Bob Bicknell-Knight
Eat The Rich, 2021
Solo exhibition at Project Room - Space Sono of Galerie Sono, 91 Rue Saint-Honoré, 75001 Paris, France
19th November - 3rd December 2021
Curated by Alexandre Pastor



Bob Bicknell-Knight (b. Suffolk, UK) is a multidisciplinary artist, curator and writer, working primarily in painting, sculpture, video, installation and digital media. His work is influenced by surveillance capitalism and responds to the hyper consumerism of the internet, exploring ideas surrounding the automation of work, global power structures and technocratic authoritarianism, as well as critically examining contemporary technologies. He is also the director and creator of the platform isthisit?, which since 2016 has exhibited over 800 artists. Through his artistic practice, Bicknell-Knight leads us to rethink the notion of image.

"Eat the rich", behind this slogan, which seems to be an assertion, hides a famous quote attributed to Jean-Jacques Rousseau: "Rousseau was also a people, and he said: When the people will have nothing left to eat, they will eat the rich". EAT THE RICH, a slogan supposedly uttered on 14 October 1793 during the period of La Terreur. A period that seems to resonate with our own. Through this slogan, the artist invites us to reconsider and rethink our relationship to society. In a world where inequality is king, how can we conceive of such gaps in wealth without seeing in them a real form of predation? This predation is at the heart of Bicknell-Knight's exhibition at Space Sono.

Trophy hunting is the act of hunting animals for sport. The trophy is traditionally the head of the animal, stuffed and displayed above the fireplace. In Eat The Rich, Bicknell-Knight seizes on this process by portraying 24 of the richest people in the world as trophy hunters.

By portraying multi-billionaire tech and corporate executives as trophy hunters, Bicknell-Knight confronts and asks us to question our relationship to these otherworldly figures. Who do these billionaires really prey upon, and who do they really want to consume or make consumable?

In the digital age and the age of data tracking, our personal information and tastes are measured, studied and sold to companies, making every connected being a potential prey, a consumable connected body.

The paintings depicting these billionaires are highly fabricated, truncated, even sabotaged. Their origin and form are contradicted and our appreciation of it is uncertain. Very quickly, the question of their original qualities arises. Where do they come from? How are they made? Printed? Painted? They carry a form of hybridity. In trying to understand the image, the viewer is quickly confused and questions what it is they are seeing. Trying to grasp its origin, Bicknell-Knight's work always inexplicably escapes us.

This notion of origin would imply that the viewer has a precise idea, a source, but this is not the case here. The origin of the Image is unclear, similar to "a whirlpool in a river" to quote Walter Benjamin. It originates in a medium that has neither beginning nor end. It is caught in a continuous flow that touches on its pre- and post-history. It is an image born of the Internet. Its origin as much as its making blurs our reference points and our certainty about the work. A feeling of "distance" manifests itself against this autonomous image that resists us. An image thrown onto a canvas from a frame, a network, where its autonomy unfolds.

Alongside these hybrid paintings are a series of 3D printed sculptures of the heads of several billionaires, decapitated from their bodies and attacked by a variety of used archery arrows.

Also included is a short looping video, featuring the decapitated head of Jeff Bezos, founder of Amazon, in the House of Commons in the UK, the de facto primary chamber of the Parliament of the UK, alongside a series of objects commonly found in the chamber, including a water jug, mic and mace. The House of Commons can only operate lawfully when the royal mace, dating from the reign of Charles II, is present.

