



## SETTING THE SCENE | JASON LINE

AN EXHIBITION OF PAINTINGS AND DRAWINGS  
14 - 29 APRIL 2023

TEXT BY ALICE CHASEY  
IMAGES ©JASON LINE

**155A GALLERY**



GLASS OBJECTS AND SHADOWS, 2021  
OIL ON CANVAS, 35 X 40CM

## SETTING THE SCENE

### JASON LINE

*'Empty chairs – there are many, more will come.'*  
Vincent van Gogh <sup>1</sup>

Jason Line's paintings predominately feature still lifes – collections of objects arranged on shelves and window sills; wooden chairs placed just so. These objects are not randomly positioned but carefully, even meticulously arranged, the spaces between them just as important as the pieces themselves. The dialogue between each shape, the silent conversations they share, is of utmost importance.

*'The chair with its back, seat, arms, legs and feet resembles possibly the nearest inanimate object to a human being and can exude a powerful presence in the right light as well providing a wealth of pictorial possibilities.'* <sup>2</sup>

Furniture – chairs and tables, are placed by the artist like props for a play. They are set at precise angles, in conference with each other, working in pairs, and passing secrets between them. They are the inanimate characters in these paintings, following an unseen script. What's not said is almost as important as what's said in this work. It is the gaps between objects, in spaces, that matter here. Empty chairs and empty rooms are left blank for our own interpretation.

<sup>1</sup> QUOTED IN CAROL JACOBI ED., VAN GOGH IN BRITAIN, EXH.CAT. TATE 2019. P.91.

<sup>2</sup> JASON LINE, 2023



TWO CHAIRS AGAINST THE LIGHT.2023  
OIL ON CANVAS. 55 X 50CM

Take for example, *Two Chairs Against the Light* 2023, in which the chairs look like they have been left to hold their own conversation while their occupants have perhaps just got up and walked away. What secrets do they hold as they lean towards each other? What intimacies shared? How much have their borne witness to? Like props on a stage, they wait to be brought to life by their human inhabitants.

The interior of the room each object inhabits – be they pots, vases, bowls or chairs – is also key. The walls, the floor, the grid like windows, all have their own story to tell. Space is key to Jason's practice, whether this is space measured between the individual elements depicted on a plinth or the wider domestic space that comes into focus when the camera pans out.



STUDIO INTERIOR AT NIGHT, 2021  
OIL ON CANVAS, 75 X 60CM

Unlike for example, the domestic interiors of Johannes Vermeer, the figure isn't central here, the spaces are mostly empty. As we know from Van Gogh who painted empty chairs and empty rooms as a repeated motif, *'Throughout art history the empty chair is often associated with absence, loss or a stand-in for a particular person'*.<sup>3</sup> The only human presence in Jason's works are self portraits, the artist appearing in reflections and shadows, almost ghost like. Indeed, shadows are everywhere – they fall from vases, cups, and bowls.

In *Studio at Night 2022* a white Lloyd Loom chair with a blush pink cushion, is echoed in the pink book placed on the window sill. The figure of the artist can just be made out in reflection in the bottom left pane of glass, a shadowy presence who becomes almost abstract as he stands painting at the easel. In *Studio Interior with Yellow Chair 2023*, he is there again, a mirror image, a dark liminal figure.

<sup>3</sup> JASON LINE, 2023



STUDIO INTERIOR WITH YELLOW CHAIR. 2023  
OIL ON CANVAS. 122 X 92CM



There are reflections to be found everywhere in Jason's work: in window panes, in mirrors, in the glass bottles and vases arranged on a shelf, in a small glass of water. They are in the open windows of the studio setting, vast panes of glass providing a natural light source, to spotlight and highlight the objects in the room. There is mystery here. There is quiet and stillness. But any melancholy is shot through with pops of colour. Pinks, greens, and the ubiquitous yellow chair who becomes a character in his own right, the lead character of this exhibition, one might say.

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ALICE CHASEY IS A WRITER AND EDITOR. SPECIALISING IN CONTEMPORARY ART



TWO CHAIRS WITH A MICHELANGELO POSTCARD, 2023  
OIL ON CANVAS, 45 X 40CM

JASON LINE

BORN 1965

CAMBERWELL SCHOOL OF ART (1983-4)

GLOUCESTERSHIRE COLLEGE OF ART (1984-7)

JASON LINE HAS EXHIBITED EXTENSIVELY IN MANY COMMERCIAL GALLERIES AS WELL AS OPEN EXHIBITIONS INCLUDING THE BP PORTRAIT AWARD, NATIONAL PORTRAIT GALLERY, THE DISCERNING EYE, THE LYNN PAINTER STAINERS AWARD, THE ROYAL SOCIETY OF PORTRAIT PAINTERS AND THE NEW ENGLISH ART CLUB (NEAC)

HE REGULARLY EXHIBITS WITH 155A GALLERY, LONDON AND IN 2021, HAD A SOLO EXHIBITION AT MARCH FINE ART IN SAN FRANCISCO, USA

HE LIVES AND WORKS IN LONDON

AWARDS:

2021 ELECTED MEMBER OF THE NEW ENGLISH ART CLUB (NEAC)

2020 THE BOWYER DRAWING PRIZE (NEAC)

2019 THE DISCERNING EYE DRAWING BURSARY, (FINALIST)

1998 THE JULIET GOMPERTS AWARD

ALONGSIDE HIS OWN WORK, JASON HAS FOR MANY YEARS UNDERTAKEN COMMISSIONS TO MAKE PAINTINGS AND SCENIC ARTWORK FOR FILM AND TELEVISION.

PRODUCTIONS INCLUDE: 'THE FATHER', 'THE AMAZING MR BLUNDEN', 'MRS LOWRY AND SON', 'DEATH OF STALIN', 'THE DANISH GIRL', 'QUARTET', 'FLORENCE FOSTER JENKINS', 'THE RIOT CLUB', 'PRIDE', 'THE HOLLOW CROWN' (RICHARD II), 'THE CROWN' AND 'POLDARK'

FRONT COVER: GREEN TABLE AND CHAIR, 2022  
OIL ON CANVAS, 40 X 50CM

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