

MORGAN STOKES. CONCERNING EXISTENCE



CURATORIAL+CO.

29 May to 4 June 2021

Exploring the concept of what he calls the ‘virtual gaze’, Morgan Stokes investigates the painting as an object, as opposed to an image.

Despite their appearance, Stokes’ works are a rumination on the virtual world, each a response to our escalating entrapment within our screens. Approaching works from a post-internet school of thought with a post-minimalist sensibility, Stokes’ works seek to explore the physicality of painting as well as the way we perceive image itself.

Each piece is an enquiry into the medium of painting, exploring and exploiting the material properties of paint, canvas and timber. Yet at the same time they are explorations developed through the lens of the screen and, as such, are self-referential products of Adobe tools: cut & paste, the eyedropper to pick colours, the brush to create marks, the gradient function.

Eschewing a manicured, well-rendered illusion in favour of sparse canvases with few, self-conscious strokes, a cynical thread runs through his pieces. They are aware of themselves as paintings and as eventual JPGs; they waver between something to look at and something to scroll past. Existing as interstices, the pace of the works lie in direct contrast to the speed of online, requiring an observational discipline.

Each painting is a formal study in colour and material, overlaid with marks which appear both accidental yet mechanical, intuitive yet intentional. They strive to be honest and abject yet covertly exist otherwise: marks made by a robot vacuum echo human marks; synthetic iridescent vinyl sits atop raw canvas; contrived organic colours live beside the real thing. Stepping back, the overall effect ranges from introspective and melancholic to sardonic.

Ironically the JPGs, which will become the end product in the lifecycle of the works, will be the way the works will be largely viewed and remembered. Any nuance or corporeality will be abolished when shifted online, completing the full circle from digital conception to painterly work back to virtuality.

Morgan Stokes completed a four-month residency in Berlin in 2019 followed by a year long practice in Germany. He holds a Master of Design from UNSW and is now based in Sydney.

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*The weight of my own masks* (2021)  
Oil + acrylic on stitched linen + canvas  
203cm x 153cm  
\$6400 Framed



*The eye of one replaced by the eyes of all* (2021)

Oil on stitched linen, fabric + canvas

203cm x 153cm

\$6400 Framed



*IRL NFT 1 (2021)*  
Oil + acrylic on stitched linen + canvas  
172.5cm x 52.5cm  
\$2000 Framed



IRL NFT 2 (2021)  
Oil + acrylic on stitched linen + canvas  
172.5cm x 52.5cm  
\$2000 Framed

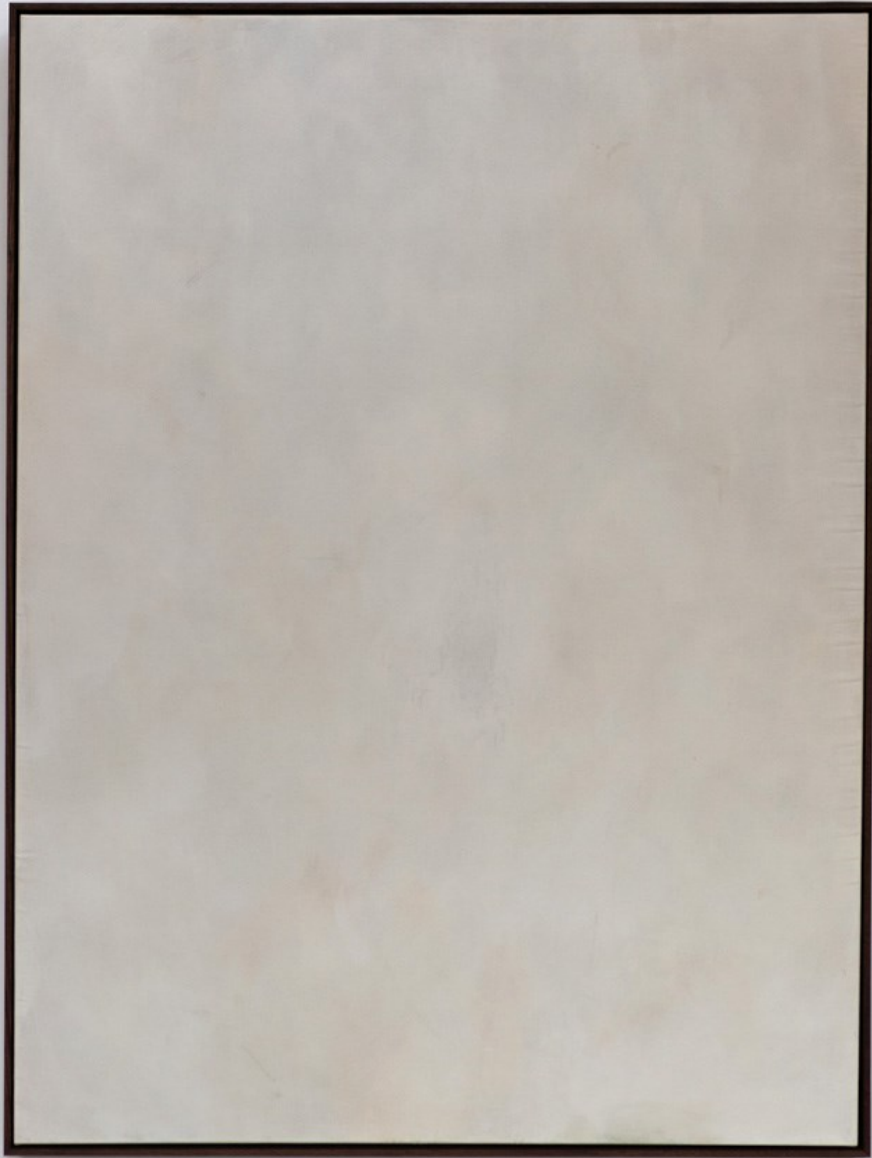


*Staring at the same view from the same desk (2021)*

Silk organza + acrylic on canvas

163.5cm x 123.5cm

\$4400 Framed



One moment of existence unforgettable +  
worthy of bearing nostalgia (2021)  
Oil + acrylic on canvas  
153.5cm x 116cm  
\$4200 Framed





*Linking my grief to the grief of others (2021)*

Oil + acrylic on canvas

153.5cm x 116cm

\$4200 Framed



*Solitude* (2021)  
Acrylic on stitched hessian  
99cm x 81cm  
\$2200 Framed



*Complex emotions painting (2021)*

Raw Italian linen

58.5cm x 48.5cm

\$550 Unframed



*Unironic painting (2021)*  
Acrylic + dispersion on stitched canvas  
58.5cm x 48.5cm  
\$620 Framed



*Sensible painting (2021)*  
Acrylic on stitched canvas  
58.5cm x 48.5cm  
\$620 Framed



*Expressive painting (2021)*  
Spray paint + conte pastel on stitched silk organza,  
polyester organza + fabric  
58.5cm x 48.5cm  
\$620 Framed



*Unbearably sad painting (2021)*  
Polyester thread, spray paint + conte pastel on silk organza  
58cm x 48cm  
\$500 Unframed



Study for #FFFFFF Manifesto (2021)  
Oil + acrylic on stitched canvas  
34cm x 34cm  
\$400 Framed







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Curatorial+Co. acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of the country on which the gallery sits, the Gadigal People of the Eora Nation, and recognises their continuing connection to land, waters and cultures. We pay our respects to their Elders past, present and emerging.