

# ANNA ZORINA GALLERY

NEW YORK CITY | LOS ANGELES TEL +1 212 243 2100

## JAMES RAZKO

### *Casting Shadows*

On view: October 21 - December 2, 2023

Opening Reception: Saturday, October 21st, 5-8 PM

Anna Zorina Gallery is pleased to present *Casting Shadows*, James Razko's solo exhibition featuring his latest series of paintings titled *Monomyth* as well as works from his acclaimed *Tiles* series.

In *Casting Shadows*, Razko invites a viewer to explore the blurred boundaries between reality and imagination through what the artist refers to as a "hyper-illusion." This hyper-illusionism is expertly employed in his series *Monomyth*, where mythologically rich figures initially appear to be crafted from layers of fabric. Upon closer examination, these figures reveal themselves as paint. This manipulation of perceived space is painted over intricate patterns, which are shaped by being bound and then submerged in water and paint. This transformative process gives rise to a surface where chaos and intention coexist. For Razko, tie-dye serves not only as a symbol of counterculture and resistance against technological uniformity but also as a representation of humanity's journey through time.

In the artist's *Tiles* series, Razko couples the Western art of trompe l'oeil with the rich arabesque tradition of mosaics. This binding of artistic motifs creates a visual dialogue that transcends cultural boundaries. On the surface, the tile paintings appear as exquisite examples of trompe l'oeil where the rendering of surfaces and textures tricks the viewer's eye into believing they are real. However, with a closer look, one will notice the loose brush strokes that deepen the narrative within the *Tiles* series. Beyond the nearly-real surface, the wounds of conflict and time become apparent, inviting viewers to contemplate the fragile balance between beauty and the enduring traces of human experience. Razko's exploration of the convergence between trompe l'oeil and arabesque mosaic tradition is a testament to the power of art as a medium for reflection and dialogue.

Razko's work across both series underscores the pivotal role of illusion in transcending personal and cultural boundaries while exploring universal themes of humanity. *Casting Shadows* transports us beyond the confines of everyday life, challenging us to explore the connections between perception, belief, and the mystical. The artist sees *Casting Shadows* as a collection of timeless metaphors of human transformation.

JAMES RAZKO (b. 1987, New Jersey) is a Los Angeles based artist who grew up on a small island in New Jersey. At the age of seventeen, Razko joined the military to escape suburbia and finance higher education. In 2008, James deployed to Iraq as part of a special forces team, a transformative experience that propelled Razko into the visual arts. Razko completed his BFA at Stockton University in 2011 and earned his MFA at the New York Academy of Art in 2015. Razko's recent solo exhibitions include *Destroy! Rebuild. Repeat?*, Spring Break in New York (2021); *Visions*, Stockton University in New Jersey (2018) along with group exhibitions at *Made in Tashkeel*, Tashkeel Nad Al Sheba, Dubai (2022); *SIT STILL: Self-portraits in the age of distraction*, Anna Zorina Gallery, New York (2020); and *Take Home a Nude*, Sotheby's, New York (2020) to name a few. His work is published in the acclaimed book, *The Figure*. He is a recipient of the Elizabeth Greenshields Foundation grant and he was awarded Eric Fischl' 66 Artist-in-Residence Program in 2019.

For further information, please contact Ismael Gardea at +1323-633-9700 or via email at [ismael@annazorinagallery.com](mailto:ismael@annazorinagallery.com)