

JENNY'S

Viewing Room | Mathieu Malouf
May 14 – June 26, 2020

Inspired by Salvador Dali's *Partial Hallucination: Six Apparitions of Lenin on a Piano* from 1931, this new series of paintings by Mathieu Malouf features six unique portraits of Xi Jinping, the president of the People's Republic of China. Produced under the New York City lockdown at the artist's Chinatown studio, on an almost entirely shuttered commercial street, the works are brimming with tension and optic pleasure. Some of Xi's iconic likenesses almost seem imbued with the polished reverence characteristic of official CCP portraits, others court the more cartoonish depictions by critics comparing Xi to Winnie The Pooh, who is permanently banned in China.

The belabored handmade artist frames and mutating, Rorschach-like blotches of intense color evoke earlier works by Malouf, specifically his mushroom paintings encased in slatted wood, as well as a recent portrait series of Kim Jong Un. However, the physiological distortions recall the psychological violence of Francis Bacon and psychedelic chromatic experiments of Martial Raysse, firmly anchoring this latest occurrence in Malouf's unclassifiable output, amidst the kaleidoscopic turmoil of the current moment.

Mathieu Malouf (b. 1984, Montreal) lives and works in New York, NY. He has exhibited widely in international venues including Greene Naftali, New York; Jenny's, Los Angeles; House of Gaga, Mexico City; Lars Friedrich, Berlin; Le Consortium, Dijon; LUMA Westbau, Zurich, and the Whitney Museum of American Art, New York.