

# MATTHEW MARKS GALLERY

1062 North Orange Grove, Los Angeles, California 90046 323-654-1830 matthewmarks.com

## **PRESS RELEASE**

**Julien Nguyen**

June 24 – August 12, 2023

Opening: Saturday, June 24, 6:00 to 8:00 PM

Matthew Marks is pleased to announce an exhibition of recent work by **Julien Nguyen**, the next exhibition in his gallery at 1062 North Orange Grove in Los Angeles. The artist's first one-person show in Los Angeles in seven years features twenty new paintings and works on paper.

Nguyen's new work continues his exploration of art historical, religious, and scientific references, and also expands on his use of portraiture and personal imagery. Many of the paintings on view stem from private moments originally captured in photos on his phone, in particular the recurring portraits of Nikos. Depicted in a variety of scenes both everyday and fantastical, Nikos is seen smoking in a hotel room, trying on a hoodie, and emerging from a giant clamshell. In Nguyen's view, the repetition of Nikos's likeness throughout the exhibition pushes the figure towards abstraction, encouraging the viewer to look beyond the individual subject and to see the works on a formal level.

Nguyen's meticulous process is informed by extensive research on both Renaissance and traditional Japanese painting methods, which in the artist's words, "allow for innumerable layers of refracting and reflecting color." This can be seen in the fiery glow of *Nebula* (2023), an updated sixteenth-century still life in tempera on wood. The artist also incorporates this effect of layering in his digital paintings, such as *Nikolaos Tying Tie, Paris* (2023), which he makes on his iPad and displays on a screen. In another painting, with a similar eye on the past and the future, Nguyen transplants the scene in van der Weyden's *Saint Luke Drawing the Virgin* (c. 1435–40) onto a Southern California beach, supplanting the figure of the saint with a self-portrait. As Nguyen has said, "I find it fascinating that individual and wholly separate traditions might actually become quite complementary once taken apart and reconfigured."

Julien Nguyen (b. 1990) lives and works in Los Angeles. 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, the Kunstverein München in Munich, and the Contemporary Arts Center in Cincinnati.

**Julien Nguyen** will be on view at 1062 North Orange Grove from June 24 through August 12, 2023, Tuesday through Saturday, from 10:00 AM to 6:00 PM.

For additional information, please call 212-243-0200 or email [inquiries@matthewmarks.com](mailto:inquiries@matthewmarks.com).