



Modus Operandi
Yulia losilzon
28 March - 11 May

Berntson Bhattacharjee is delighted to present Modus Operandi; Yulia losilzon's ambitious solo exhibition of paintings, ceramics and larger-than-life installations in a vibrant celebration of the humble snail.

In a captivating game of visual pursuit, losilzon's snails of various sizes and hues perch delicately upon a foot, emerge from the corners of canvases, and glide across the limbs of their companions. At the heart of losilzon's artistic approach is a childlike enthusiasm that infuses every aspect of her work, casting a joyous, youthful spirit over her oeuvre. Her practice is a seamless blend of children's illustration, fashion, and theatre, where she weaves intricate fragmentary narratives into her expansive works. Her paintings are always based on a storyline or impression, each work unfolding within its own scene. When viewed collectively as a series, the works harmoniously coalesce to deliver a compelling message, akin to the self-contained meanings found in the realm of fairy tales.

The snail figure embodies multifaceted symbolic interpretations that resonate deeply with contemporary global issues and losilzon's personal experiences. Initially, the snail represents steadiness, calmness, and comfort. Beyond its surface symbolism, however, the snail emerges as a powerful metaphor – the snail's slow but determined progress mirrors the resilience and adaptability required to navigate uncertain terrains. losilzon's personal narrative contributes significantly to the formation of these metaphors, adding layers of depth to the snail's metaphorical interpretations. Her familial history of frequent relocations in pursuit of comfort and security echoes the snail's journey, underscoring the universal human quest for stability amidst a constantly shifting world.

Central to the symbolic richness of the snail figure is its ability to encapsulate the contradictions inherent in the human condition. While the snail's leisurely pace conveys a sense of tranquillity and steadfastness, it also embodies the restless spirit of modern existence, characterised by perpetual movement and adaptation. In this way, the snail becomes a poignant symbol of the tension between the desire for stability and the inevitability of change. The snail's shell, a protective covering, strengthens the metaphor of resilience and self-reliance. The shell offers reliable comfort and shelter upon travelled or interpersonal journeys. Just as the snail retreats into its shell in times of discomfort, so too do humans seek relief and refuge within themselves during periods of change or challenge. The intricate spiral of the snail's shell, reminiscent of the womb, adds another layer of symbolism, likening the snail's protective covering to the nurturing embrace of motherhood, wherein one carries and protects their child through life's journeys.

losilzon's painterly signature is defined by her remarkable ability to weave a rich tapestry of vibrant hues onto delicate silk and fabrics. She employs a meticulously refined method, expertly layering paint with seamless, flowing motions onto sheer silk – a technique reminiscent of Helen Frankenthaler's style from the 1950s and 60s. A pivotal element of her artistic style is her guidance by intuitive, singular brush strokes. This unwavering principle underscores her expertise in capturing the depth of emotion and character within her subjects, with just a single stroke, serving as a testament to her exceptional skill.

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Alongside her painterly practice, losilzon has long been working in the medium of clay, extending the thematic threads of her work and offering an alternative material perspective through which the same narrative is articulated. By marrying her painting and ceramics practices, she fuses these material components, pushing the boundaries of her exploration into duality and the pathways for interconnectedness that her practice encompasses. losilzon often creates ceramic frames and mosaic-like sculptures, where small ceramics are brought together to create scenes that intricately speak to the paintings and overarching storyline of her exhibitions.

In the midst of global and personal challenges, losilzon's imagination and her fantasy realm consistently serves as a source of solace. What distinguishes her works is their deeply personal origin, a vital element in ensuring they resonate authentically with the viewer. Her works are not mere flights of fancy; they are firmly tethered to the real world through her lived experiences. In an era where the world's current state demands a refuge, she ardently believes that imagination plays a paramount role in shaping our reality, offering a pathway to escape. In her works, the convergence of fantasy and reality blurs, and it is here, at this unspoken crossroads, that her paintings assertively take their place, forging a connection between the tangible and the intangible, and articulating the indescribable.

About the artist

Yulia losilzon (b. 1992, Moscow) is an Israeli artist who lives and works in London. She graduated from Slade School of Fine Art, University College London with a BA in 2017 and completed an MA in Painting at the Royal College of Art in 2019.

losilzon's figurative paintings on stretched transparent fabric are portals into vivid dreamlike worlds with roots in both ancient mythologies and contemporary social concerns. Her works hint at unfolding narratives of human-animal metamorphosis. Her visual references are wide ranging; she draws on imagery from childhood cartoons and representations of paradise, as well as exploring the Jewish iconography of her heritage. This symbolic language also extends into her ceramic practice.

Modus Operandi marks losilzon's second solo exhibition with Berntson Bhattacharjee after showing with the gallery and Sotheby's in Stockholm in 2021. Other notable solo exhibitions include Carvalho Park, New York (2023, 2021, and 2019), Sapling in London, De Brock in Knokke and Foundry in Seoul (all 2022), Art Antwerp with De Brock Gallery (2021) and Huxley-Parlour in London (2021). Significant group exhibitions include Atipografia in Arzignano, Badr El Jundi in Madrid, and Project Pangée in Montreal (all 2023); Untitled Art Fair in Miami and Kiaf in Seoul, both with Carvalho Park; Sapling in London; Tabula Rasa in Beijing (all 2022); Berntson Bhattacharjee Gallery in London (2021); Roman Road in London (2021); Space K in Seoul (2020); Hannah Barry Gallery in London (2020); Leeds Art Gallery, Leeds (2019) and Moscow Museum of Contemporary Art (2019).

losilzon received the Bloomberg New Contemporaries Award in 2019 and the Audrey Wykeham Prize in 2016.

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