

## *Jules de Balincourt: Birds on a Boat*

March 17 – April 28, 2022  
 12/F, H Queen's  
 80 Queen's Road Central  
 Hong Kong



Jules de Balincourt, *Beautiful Storm*, 2022 © Jules de Balincourt, courtesy Pace Gallery

Hong Kong – Pace is pleased to present an exhibition of 12 recent paintings by Jules de Balincourt at its Hong Kong gallery. Running from March 18 to April 28, the show, which is titled *Birds on a Boat*, marks the artist's first solo exhibition with Pace since he joined the gallery in 2021. This is also de Balincourt's first solo presentation in Hong Kong since 2012.

Paintings in the show span landscape and figuration. Rendered in rich colors at large- and small-scales, these works reflect de Balincourt's interest in using the canvas to merge his own psychological landscape with external, global landscapes. In his practice, de Balincourt often explores the relationships between humanity and the natural world. The artist, who takes an intuitive, stream of consciousness approach to painting, imbues much of his work with mystery and ambiguity.

Several pieces in *Birds on a Boat* feature groupings of de Balincourt's transient, nomadic figures situated amid formidable trees, churning coastlines, and other natural settings that the artist injects with otherworldly and fantastical qualities. In these works, the artist has said, it's unclear whether the diminutive figures have found themselves in these environments "out of leisure or out of desperation." For viewers, the wind, rain, and other natural forces depicted in these paintings are visceral and deeply felt.

"In a lot of this work you really feel the earthiness within the paintings. I want to convey the physicality of the natural elements, such as the wind, the plants, the rain," the artist has said of his landscapes. "It's about these really basic, earthy elements, and our relationship and our vulnerability, as we attempt to coexist in a constant flux."

Other works in the exhibition feature nude male figures. Depicting torsos, arms, and obscured faces, these works blur the boundary between abstraction and figuration. Limbs and abdomens converge with their surroundings, and the artist positions his figures at a crossroads between full representation and abstraction. Like de Balincourt's landscapes, these works defy easy narrative ascription or categorization.

Formally engaged with the work of artists like Arthur Dove and Milton Avery, as well as the traditions of Fauvism and German Expressionism, de Balincourt's paintings can be understood as vehicles into exploring the subconscious. Rife with expressions of fragility, vulnerability, imbalance, and precarity, these works take up timely motifs and ideas.

**Jules de Balincourt** (b. 1972, Paris) is known internationally for his colorful, radiant paintings that meditate on the social, political, and cultural dynamics of an increasingly globalized world. Shifting from a broader sociological view of borders, territories, and nation-states in his map paintings, the artist’s psychological landscapes bring us closer to humanity’s complicated relationships with natural and urban settings. Dissolving the boundaries between individuals and their environments reveals tensions created by privilege, geographic mobility, and labor. The artist’s social commentary is present even in the most luxuriant, fantastical settings that speak to urgent realities of contemporary life.

De Balincourt expertly blurs the line between abstraction and figuration, creating unsettling formal distortions, shifts in scale and perspective, and abstractions that have linked his approach to artists like Arthur Dove and Milton Avery, as well as the traditions of Fauvism and German Expressionism. Underlying his paintings are poignant commentaries on systems of labor and power, political events, and popular culture that draw their impact from a restless, intuitive exploration of color, space, and form. Of his practice, de Balincourt says: “People often associate a utopian/dystopian narrative with my work. I never had the intention of my work being about these dichotomies. I am more interested in the power painting has to place the viewer at a crossroads of ideological perspectives, which can allow the mind to travel in different directions.”

Born in Paris in 1972, the artist is currently based in Brooklyn, New York and Malpais, Costa Rica. He graduated from the California College of Arts and Crafts, San Francisco in 1998 and earned a Master of Fine Arts at Hunter College, New York, in 2005. He later ran the Brooklyn-based community and events center Starr Space. In 2009, the artist’s work figured in the 10th Havana Biennial at the Museo Nacional de Bellas Artes. His work is held in numerous public collections worldwide, including the Brooklyn Museum, New York; the Los Angeles County Museum of Art, California; the Modern Art Museum of Fort Worth, Texas; the Montreal Museum of Fine Arts, Canada; the Collezione Maramotti, Reggio Emilia, Italy; and the Rochechouart Museum of Contemporary Art, France; among many others.

**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 President and 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.




The gallery has also spearheaded explorations into the intersection of art and technology through its new business models, exhibition interpretation tools, and representation of artists cultivating advanced studio practices. Pace’s presence in Silicon Valley since 2016 has bolstered its longstanding support of experimental practices and digital artmaking. As part of its commitment to innovative, technologically engaged artists within and beyond its program, Pace launched its own dedicated NFT platform, Pace Verso, in November 2021. The gallery’s past NFT projects have spotlighted digital works by Glenn Kaino, DRIFT, Lucas Samaras, Simon Denny, Urs Fischer, John Gerrard, and other artists.

Today, Pace has nine locations worldwide including London, Geneva, a strong foothold in Palo Alto, 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 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. In 2020, Pace opened temporary exhibition spaces in East Hampton and Palm Beach, with continued programming on a seasonal basis.

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