

# DIANA

## PRESS RELEASE

### RUNNING

Nour Malas | Solo Exhibition  
30 November – 22 December 2023

Presented by CARBON 12

**DIANA** is pleased to present *Running*, a debut solo exhibition by Chicago-based artist Nour Malas. On view from November 30th, 2023 - December 22nd, 2023, this will be the artist's first exhibition in New York, featuring a new series of intimately-scaled oil paintings on wood panel. A departure for the artist, these works show Malas deviating from the large-scale, all-over canvases for which she is best known to reduced compositions on wood—emblematic of the fearless experimentation in pursuit of emotive and psychological states at the heart of her practice.

Movement is muse as Malas follows her forms, often figures, animals, or an occasional vehicle, through meditative depths of pigment. Skies of burnt umber whisper of silhouettes, untethered to ground and steered by a centrifugal, rhythmic force distinctive to Malas' compositions. Shadowy blacks envelop luminous, reflective planes, shaded with shimmering tones of deep color. Drawing on the pictorial strategies of artists stretching from Mark Rothko to Miriam Cahn, Malas similarly creates open, atmospheric layers of color, evocative of an interior realm. Her paintings become legible as internal landscapes, abstractions of experience that blur reality, dream, and memory.

In these works, Malas' signature, long-form brushstrokes, often frenetic threads that twist through the composition, now appear in isolation. To create the works, Malas built her surfaces with oil paint, before scraping away pigment with the back of her brush. A signature component of Malas' pictorial vocabulary, these carved scrawls and Twombly-esque scribbles point to the immediacy and intuition inherent in her practice; fleeting moments abound, where, in the artist's words, images "are always running away from me."

Many of the works consist of a single light source, echoing the large glass block window in the artist's Chicago studio. Malas' figures similarly emanate and trap light, glowing through darkened spaces with an inner radiance. Long influenced by the paintings of Edvard Munch, Malas looks to concentrate poignant emotive states into a single picture plane. Layers of paint unfold in search of fear, injustice, loss and failure, radically proposing painting as an act of physical expression achieved in the discovery of psychological states. Like her subjects, we race through line and color, time and place, encounters and conflicts without knowledge of the beginning or the end.

**Nour Malas** (b. 1995) was born in Cannes, FR. After graduating from Goldsmiths University, London in 2017, she received an MFA from the School of the Art Institute of Chicago (SAIC), in 2022. Recent solo and two-person exhibitions of her work include *Heavyweight*, Mae Lombardi Gallery, Chicago; *four am*, Carbon 12 Gallery, Dubai; and *Desperately Discontinuous Bodies*, Gonzo Unit, Thessaloniki (2019). The artist lives and works in Chicago, IL.

-- Amber Collins

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