The final artwork in the exhibition is an editioned deck of playing cards in a 3D printed frame. The work presents the 54 wealthiest people in the world depicted as trophy hunters. Each playing card is unique and features a different billionaire, accompanied by their job title and accrued wealth, as was recorded on the 20th October 2021.
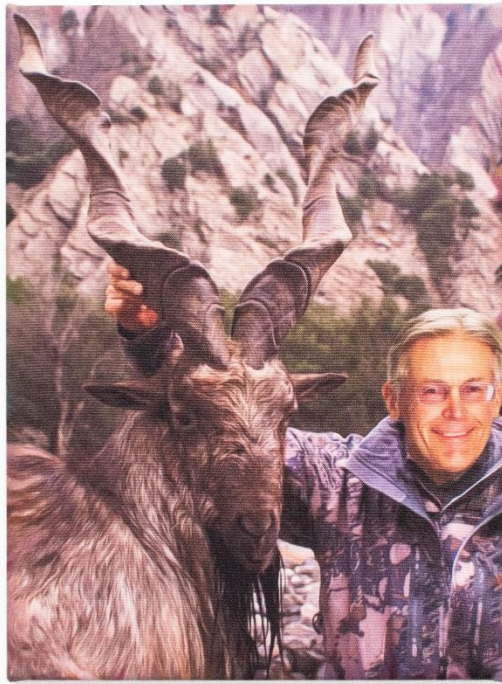
Hybrid, polysemic and curious, Bicknell-Knight's works question as much as they speak about us and our society.

Eat The Rich, 2021
Installation view
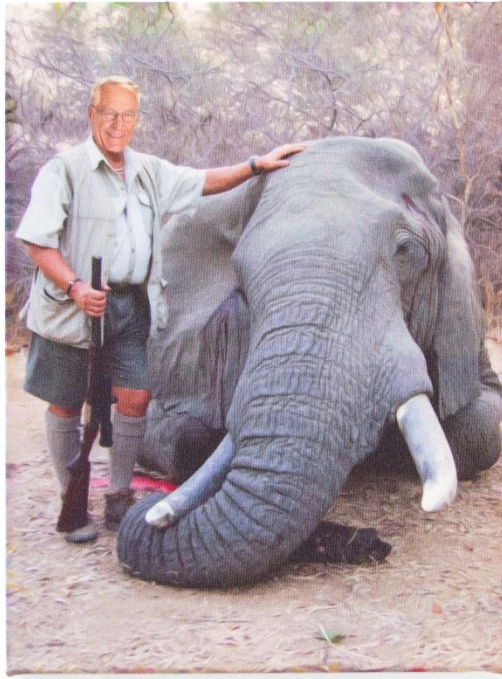
Rob's First, 2021
Ink and acrylic on canvas
40 x 30 cm
Unique

