

MATTHEW MARKS GALLERY

523 West 24th Street, New York, New York 10011 Tel: 212-243-0200 Fax: 212-243-0047

PRESS RELEASE

Julien Nguyen: Pictures of the Floating World

June 4 – August 13, 2021

Matthew Marks is pleased to announce **Julien Nguyen: Pictures of the Floating World**, the next exhibition in his gallery at 523 West 24th Street. The artist's first one-person show at the gallery, it includes thirteen oil paintings made over the past three years.

Nguyen is known for his deftly rendered paintings that combine elements of art history, science fiction, and contemporary subjects. His interest in worldbuilding can be seen in several new paintings that use biblical and classical themes as a starting point, including *Ave Maria* (2019), a take on the Madonna Enthroned, and *St. John the Baptist* (2020), a reworking of Caravaggio's *John the Baptist* featuring one of Nguyen's friends as the model.

The exhibition also highlights Nguyen's recent emphasis on portraiture, with depictions of friends, lovers, and fellow artists painted from life. He has said of his art, "Reality occurs only in the intimacy of understanding and being understood." The Los Angeles studio where he lives and works can be seen in several paintings, including one that presents the view from a second-story window in a depiction as thoroughly detailed as it is inventive.

The exhibition's title refers to the visual art of Edo-period Japan, a decadent period of flourishing culture. An enthusiast of history, Nguyen uses the past as a lens through which to view, analyze, and reframe our present moment. As Zack Hatfield has described in *Artforum*, "Some declare the end of the world; others make new worlds. Julien Nguyen does a bit of both."

Julien Nguyen was born in Washington, DC, in 1990. His work was included in the 2017 Whitney Biennial and has been the subject of one-person exhibitions at the Swiss Institute in New York and the Contemporary Arts Center in Cincinnati. He lives and works in Los Angeles.

Julien Nguyen: Pictures of the Floating World is on view by appointment at 523 West 24th Street from June 4 to August 13, 2021. To make an appointment, please click [here](#). For additional information, please contact Beau Rutland at 212-243-0200 or beau@matthewmarks.com.