choice is oil. Óskar explains: 'I want the thickness and the richness the oil has to offer; I want things to get messy so I can organize that mess.' Influenced by the Northern climate and sometimes sombre atmosphere of Scandinavian landscapes, Óskar's raw brushstrokes and muted palette reflects on this isolation.

Óskar draws inspiration from the energy and raw nature of artists such as Paul McCarthy, Armen Eloyan, Bjarne Melgaard, Rita Ackermann. However, the main source of inspiration for Óskar is music: 'Music is such a rich emotional generator which I use all of the time in my own work.'

Having exhibited internationally in various cultural hubs including Spain, Germany, China, Switzerland, Norway and Iceland, *Pain Thing* marks Georg Óskar's debut solo exhibition in the UK.

Georg Óskar currently lives and works in Oslo, Norway.

For more information, images, and comment, please contact: press@jdmalat.com

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