

GALLERI URBANE

József Csató: *Lush Ferns in Empty Wells*

November 19, 2022 – January 4, 2023

Public Reception: November 18 from 6–8pm

Galleri Urbane is pleased to announce *Lush Ferns in Empty Wells*, an exhibition of artworks by Budapest-based artist József Csató. For his third solo exhibition with Galleri Urbane, Csató returns from his foray into sculptural materials with a collection of 13 paintings on canvas as well as aquarelle paintings on A4 paper.

Following Csató's online-presentation during 2021, wherein the artist explored the sculptural applications of plaster relief, *Lush Ferns in Empty Wells* returns to the primary mode of Csató expertise: painting and drawing. Csató's practice is twofold: he works up the composition through drawing, until drawing becomes insufficient. He then turns to paint. However, Csató does not prefer one to the other, and it can be frustrating to know when to end one medium and turn to the other. "There are some points where I see it could be worked with forever," says Csató. At times, the painting can still benefit from drawing, and so the artist will work with oil sticks or chalk atop the paint.

The curvilinear forms that place Csató's vases, skull shapes, flowers and eyeballs among each other outshine their quiet, single-color backgrounds. Csató's painting method consists of scraping color across the canvas, leaving a dusty texture behind. These shapes should be familiar: they are representative of a vast repertoire of Csató's sketch practice, brought into full realization through paint. When observing the shapes in Csató's oeuvre, representation is often just out of reach. The surface that Csató builds up can intimate age, and so he experiments with rough dashes of chalk or pigment to jolt the image into a different timeline of figuration.

Lush Ferns in Empty Wells is Csató's continued rumination on painting, with an added focus on balance. Here, he is experimenting with paintings that are twice as wide as they are tall. They may be hung atop one another, creating new narrative compositions which seem akin to hieroglyphic tablets or layers of biology in the depths of the sea. Csató continues to render his arcadian gardens, as in *Stormr*, where electric waves of yellow caress bulbous forms against a dusty teal backdrop. Csató's scenes contain an indescribable flow-like sense, as though wind or water flows between his fronds and vases. Csató reflects on reaching this state in his newest body of work: "That's the best, I'm always searching for that."

József Csató lives and works in Budapest, Hungary. He completed his studies in the painting department of the Hungarian University of Fine Arts (MKE) in 2006, under the instruction of Dóra Maurer. He was a three-time recipient of the esteemed Gyula Derkovits Scholarship from 2013 to 2015 and received the prominent Esterhazy Prize in 2013. He was an artist-in-residence at the Krinzinger Gallery (A) - AIR program in 2017. Csató's work has been exhibited in numerous group and solo exhibitions across Europe including Semiose gallery, and other venues in Paris, Budapest, Vienna, Berlin, Stuttgart, Düsseldorf, Nürnberg and Copenhagen. His works can be found in Hungarian and International private and institutional collections such as the Contemporary Collection of the National Bank of Hungary and the Collection of the Ludwig Museum, Budapest. Csato is represented by Plus One Gallery in Antwerp, Double Q, Hong Kong and Deak Erika Gallery, Budapest. Galleri Urbane has represented Csató's work in the US since 2020.