

*The Hills Are Not as Close as They Seem* | Máté Orr | 14<sup>th</sup> May – 14<sup>th</sup> June 2025



Máté Orr, *Three Headed Swan*, 2024, Oil and acrylic on canvas, 80 x 100 cm

JD Malat Gallery, London, is delighted to announce *The Hills Are Not as Close as They Seem*, the first solo exhibition in London by emerging international artist Máté Orr (b. 1985, Budapest). Taking place on the lower-ground floor of the gallery from 14<sup>th</sup> May to 15<sup>th</sup> June 2025, this landmark exhibition presents a powerful new series of works that explore human emotion, psychological resilience, and the surreal absurdities of contemporary life.

Orr's distinctive practice merges digital precision with traditional oil painting, resulting in dreamlike compositions where human and animal forms inhabit complex, psychologically charged landscapes. Through intricate scenes of quiet confrontation and poetic unease, Orr invites viewers into a world where adversity becomes adventure and vulnerability is met with calm introspection.

The title piece, *The Hills Are Not as Close as They Seem*, along with works like *What If We Get Lost?*, exemplifies Orr's thematic focus: figures that are visually out of place, yet composed, reflecting the artist's interest in how we perceive and process threat, fear, and unfamiliar terrain. These characters face surreal challenges not with panic, but with poise, suggesting a deeper narrative of emotional resilience.

Raised in rural Hungary in the 1990s, Orr's personal experience of a culture where psychological vulnerability was rarely acknowledged has greatly influenced his work. His art seeks to unpack the logic of emotions, drawing from both introspection and a curiosity about others. Each painting becomes a subtle yet monumental proxy for examining our inner lives.

Orr's process begins digitally, with silhouette-like 'notan' compositions crafted using technological tools. These are transformed through the artist's masterful use of oil paint, chiaroscuro, and airbrushed surfaces, creating a softness that merges realism with the surreal. His subdued, evocative palette oscillates between intimacy and distance, memory and immediacy.

His art historical influences are wide-ranging, drawing from the surrealism of Dalí and Magritte, the theatricality of Hockney, and the mysticism of Kiki Smith. Layered with references to European folklore and informed by extensive anatomical study, Orr's compositions exist in a space where anxiety, absurdity, and wonder intersect.

With *The Hills Are Not as Close as They Seem*, JD Malat Gallery offers collectors and audiences the rare opportunity to encounter an artist whose vision is as technically refined as it is psychologically profound. This exhibition not only marks Orr's solo debut in Mayfair but solidifies his place as one of the most compelling narrative painters of his generation.

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For more information, images and comments, please contact: [press@jdmalat.com](mailto:press@jdmalat.com)

Opening hours: Monday – Friday, 10am – 6pm and Saturday's, 12pm – 6pm

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