

For immediate release

Paul Hunter Speagle
MYTHOLOGYANITYISM

4 December 2021 – 2 January 2022

Opening reception: 3 December 2021, 5 – 7 pm



Paul Hunter Speagle, *That's All I Can Stand and I Can't Stand No More*, 2021, oil, oil bar, acrylic, spray paint, charcoal, white out, graphite on canvas, 213 by 213 cm. Courtesy of the artist and JPS Gallery.

JPS Gallery is pleased to present *MYTHOLOGYANITYISM*, a solo exhibition of Paul Hunter Speagle, on view at the gallery's Hong Kong location in LANDMARK ATRIUM. This exhibition is the first solo show of Speagle in the city. It marks his international debut, showcasing a series of new paintings tracing all the life experiences that shape his artistic journey. This series documents Speagle's challenges, his exploration of himself and where he is standing with his beliefs, as a new parent and as an artist in our complex modern world.

Born and raised in the South of the United States, Speagle grew up under the preaching and beliefs of Christianity, which he attributed to his pursuit in art. In the presented series of paintings, Speagle re-examines his relationship with religion and his beliefs. By referencing the

stories and characters from The Bible, motifs found in religious paintings and architecture, as well as Greek mythological stories and personal experiences, he created a symbol filled world that he calls *MYTHOLOGYANITYISM*.

Yuval Noah Harari in his book *Sapiens* says: “With time some followers of polytheist gods became so fond of their particular patron that they drifted away from the basic polytheist insight. They began to believe that their god was the only god and that He was in fact the supreme power of the universe. [...] Thus were born monotheist religions, whose followers beseech the supreme power of the universe to help them recover from illness, win a lottery and gain victory in war.”¹

Speagle does not aim to create a new religion or belief system. His practice simply takes what's familiar and adds what comes from within to animate his paintings, to help us relate.

In the monumental painting, *That's All I Can Stand and I Can't Stand No More* (2021), Speagle retells the story of Samson's riddle and depicts the scene of him slaying the lion. Taking the vengeance of Samson as an inspiration, Speagle contemplates the story through the lens of a contemporary pacifist by dwelling on the issues of good and evil, rights and wrongs. Using his significant style with vivid and dynamic depiction of the scene coupled with a hugely dense composition Speagle opens up his soul, his world full of symbols and mysticism. Featured is one of his reoccurring symbols, the snake, slithering around the painting. This can be viewed as the artist's attempt to conquer his fear of snakes as well as him trying to remind us that what we see in his paintings is initiated through our own reality. The scene takes place in a church adorned with stained glass. The same stained glass pattern is also incorporated into the curation of the exhibition, creating a complete and immersive viewing experience and highlighting the fact that what is heavenly is also intertwined with mundane.

Charged with symbolic motifs and figures, *MYTHOLOGYANITYISM* addresses the questions of fate, life, death, love, society and religion. His suggestive style and ideas allow his works to have many interpretations, inviting the spectators to ponder and connect despite of what they believe.

About Paul Hunter Speagle

Taking inspirations from life, love and religion, Paul Hunter Speagle creates expressive and colorful works that reflect his passions and beliefs. Working across paintings, sculptures as well as interactive and public installations, Speagle is a versatile artist who explores the world through his works.

¹Yuval Noah Harari, *Sapiens*, 2009, 241.

Stemming from underground skateboarding, snowboarding, street and comics culture, Speagle's canvases are filled with intense coloration that heightens a pervasion tension - evoking urban and rural environments of the US while experimenting with internal painterly dynamics around light, brushwork and compositions. Much of his works are inspired by symbolic motifs, Native American totems, outsider folk art, ancient mythologies as well as biblical narratives, commenting on the transcendent of time and the issue of human mortality with his unique and painterly style.

Born and raised in Hickory, North Carolina, Speagle started painting as a young teen and won the Paul Whitener Painting Contest at the age of 12. He gained a scholarship to study at the Savannah College of Art and Design (SCAD), where he earned a BFA in painting in 2005 and an MFA from the School of Visual Arts in New York City in 2012. In 2018, he had his first museum solo exhibition *Walking the Dog*, at the Hickory Museum of Art. In recent years, Speagle started exploring the possibilities of public murals. He was commissioned to participate in many mural projects, including the large-scale historical mural, the Miracle of Hickory (2019) and a collaborative mural for Art Basel Miami Beach 2019. Speagle is the founder of the artists-led organization ATAC Gallery. The artist currently lives and works in Hickory, North Carolina.

About JPS Gallery

Established in 2014 in Hong Kong, JPS Gallery is an independent contemporary art gallery presenting works of emerging and established artists from around the world. The gallery is founded with a passionate spirit that dedicates to the new digital age and the exploration of the world of fine art and pop culture.

We aim to create an innovative environment for a new generation of artists and collectors, fostering a creative space for all. We focus on fun and playful works of the era that spans across different mediums and disciplines, showcasing a discerning selection of works that embody the aesthetics of today.

We are committed to supporting the culture and art scene both in Hong Kong and Japan, creating a vibrant local art community. The gallery regularly presents works of emerging artists in our gallery spaces in Hong Kong and Tokyo as well as international art fairs, giving them a platform to gain global exposure, supporting young artists to launch their careers. JPS has also been an active contributor to society and the local art scene by sponsoring various charity events and auctions.

