

TODD JAMES
The Intrepid

The gallery's sixth solo exhibition of new works by artist Todd James (b. New York, 1969) opens the new season at our central Madrid space as part of Apertura 2020. The show includes a selection of works created this year, both on canvas and on paper, displaying important examples of the themes and motifs that are central to James' current creative preoccupations. These include still lifes in which the objects have been simplified to the point of transformation, creating a composition of significant forms that populate the space fully, and also interiors that serve as a setting to female figures in indolent, relaxed, distracted—and sometimes suggestive—attitudes.

Todd James takes on these classic genres of painting with an outsider's subversive perspective on the academic tradition of European art history. His scenes refer to everyday life in the Western world and, by extension, comment on countries that the USA influences politically and culturally, as they share in the same consumer-society dilemmas. *The Intrepid* continues his critical spirit and characteristic sense of humour, with which he filters and reinterprets the excess of images that overwhelm us through the various media.

These new compositions, where backgrounds and foregrounds merge, seduce us with their daring colours and surface innocence. But the intimate Matissian interiors and idyllic landscapes are tinged with a latent eroticism and violence. Lascivious women surrounded by weapons, accompanied by skeletons and skulls, or with their usual cats, are depicted from the viewpoint of a voyeur with whom we may identify. Through them he offers a Pop-Art flavoured interpretation of the vital and antagonistic impulses of Eros and Thanatos.

A largely self-taught and multidisciplinary artist, James developed his art in the world of New York's cultural underground in the eighties, and he briefly attended Manhattan's High School of Art and Design during this period. In addition to his fine art, James has produced many celebrated commercial works, including illustrations for major publications, an animated series for Cartoon Network, and art and logos for clients such as the Beastie Boys, Iggy Pop, Eminem, and U2.

In 2001, James' work on the collaborative project *Street Market* was chosen to represent the United States at the Venice Biennale, and in 2015 his work was again selected for the Venice Biennale, this time within the group exhibition *The Bridges of Graffiti*. In 2011, his *Street Market* installation was revised and re-installed as the centerpiece of LA's sold-out *Art In The Streets* group exhibition, and his work has also been included in such iconic international group exhibitions as *Beyond The Streets* (2018-2019), and *Beautiful Losers* (2004-2009).

James recently exhibited at Les Abattoirs in Toulouse as part of its Rose Béton street-art biennial. His work has been shown in solo exhibitions worldwide, in cities including New York, London, Paris, Tokyo, Hong Kong, Brussels, Copenhagen, Milan, Toronto, Sydney, and Melbourne. James lives and works in downtown Manhattan.

For further information or for images, please contact us.