

Matthew Day Jackson: *Against Nature*

May 12 – July 1, 2023
510 West 25th Street
New York



Matthew Day Jackson, *Solaris (after CDF)*, 2023 © Matthew Day Jackson, courtesy Pace Gallery

New York – Pace is pleased to present new works by Matthew Day Jackson at its 510 West 25th Street gallery in New York from May 12 to July 1. This presentation—coinciding with Frieze New York and TEFAF New York—will mark Jackson’s debut solo show with the gallery and his first exhibition in New York in a decade. Titled *Against Nature*, the artist’s upcoming exhibition will center on a focused body of work that includes painting and sculpture.

Through his expansive practice, Jackson explores a wide range of subjects—historical, futuristic, scientific, spiritual, and fantastical. At the core of his work is a deep interest in finding similarities within binaries and dichotomies, particularly the simultaneity of beauty and horror. In his research-based, experimental process, the artist considers conceptual and physical underpinnings equally significant, incorporating combinations of traditional, industrial, and found materials in his work across painting, sculpture, installation, and other mediums.

Named for Joris-Karl Huysmans’s 1884 novel *Against Nature*—in which a French aristocrat named Jean Des Esseintes departs Paris to indulge his obsessive, insatiable desire for luxury and beauty in the countryside, exploiting natural resources for his own aesthetic ends—Jackson’s forthcoming presentation with Pace in New York will be anchored by ten new landscape paintings. Using a semi-autonomous laser process that imbues colors and forms in these works with an otherworldly feel, the artist mines the history of landscape painting, with an eye towards Caspar David Friedrich, Thomas Cole, Albert Bierstadt, and Thomas Moran. Similarly, the work of 19th century photographer Eadweard Muybridge, known primarily for his studies of motion and his learned expertise in darkroom photography, has informed Jackson’s interest in unearthly landscape scenes featuring perspectival distortions and uncanny coloration. With his new paintings, Jackson eschews stylistic signatures to investigate the complexities of authorship and undermine mythologies of artistic “genius.” As part of a process that combines physical and digital modes of making, the artist brings issues of materiality and form—as opposed to gesture and expression—to the fore of his latest works.

Replete with art historical allusions, the artist's new landscape paintings also reference the conventions of landscape in science fiction film and literature, where the strange and familiar converge. Jackson creates these composite works by layering images sourced from landscape photography and painting as well as everyday scenes he has captured on his iPhone. As such, tensions between artifice and authenticity; reality and unreality; ambiguity and clarity cut across these highly detailed, hallucinatory scenes, eliciting curiosity and wonderment. Upending viewers' expectations and initial impressions, Jackson's layered, complex works—rife with visual paradoxes—invite questions of medium, materiality, and meaning that are only answered through sustained consideration and interrogation.

Uniting visions of suburbia and the sublime, the exhibition's sensorial offerings will extend to the olfactory realm. An ineffable scent—produced by the artist in collaboration with ArtOlfactionLab team at Bestscent—will linger throughout the gallery space. This immersive element will transport viewers into the imaginary environments and atmospheres of the landscapes on view.

The presentation will also include a sculptural work that directly references Huysmans's novel *Against Nature*, in which the protagonist, Des Esseintes, uses his wealth to enjoy any and all pleasures of the senses within his own hermetically sealed bubble of privilege. At one point in the story, Des Esseintes commissions a Parisian lapidary to encrust a living tortoise with jewels—he is unphased and unmoved when the tortoise dies upon delivery to his home. Connecting this character's disregard for expense, labor, and conservation with present-day treatment of the natural environment, Jackson will present a ring inspired by Huysmans's tortoise narrative in his exhibition. Created through a collaboration and trade between Jackson and designer Solange Azagury-Partridge, the ring, which is owned by the artist, will be displayed in a specially built case. With his inclusion of this piece, Jackson draws attention to his own embodiment of Huysmans's critique, comparing the insularity of an artist's studio with Des Esseintes's self-imposed isolation from the rest of the world.

Concurrent with his presentation at 510 West 25th Street, Jackson will also show a new benefit print, titled *Tower Falls* (2023), at Pace's 540 West 25th Street gallery. Printmaking is an integral part of Jackson's practice, and the sale of *Tower Falls* will support the Skowhegan School of Painting & Sculpture's program and participants.

Matthew Day Jackson (b. 1974, Panorama City, California) has cultivated a practice encompassing sculpture, painting, collage, photography, drawing, video, performance, and installation. Jackson's work, which is often monumental in scale, engages with a wide range of subjects, from the historical and scientific to the futuristic and fantastical. The artist graduated from the University of Washington in Seattle in 1997 and earned his MFA from the Mason Gross School of the Arts at Rutgers University in New Jersey in 2001. He was the recipient of the 2019 Jordan Schnitzer Award for Excellence in Printmaking, and he has participated in residencies at the Chinati Foundation in Marfa, Texas; the Portland Institute for Contemporary Art in Oregon; and the Skowhegan School of Painting & Sculpture in Maine. Jackson lives and works in Brooklyn, New York.

Pace is a leading international art gallery representing some of the most influential contemporary artists and estates from the past century, holding decades-long relationships with Alexander Calder, Jean Dubuffet, Barbara Hepworth, Agnes Martin, Louise Nevelson, and Mark Rothko. Pace enjoys a unique U.S. heritage spanning East and West coasts through its early support of artists central to the Abstract Expressionist and Light and Space movements.

Since its founding by Arne Glimcher in 1960, Pace has developed a distinguished legacy as an artist-first gallery that mounts seminal historical and contemporary exhibitions. Under the current leadership of CEO Marc Glimcher, Pace continues to support its artists and share their visionary work with audiences worldwide by remaining at the forefront of innovation. Now in its seventh decade, the gallery advances its mission through a robust global program—comprising exhibitions, artist projects, public installations, institutional collaborations, performances, and interdisciplinary projects. Pace has a legacy in art bookmaking and has published over five hundred titles in close collaboration with artists, with a focus on original scholarship and on introducing new voices to the art historical canon.

Today, Pace has eight locations worldwide, including a European foothold in London and Geneva, and two galleries in New York—its headquarters at 540 West 25th Street, which welcomed almost 120,000 visitors and programmed 20 shows in its first six months, and an adjacent 8,000 sq. ft. exhibition space at 510 West 25th Street. Pace's long and pioneering history in California includes a gallery in Palo Alto, which was open from 2016 to 2022. Pace's engagement with Silicon Valley's technology industry has had a lasting impact on the gallery at a global level,



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accelerating its initiatives connecting art and technology as well as its work with experiential artists. Pace consolidated its West Coast activity through its flagship in Los Angeles, which opened in 2022. Pace was one of the first international galleries to establish outposts in Asia, where it operates permanent gallery spaces in Hong Kong and Seoul, as well as an office and viewing room in Beijing.

Press Inquiries

Claire Hurley
Associate Director of Public Relations
churley@pacegallery.com
+1 703 901 1960

Emily Kopp
Public Relations Associate
ekopp@pacegallery.com
+1 516 426 4146

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