Jim's First, 2021
Ink and acrylic on canvas
40 x 30 cm
Unique

Alice's First, 2021
Ink and acrylic on canvas
40 x 30 cm
Unique

Sergey's First, 2021
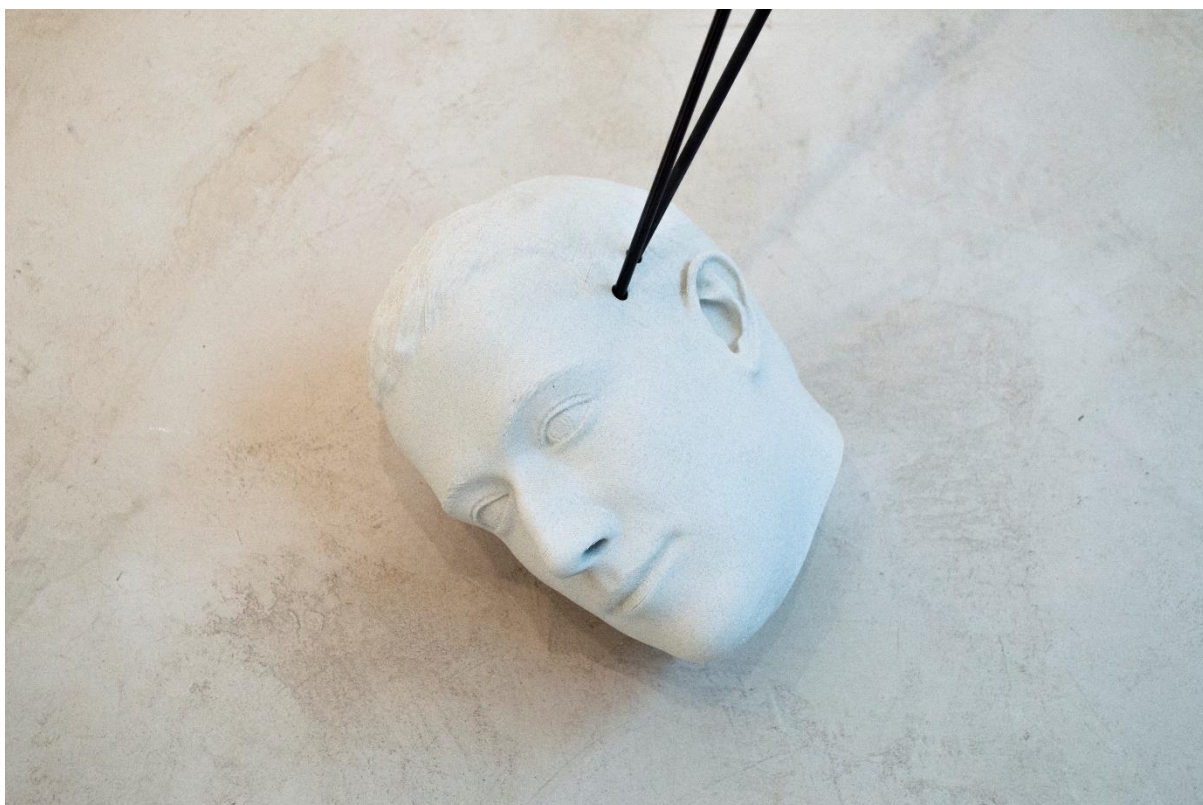Ink and acrylic on canvas
40 x 30 cm
Unique

Larry's First, 2021
Ink and acrylic on canvas
40 x 30 cm
Unique

Eat The Rich, 2021
Installation view

The Hunt (Mark), 2021
3D printed marble PLA plastic, fiberglass arrows
85 x 29 x 26 cm
Ed 3 + 1 AP

The Hunt (Mark), 2021
3D printed marble PLA plastic, fiberglass arrows
85 x 29 x 26 cm
Ed 3 + 1 AP

