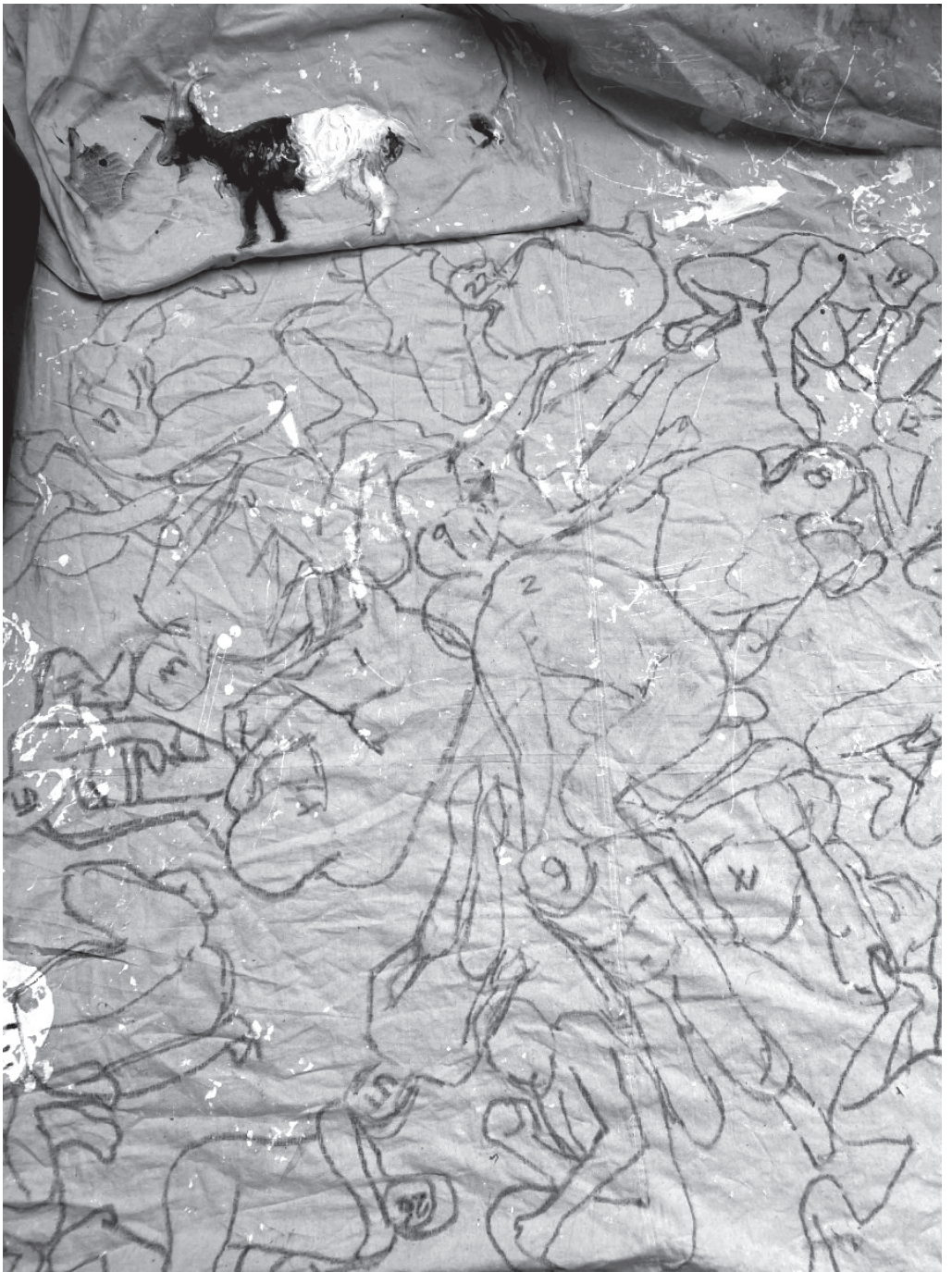


Catalogue

Bus Projects

# Gian Manik, 'Marouflage'



Jan. 19 – Feb. 27, 2021

*\*in trying to laugh in a more abandoned way he'd become preoccupied with the question of whether there was any difference between the burden of futility on the one hand and the burden of scorn on the other as well as with what he was laughing about anyway, because the subject was uniquely, everything, arising out of everywhere:*

I think of Gian when I read *Wuthering Heights*. Heathcliff and Joseph climbing the cellar steps with vexatious phlegm – his dogs are upstairs snarling at the annoying cunt Lockwood. The phlegm is a kind of lingual threshold for meaning, a discharge of lexicality. A pair of teenage boys in Nautica hats spitting at the bus stop. Lockwood is sitting there, vaguely anxious, unable to make sense of the scene.

Images in these paintings shift from operating within systematic intensities into structural limits and back again, folded in a referentiality immaterial, circulation of excessive reciprocity. Fingers pointing at everything & nothing. The folding & folds I'm talking about here is like those in a DIY – Origami Tutorial video or a human resources manager taking their folding bike home on the tram, the benign memory of folding washing for your mum while watching TV.

Goat & pigs are situated in a reciprocally significant/ insignificant relation in a milieu with organic farming, biodynamic farming, Steiner School children, Steiner characters in Warhammer, etc – parading without a stance. The diffusion of disparate imagery and interference sets the scene for the expulsion of realism and meaning.

The images coincidentally inform one another, while there is a noncontemporaneity of movement between imagery. Everything within the panel or frame erratically circumambulating an axis that is absent of consequence. Like something approximate to the final scene in Andrea Arnold's *American Honey* when the group of burned-out runaway teenagers dance around a numinous bonfire, imps of Satan or God or Nothing

– between Star’s dreadlocks and Jake’s fucked-up ratty –  
coming of age after the idea of meaning has been vacated.

Cynosure is either absent or in excess. Content  
compressed in an internally disparate and discontinuous  
scene. Endless DIY Waldorf toys. There’s no transition from  
elision to legibility, or as Angelina Jolie pronounces where  
ever I am I always find myself looking out the window  
wishing I was somewhere else.

\*Modified from László Krasznahorkai’s *The  
Last Wolf & Herman* (2017)

(Tristen Harwood, 2021)





Gian Manik's practice is defined by an ongoing investigation into the boundaries of representation. Previously, the artist staged reflective and malleable materials – such as tin foil – to mirror environments, which he then documents and faithfully reproduces as non-representational paintings. More recently, Manik has broadened this approach by entwining abstraction with figuration.

Continuing to work from digital photographs, Manik's paint application fluctuates between delicate and sumptuously excessive as he combines preparatory sketches with assured and adept brushwork. References from the fabric of his daily life contend with gestural passages to form a palimpsest of representation and memory. These layering techniques provide visual texture and energy to the artworks while adding depth and weight to his complex review of representation. Nostalgic, melancholic and facetious, Manik's works vibrate with emotional and compositional intensity.

Bus Projects acknowledges the traditional custodians of the land on which we operate: the Wurundjeri people and Elders past and present of the Kulin nations.

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