

HENRY CURCHOD

SET YOUR FRIENDS FREE

2 October 2021–13 November 2021

Ground Floor and First Floor
MAMOTH, London

MAMOTH is thrilled to present *Set Your Friends Free*, Sydney based artist Henry Curchod's first exhibition in the UK, on view from 2 October to 13 November 2021.

The exhibition explores the notion of escape, and features depictions of human escape from restrictive circumstances and ambiguous scenes which evoke an indeterminate poetic freedom. Inspired by 12th century Persian miniature paintings, and Solutrean cave art, Curchod's transportive paintings possess a fabulist quality. His paintings harness a contemporary yearning for unreality.

Not hearing, listening, 2021 begins with a head, its eyes closed as if sleeping. This is attached to a conference of limbs shaped like a figure of eight, the upper part, featuring two clutching arms, the lower circle has two legs similarly fused together, supporting two jutting out sandalled feet. The form hovers just above a canary yellow plane. A docile image, though somewhat perturbing, the hands gently clasping its 'body' could also be interpreted as supine solitude.

The use of oil stick on stretched linen, in combination with oil paint is a recent development in Curchod's practice. With an oil stick he treats linen like paper, building up areas of colour with repeated strokes, a process which brings an unbridled exuberance and joy to a surface which he feels oil paint struggles with. Fusing drawing and painting, his work has a defined graphic quality and visceral texture.

In *The future belongs to those that wait, 2021*, a figure is rendered with their face turned away. The top half of their body slumped over a persian rug draped over a wire fence. Embodying the slow 'wait' of its title, the figure could be read as idle, the cocked leg could also be read as a body caught failing to mount an obstacle.

The meandering energies of his drawn lines are evident in the enigmatic image *Wake in fright, 2021*. Depicted from above (a recurring vantage point of his work) a hatted figure, reaches out with their left arm, their right leg planted, in a quasi-yogic pose. Their mirrored image is projected by a cast shadow. Reality is escaped as the figure and their shadow are tethered at the hand. The shadow form is cast onto a rich ochre earth, evoking the unmistakable landscape of Australia.

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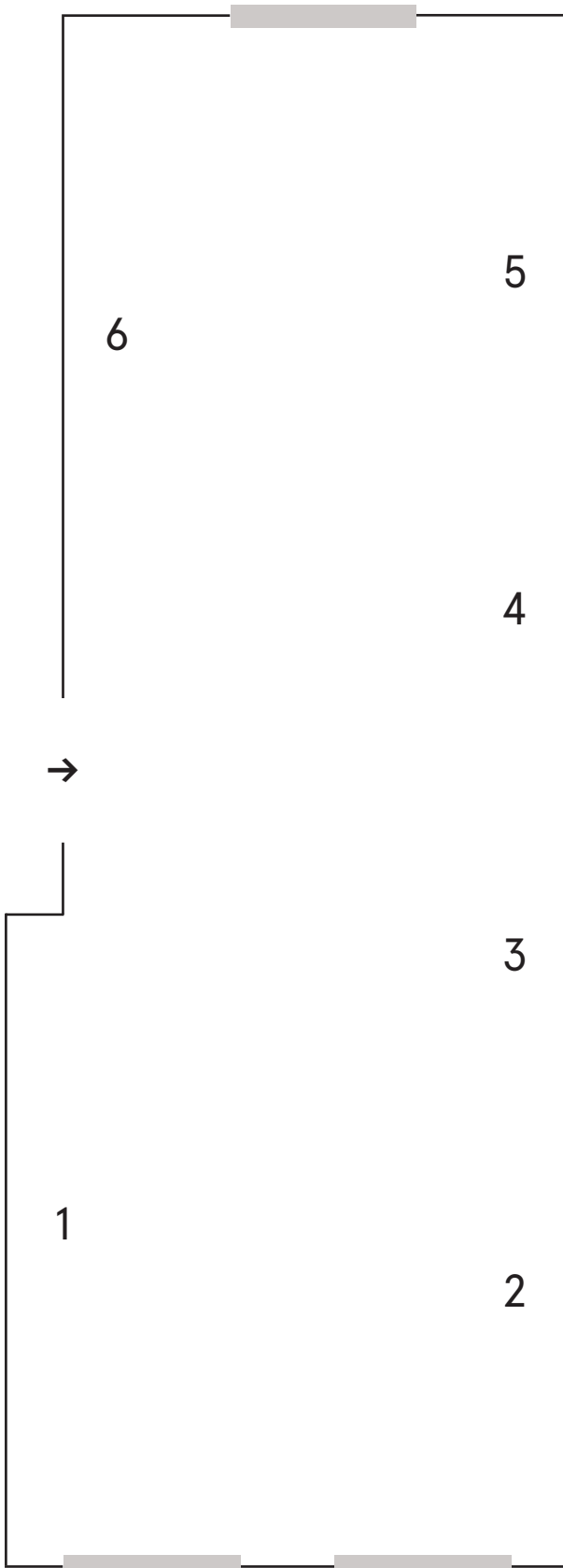
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Curchod is the son of Kurdish-Iranian and Anglo-American parents, and whilst he acknowledges the importance of his heritage he prefers to focus on the universal. The universal has more potency, especially in relation to his protagonists—neither masculine or feminine, judged or revered, they are not pulled from life, but create the potential for life.