Eat The Rich, 2021
Installation view

Mark's Sixteenth, 2020
Ink and acrylic on canvas
40 x 30 cm
Unique

Larry's Third, 2021
Ink and acrylic on canvas
40 x 30 cm
Unique

Jeff's Dead, 2021
Single channel 4K video
4 min 0 sec
Ed 3 + 2 AP

Watch the film by going to https://youtu.be/d6ex6ZMlVRA

MacKenzie's Second, 2021
Ink and acrylic on canvas
40 x 30 cm
Unique

Jeff's First, 2020
Ink and acrylic on canvas
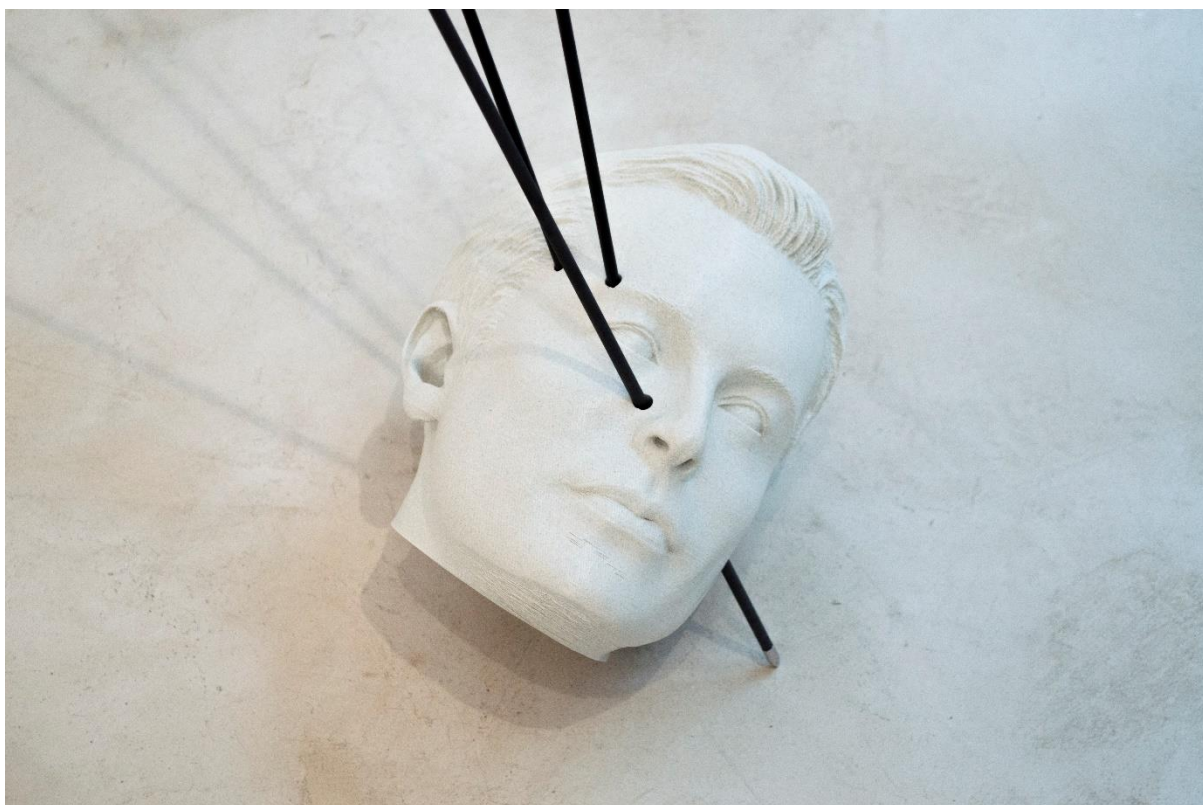40 x 30 cm
Unique
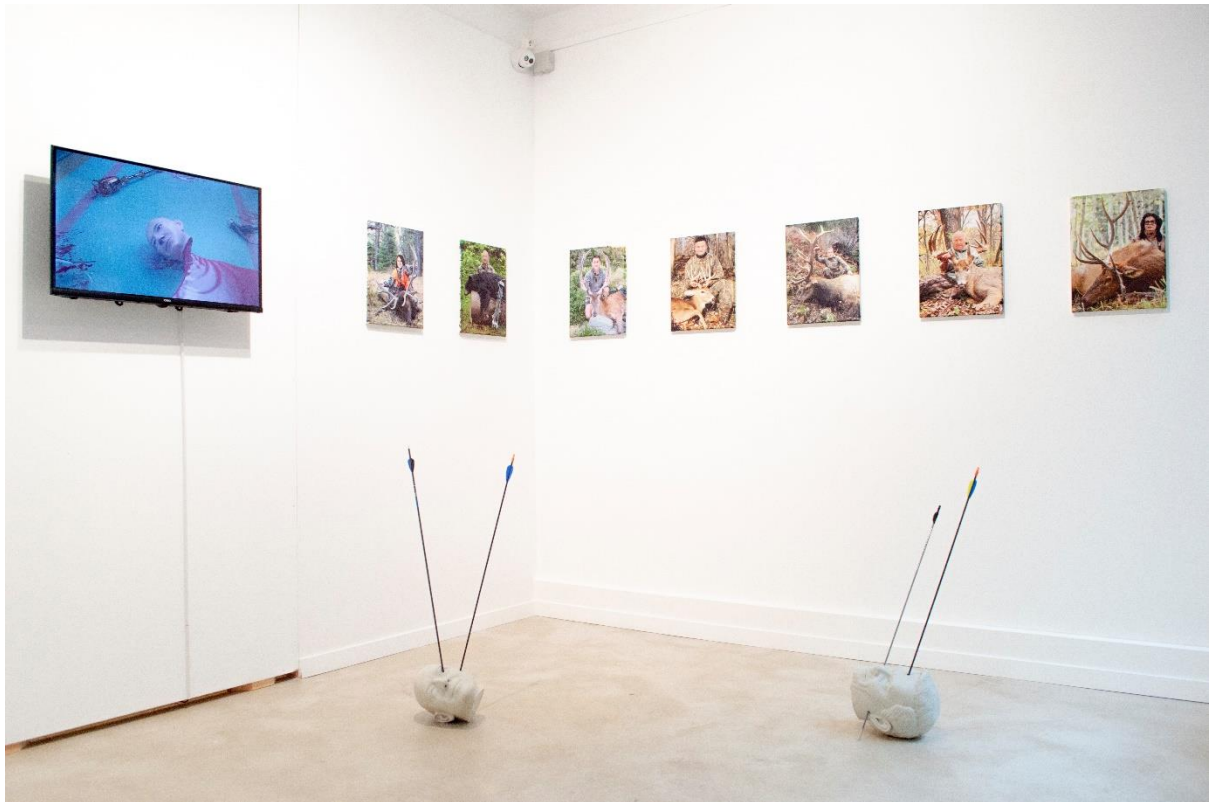
Eat The Rich, 2021
Installation view