Location

Shops 218-219, 2/F, LANDMARK ATRIUM, 15 Queen's Road Central, Central, Hong Kong

Media Inquiry

For media inquires and press preview, please contact

TY | ty@jpsgallery.com

Social Media Hashtags

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即時發佈

Paul Hunter Speagle

《神話？！》

2021年12月4日 – 2022年1月2日

開幕酒會：2021年12月3日，下午5時至7時



Paul Hunter Speagle, 《That's All I Can Stand and I Can't Stand No More》, 2021年作, 油畫顏料、油性蠟筆、壓克力、噴漆、木炭、塗改液和石墨於畫布, 213 x 213 釐米。圖片由藝術家和 JPS畫廊提供。

JPS畫廊欣然呈現Paul Hunter Speagle於香港置地廣場中庭的個人展覽《神話？！》。本次展覽亦是Speagle的首次國際個人展覽，展出一系列新的繪畫作品。對人生的反思是他藝術創作的泉源，他的藝術創作記錄他人人生路上的思想掙扎，包括：自身、信仰、成為父親，以及在現今複雜世代成為藝術家的內心鬥爭。

Speagle在美國南部出生和長大，在基督教的佈道下成長，也是他藝術創作的重要契機。是次展出的一系列畫作中，Speagle重新審視他與宗教的關係，通過參考聖經中的故事和人物、宗教繪畫和建築中的主題，以及希臘神話故事和個人經歷，創造出一個他稱之為《MYTHOLOGYANITYISM》的符號世界。

哈拉利 (Yuval Noah Harari) 在他的《人類大歷史》(Sapiens) 一書中說：「隨著時間的推移，一些多神教的追隨者變得偏愛他們特定的守護神，隨後更逐漸偏離了多神論。他們開始相信自己所相信的神是唯一的神，祂實際上是宇宙至高無上的力量……。因此誕生了一神教，其追隨者懇求宇宙的至高力量幫助他們從疾病中康復，贏得彩票，並在戰爭中取得勝利。²」

Speagle的目標不是創建新的宗教或信仰體系，他的做法只是純粹地採用熟悉的東西，並添加自身的影響來為他的畫作賦予生命，創作一個協助人與人之間建立聯繫的途徑。

在大型畫作《That's All I Can Stand and I Can't Stand No More》(2021 年作) 中，Speagle重述了參孫屠獅的場景。Speagle以參孫的復仇為靈感，以當代和平主義的視角敘述故事，思考善與惡、對與錯的問題。Speagle以其獨特的動態描繪風格使場景顯得生動，加上豐富密集的構圖，以畫作打開他的靈魂窗口，展示他充滿符號和神秘主義色彩的世界。在畫作周圍滑行的其中一個反覆出現的符號——「蛇」，藝術家試圖藉此克服他對蛇的恐懼，同時提醒我們畫中所呈現的都是由現實情景出發。該畫作設置在一座裝飾著彩色玻璃的教堂內，而彩色玻璃圖案也被設置在展覽當中，為觀眾帶來一個完整的、身臨其境的觀賞體驗，並同時希望突出，天堂與世俗是互相交織的。

在《MYTHOLOGYANITYISM》充滿象徵性的圖案和人物畫作中，Speagle探討了命運、生、死、愛、社會和宗教的問題。他暗示性的風格和想法讓他的作品存在多種不同的詮釋，儘管信仰不同，也邀請觀眾以不同的解讀來對作品思考和連繫。

關於Paul Hunter Speagle

Paul Hunter Speagle擅於使用多種媒介創作，包括油畫、雕塑、互動裝置和公共藝術。他的作品色彩繽紛又富表現力，洋溢著生命力、熱情和愛，也帶有個人宗教信仰色彩。

Speagle的作品深受地下滑板、街頭文化和漫畫文化影響，以強烈的色彩表現出美國城鄉之間的張力。他以油彩堆疊，形成較厚的筆觸，折射出光影的變化，組成構圖。除此以外，他的靈感也來自象徵符號、美國原住民圖騰、非主流民間藝術、遠古神話和聖經故事。Speagle將歷史文化融入藝術當中，藉此在浩瀚時空之中尋找人類短暫生命的位置。

² 哈拉利，《人類大歷史》，2009年作，241頁。

Speagle出生並成長於美國北卡羅來納州的希科里，亦現居於此。他自少時已經學習繪畫，更在十二歲時贏得Paul Whitener Painting Contest獎項。二零零五年，他獲取獎學金前往薩凡納藝術設計大學就讀藝術學士，主修繪畫。二零一二年，他於紐約視覺藝術學院獲得藝術碩士學位。二零一八年，Speagle於希科里藝術博物館舉辦首個個人展覽——《Walking the Dog》。近年，他開始探索公共壁畫所蘊含的可能性。他被委託參與不少壁畫計劃，例如二零一九年的大型歷史壁畫「Miracle of Hickory」。同年，他也與其他藝術家一起為巴塞爾藝術展邁阿密海灘展會繪製協作壁畫。除了繪畫，Speagle也創辦了由一個藝術家主導的畫廊——ATAC Gallery。

關於JPS畫廊

JPS畫廊始創於二零一四年，先後在香港和日本成立畫廊空間，是一所主打當代藝術的畫廊，代理來自世界各地的新晉及知名藝術家。

畫廊旗下的藝術家大玩流行文化，從現代生活文化符號取材，以不同媒介創作出獨特的當代藝術品，趣緻玩味，呈現當代美學。本畫廊不但為新一代藝術家提供自由的創作空間，亦為收藏家提供別樹一幟的藝術品，更為香港藝術品市場帶來緊貼時代潮流的作品。

我們矢志於推動香港及日本的文化與藝術界發展，為本地建立充滿活力的藝術社區。我們會定期為藝術家於香港和東京兩地的畫廊設置展覽，亦會安排他們的作品於國際藝術節展出，讓新晉藝術家得以於國際舞台嶄露頭角，同時維持知名藝術家在全球藝術市場的熱度。除了貢獻本地藝術界，畫廊亦熱心公益，積極參與和贊助各項慈善和義賣活動以回饋社會。

地點

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