

THE STAND-INS
FIGURATIVE PAINTING FROM THE COLLECTION
7 October–19 December 2021

Featured artists: Maxwell Alexandre, Anna Glantz, Philip Guston, Jamian Juliano-Villani, Jordan Kasey, Ella Kruglyanskaya, Maria Lassnig, Kate Lyddon, Christina Quarles, Avery Singer, Dorothea Tanning, Henry Taylor, Caragh Thuring, Tesfaye Urgessa, Willem Weismann, Robin F. Williams, Issy Wood, Rose Wylie, Jakub Julian Ziolkowski



Jamian Juliano-Villani, *Constructive Living*, 2019. Courtesy the artist, Zabłudowicz Collection and MASSIMODECARLO.
Photo: Todd-White Art Photography

The Stand-Ins brings together 19 artists who deploy autobiographical elements and a cast of imagined characters in the construction of their paintings and narratives. Showcasing works from the Zabłudowicz Collection, the exhibition maps lines of influence across generations, featuring seminal figures alongside important new voices.

The term 'stand-in' suggests a temporary replacement, an understudy or avatar filling in for an absent lead. Recently the vulnerability of bodies has been brought into sharp focus for us all. As we step back into the physical and social world after an enforced period of separation, how might we have changed? Who, or what, will we choose to present to others? This air of uncertainty about interactions in the world we share cannot help but permeate artists' studios today, but this concern has a long history that predates the contemporary moment.

The exhibition recognises the diversity of approaches found in figurative painting today, from those that overtly quote art historical styles to those that are more closely linked to observation and realism, or that move towards abstraction. Rather than simply depicting exterior appearances, these artists map interior psychological spaces. Their process shows the sheer exuberance, imagination and humour with which artists continue to reimagine themselves and others via paint. Formal experimentation in composition and the use of materials often leads to the deconstruction of the body into parts: hollow vessels, mask-like layers and bundles of gestures. Sabotaging the idea of a singular self or fixed identity, this group of paintings looks at bodies from the inside out.

A prevalent feature of the dialogue around painting today is the acknowledgement of influences from the past and the need for tenacity and longevity in art practice. Here the distinctive approaches of three landmark figures – **Dorothea Tanning, Philip Guston and Maria Lassnig** – provide a framework for the exhibition. Tanning was a pioneering artist associated with surrealism who developed her own realm of domestic disquiet and dream-like myth. Guston used humour and awkwardness to point directly at the injustices and absurdities he saw around him, and to explore how paintings could be self-contained but could also tell stories, famously taking a bold step away from abstraction to a cartoon-like figuration to do so. And in an approach she termed ‘body awareness’, Lassnig placed herself at the centre of an unflinching take on how flesh and mind intertwine, shift and sometimes come apart.

The ability to remain responsive and reflexive in one’s painting practice is evident in work by many of the artists in the exhibition. Some have had long, rich careers; others are right at the beginning. Many look to, or indeed work in, different mediums, such as moving image, sculpture or music, alongside their painting practice. But painting for all these artists is a point of departure as well as arrival, acting as an enduring frame of reference as well as a history to be kicked against. The representation of the human body in art is not going away and, right now, expressing this as a painted image feels resolutely urgent.

ZABLUDOWICZ COLLECTION

Zabludowicz Collection is an independent philanthropic organisation that is home to a growing collection of contemporary art, and a programme of exhibitions, events and residencies, in collaboration with leading British and international artists. Since its foundation in 1994 the Collection has been dedicated to fostering new audiences and a sustainable environment for contemporary art by creating developmental opportunities and support for emerging and mid-career artists, curators and organisations.

UK registered charity number 1120067.

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Admission: FREE

Thursday–Sunday,

12–6pm or by appointment

Café, Library and Shop

The **Shop** sells limited edition artworks, 50% of the proceeds go directly to the artist.

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