The Hunt (Jeff), 2021
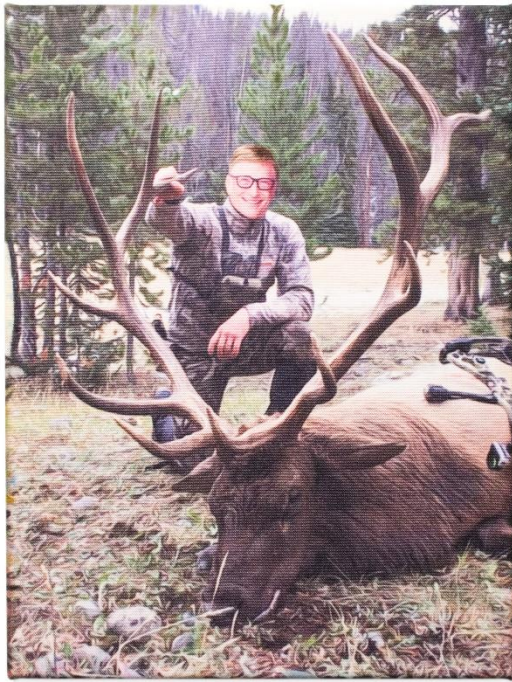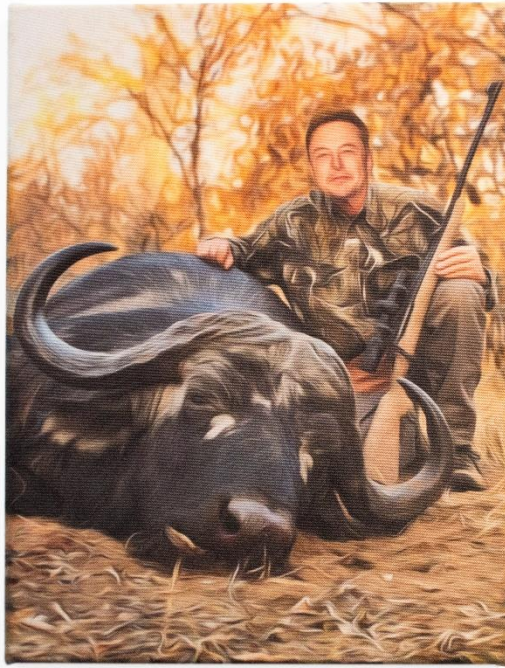3D printed marble PLA plastic, fiberglass arrows
87 x 26 x 28 cm
Ed 3 + 1 AP

The Hunt (Jeff), 2021
3D printed marble PLA plastic, fiberglass arrows
87 x 26 x 28 cm
Ed 3 + 1 AP

The Hunt (Bernard), 2021
3D printed marble PLA plastic, fiberglass arrows
80 x 27 x 30 cm
Ed 3 + 1 AP

The Hunt (Bernard), 2021
3D printed marble PLA plastic, fiberglass arrows
80 x 27 x 30 cm
Ed 3 + 1 AP

