

Nocturnal

Organized by Matthew Brown

September 23–November 14, 2026
5–6/F, H Queen's, 80 Queen's Road Central, Hong Kong



Olivia van Kuiken, *Blind Eye*, 2026. Courtesy the artist and Matthew Brown

David Zwirner is pleased to announce a group exhibition organized and conceived by gallerist Matthew Brown that brings together a group of artists who work primarily in the hours of darkness. *Nocturnal* presents work by Uri Aran, Patricia Ayres, Julie Beaufrils, Sedrick Chisom, Carroll Dunham, Nat Faulkner, Sasha Gordon, Kenji Ide, Olivia van Kuiken, Heidi Lau, Jack O'Brien, Kent O'Connor, Trevor Shimizu, and Michelle Uckotter.

Across painting and sculpture, these artists draw upon what fellow nocturnal creative Joan Mitchell called "electric light," harnessing this visual and temporal state to make works that thrum with the particular energies of darkness and offer an alternative to waking life. For some of the artists on view, nighttime foments periods of creativity and productivity unavailable to them during the day. Olivia

van Kuiken observes, “I primarily work at night because it’s the only time when it feels like everyone else turns off. There’s also something about night where I’m less inhibited, less judgmental. I can paint freely without feeling anyone’s eyes on me, let alone my own.” Drawing from lunar cycles, Heidi Lau’s standing sculpture draws on emergent landscapes, its surface forming a hybrid of geological formations and tidal movements shaped by the moon. Suspended above it is a circular ceramic form from Lau’s *Moon Jar* series, connecting terrestrial and celestial realms.

Others take advantage of night’s oneiric associations, harnessing the power and fantasy of dreamscapes—and still others might make use of the privacy and quiet afforded by these late hours. For Kenji Ide, the nocturnal has become a recurring theme in his sculptures: “The night frequently appears in my work; it is a time when I walk, reflect, and feel truly free. As the movement of society comes to a halt, I feel that my own personal time begins. The darkness and minimal light shift the weight of my mind, allowing me to reach the entrance of an imaginative world. Blurred shapes, with their outlines faded and softened, overflow their boundaries and blend into one another. In such a hazy space, I am able to project and see my own mind.”

The works in *Nocturnal* call upon the temporal arc from dusk to dawn, exploring how artists have variously invoked its romantic, eerie, eccentric, gloomy, and peaceful aspects. Regarding how the nighttime shifts a setting within a composition, Michelle Uckotter notes, “What is a room but a pinewood box? When we’re left with only artificial light from a bulb or screen, or ambient streetlight coming through a window, it has a way of compressing space into a neat little chamber. Psychological games begin to play out around the shapes in the dark. Just as quickly the narrative dissolves, leaving you alone in a silent room.”

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