His belief in the power of the simple drawn line, mirrors the enigmatic potential of his non-contextualised subjects. Making a case for the transience of meaning, Curchod has stated that it is a process of ‘...finding the line between reduction and action. Finding the space between a lightness of drawing and the fullness of painting. I am trying to abandon the reliance on the reverence of liquid paint, in hope of achieving something more solid’.

Henry Curchod (b.1992, Palo Alto) lives and works in Sydney, Australia. Curchod obtained a BA/BFA from the University of New South Wales in 2014. Recent solo exhibitions include: ‘Sharing the Sky’, Sumer Gallery, Tauranga, New Zealand; ‘Inside head, outside head’, Martin Browne Contemporary, Sydney, Australia (both 2021). Recent group exhibitions include: ‘It’s raining inside’, Lon Gallery, Melbourne Australia; ‘Strange Paradigm’, Yngspc (curated by Kate Mothes) * virtual exhibition; and ‘Nasha’, Nasha Gallery, Sydney, Australia. Curchod has been a finalist in: The Mosman Art Prize (2015); The Sulman Prize (2014); The Adelaide Perry Prize for Drawing (2014); and was awarded the Fortyfive Emerging Art Award in 2017; The Cérét Residency, Languedoc-Rousillion, France and The JOYA Project Residency, Manilla, Philippines (both 2016).



GROUND FLOOR:

1. Henry Curchod
Debt free, 2019
Oil, charcoal and oil stick linen
183 x 152.5 cm
2. Henry Curchod
The future belongs to those that wait, 2021
Oil, charcoal and oil stick linen
152.5 x 122 cm
3. Henry Curchod
Healthy prisoners, 2021
Oil, charcoal and oil stick linen
106.5 x 91 cm
4. Henry Curchod
Wake in fright, 2021
Oil, charcoal and oil stick linen
152.5 x 122 cm
5. Henry Curchod
THX, 2021
Acrylic and oil stick linen
152.5 x 122 cm
6. Henry Curchod
Run like hell?, 2021
Oil, charcoal and oil stick linen
152.5 x 152.5 cm

FIRST FLOOR:

7. Henry Curchod

Not hearing, listening, 2021

Oil, charcoal and oil stick linen

152.5 x 183 cm

8. Henry Curchod

Solutrean blunder, 2021

Oil, charcoal and oil stick linen

106.5 x 91 cm

9. Henry Curchod

Turbine, 2021

Oil and acrylic on canvas

50 x 70 cm

10. Henry Curchod

Athletic defecting, 2021

Oil, charcoal and oil stick linen

152.5 x 122 cm

11. Henry Curchod

Frivolous, doing the rounds, 2021

Oil, acrylic, charcoal and oil stick linen

76.5 x 61 cm