Eat The Rich, 2021
Installation view

Ma's Second, 2021
Ink and acrylic on canvas
40 x 30 cm
Unique

Jack's Second, 2021
Ink and acrylic on canvas
40 x 30 cm
Unique

Bernard's First, 2021
Ink and acrylic on canvas
40 x 30 cm
Unique

Amancio's First, 2021
Ink and acrylic on canvas
40 x 30 cm
Unique

Francoise's First, 2021
Ink and acrylic on canvas
40 x 30 cm
Unique
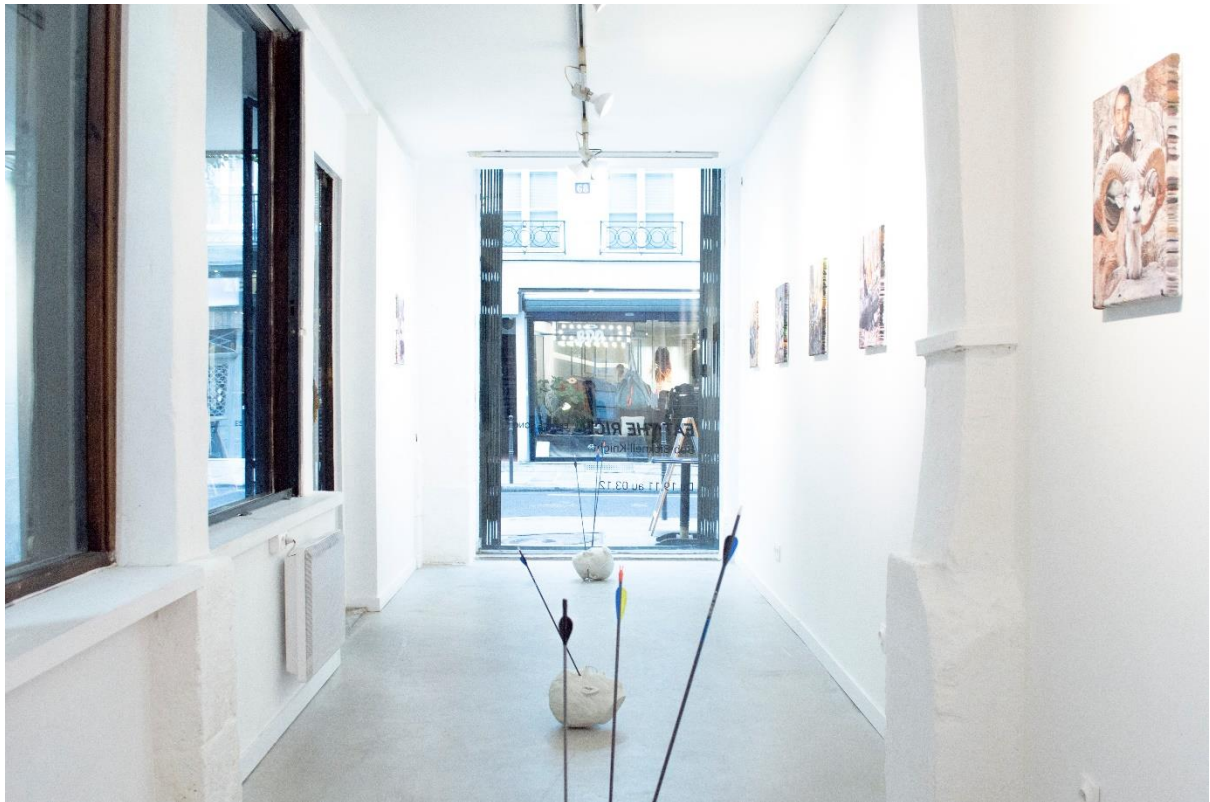
Eat The Rich, 2021
Installation view

The Hunt (Bill), 2021
3D printed marble PLA plastic, fiberglass arrows
66 x 31 x 28 cm
Ed 3 + 1 AP

