

Matt Doust : New Works
September 7th – September 28th

Thinkspace (Los Angeles) is pleased to present new works from Australian based artist Matt Doust. An accomplished portraitist, Doust's hyperrealistic paintings explore the concept of identity through the external betrayals of the body. The artist's dramatic human landscapes tap into the subtle revelations of physical expression, drawing the viewer's attention to the subject's minutest details. At times voyeuristic, these larger than life portraits are both alienating and intimate. Undeniably beautiful, they seem haunted and resonate with a provocative sense of discomfort. Doust draws on our anxiety and fascination when faced with the other in this unfamiliar proximity and scale, forcing monumental disclosures of intimacy upon us.

The paintings convey a sense of irreconcilable distances: those between the familiar and the alien, the self and the other - and yet do so somehow by uniting this sense of estrangement with a feeling of intimacy. While portraiture is ostensibly a study of the objective subject, Doust reveals that it is as much about the artist's selective disclosure, and the viewer's projections, as it is about the internal lives of those exposed. The artist's haunting portraits remain evasive alloys of the seen and the unknown, and seem to instigate an interminable longing in the viewer to "possess" the inner motivations of the elusive sitters. These portraits reveal something of the desire for sameness, and this desire's coexistence with the estrangement of manifest difference, in our shared search for human connection.

Matt Doust captures the fleeting and intangible impressions of identity, those we read from the body, and immortalizes them in portraiture. The artist's ability to arrest the beautiful and the strange simultaneously, and his appreciation of imperfect perfection, results in portraits that are as much about absentia as they are about what is manifest. Upon seeing Doust's paintings, we are strangely cognizant of the failure of our own holistic impressions, and of our inability to capture the "truth" of the other. Perhaps the work's subtle melancholy comes from this realization of our own covetous disappointment: the subject is always slightly beyond our grasp. These portraits provide us with a rare opportunity to slowly excavate the intimacies of the body: searching for some sense of "truth", communion, or revelation in the flesh. Doust captures what stirs beneath the skins of his subjects. With great technical facility, and a genuinely unparalleled refinement and detail, he is able to animate an inanimate surface with an evasive internal life.

Earthly Beings
September 7th – September 28th

Concurrently on view in the **Thinkspace** project room is **Earthly Beings**, featuring new work by Australian artist Bec Winnel. An accomplished illustrator, Winnel's portraiture combines the illustrative precision of a graphic artist with the sophistication and emotiveness of a painter. The ethereal quality of the artist's work is the result of carefully accreted layers of color and pencil. These portraits capture the soft tactility and warmth

of flesh with nothing less than alchemy. Executed with graduated washes of watercolor paint, pastel, and pencil, the portraits seem to transcend the very materiality of their execution and subjects. Winnel's work is delicate and otherworldly, and seems to border on the immaterial. Like a chimeric mirage, the imagery emerges from the surface like a dream state: soft, plush, and seemingly on the brink of dissolving into thin air. The artist's subjects are beautiful, and her highly stylized portraits explore the haunting of femininity with a genuine enjoyment and sensuality that captures its lovely vicissitudes.

Winnel's work, while indisputably contemporary, is informed by a stylized penchant for the romantic and a tendency towards aesthetic nostalgia. Her pieces are rendered in a palette of candy pastel hues, with a gossamer like delicacy that seems to defy their two-dimensional surfaces. Hyperreal and uncannily executed, the seduction of the imagery is rooted in its combination of hyperrealistic portraiture and hyper-stylization. The portraits are ultimately contemporary odes to feminine beauty that combine nostalgia with timeliness, hyperrealism with stylistic license - and that successfully defy the confines of the two-dimensional plane by hovering seductively in the realm of dream.

The Big-Banged Meaning of it All
September 7th – September 28th

On view in the **Thinkspace** offices is new work by N.S David: *The Big-Banged Meaning of it All*. A Los Angeles based painter, David's combination of surreal imagery and realistic figuration is unmistakably her own. With powerful paintings wrought from a personal synthesis of mythology, fairytale, and fantasy, the work is contemporary and simultaneously personal. David artfully combines the suggestion of narrative with tangential symbolism, and summons a mysterious, revelatory, power that borders on that of mysticism. The fascination and draw of her paintings is rooted in this encounter of the "known" of this world with the endless possibilities of those borne of unadulterated fantasy.

With a self-proclaimed love and belief in the transformative beauty of delusion, David's work is motivated by an inspired creativity, and by a mastery of story and imagination. Her work reads like narrative vignettes; like partial insights into a complex cosmology sustained by its own fabric of symbols and iconographies. Beautifully executed with the raw power of emotive and expressive freedom, the work is sensual, mystical, and transporting. With the belief of the mystic, and the spontaneity of the visionary, David's work is truly an encounter with another world.