

# RYAN MOSLEY

## The Disappearing Land

### 2 February - 18 March 2023



Tim Van Laere Gallery is pleased to announce *The Disappearing Land*, a solo exhibition of new paintings and drawings by British painter Ryan Mosley. It is the artist's third solo show at the gallery.

In his works, Ryan Mosley explores new ways of figuration that build on, challenge, and expand the canonical Western painting tradition. Mosley wants his paintings to embody their own contradictions and plays with the viewers' perception of both fact and imagination. Through his spontaneous approach to painting, the characters and narratives appear organically, starting with a cross-fertilization of ideas. Adding and taking away paint propels the characters and narratives towards new destinations far removed from the initial idea.

Mosley's painterly universe is inhabited by an array of fantastical characters who live in a world set in a time both in the past and in the future. They stage a conversation formed by every conceivable tentative, corner of fact and fiction. These characters often find their origins in the signature portraits by Mosley. Here he explores his painterly possibilities and experiments with different ways of representation. They are alibis for painterly questions about surface, shadow, texture, and patterns. These characters only exist in the painters' studio and often find their way onto several of the painter's canvasses, where they develop new storylines. In his large-scale paintings, these portraits become the stage actors and actresses, flaneurs, dandies, dancers, musicians, and travelers. Some figures have accompanied the artist since the beginning of his artistic career, like the bearded man who, in this show, takes on the role of a rower who travels across the water and guides other travelers there with him. For Mosley, the visual anchor of the boat offers a similar escapism as previous motifs of camels, cacti, Stetson hats, stage curtains, and characters plundered from Greek myth. Resembling our human need for stories, Mosley references stories that are based on fiction: Greek myth, fables, ancient narratives, and folklore.

Mosley often obscures the boundaries between fiction and reality, but also between the urban and the exotic. He pulls on many different aspects from his daily life, like the brick patterns he encounters in the streets, the boat motif he encountered over the summer, and new characters he familiarized himself with through literature, like the Behemoth he encountered in Mikhail Bulgakov's *The Master and Margarita*. There, the Behemoth is described as a demonic black cat who speaks, walks on two legs, and can transform into a human shape for brief periods of time. This shape-shifting quality triggered a new train of thought for Mosley and opened up new possibilities for visual motifs to landslide into each other, allowing the domestic reality and otherworldly streams of fiction, literature, and art to collide. It's in this in-between space that each painting begins.

Ryan Mosley (°1980, Chesterfield, UK) has exhibited internationally in exhibitions including Whitechapel Gallery, London; Southbank Centre, London; Aston Hall Museum, Birmingham; Kunsthaus Baselland, Basel; Saatchi Gallery at The Hermitage, Saint Petersburg; Museum Sheffield, Sheffield; Arp Museum Bahnhof Rolandseck, Remagen; Museum of Modern Art, Baku; Modern Museum, Hungary. His works are part of public collections such as Milwaukee Art Museum, Arts Council Collection, Falckenberg Collection, Saatchi Collection, and Museum of Art, Rhode Island School of Design.