The Hunt (Bill), 2021
3D printed marble PLA plastic, fiberglass arrows
66 x 31 x 28 cm
Ed 3 + 1 AP

The Hunt (Elon), 2021
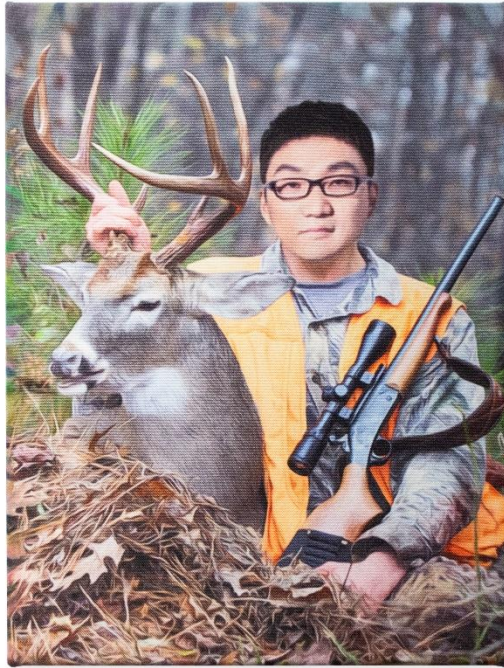3D printed marble PLA plastic, fiberglass arrows
85 x 27 x 31 cm
Ed 3 + 1 AP

The Hunt (Elon), 2021
3D printed marble PLA plastic, fiberglass arrows
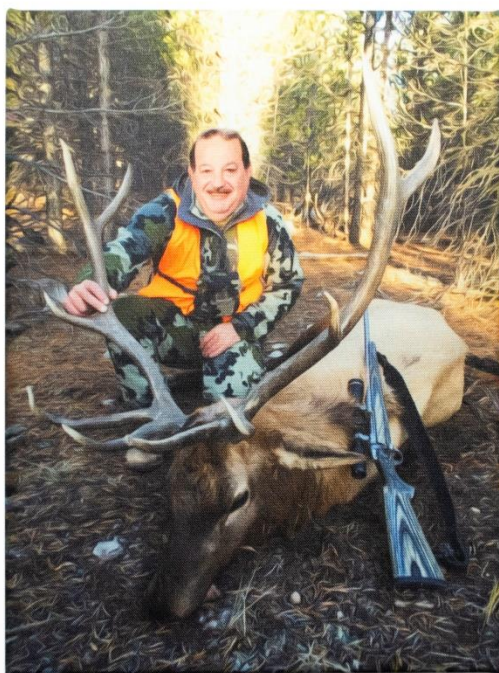85 x 27 x 31 cm
Ed 3 + 1 AP

Bill's Second, 2021
Ink and acrylic on canvas
40 x 30 cm
Unique

Elon's First, 2019
Ink and acrylic on canvas
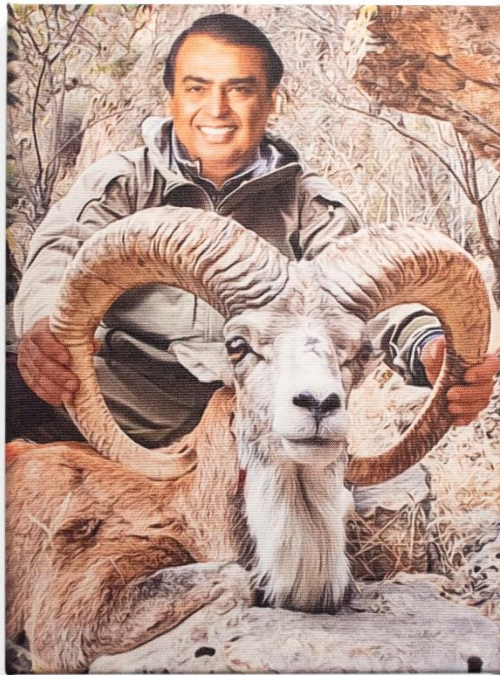40 x 30 cm
Unique

Colin's First, 2021
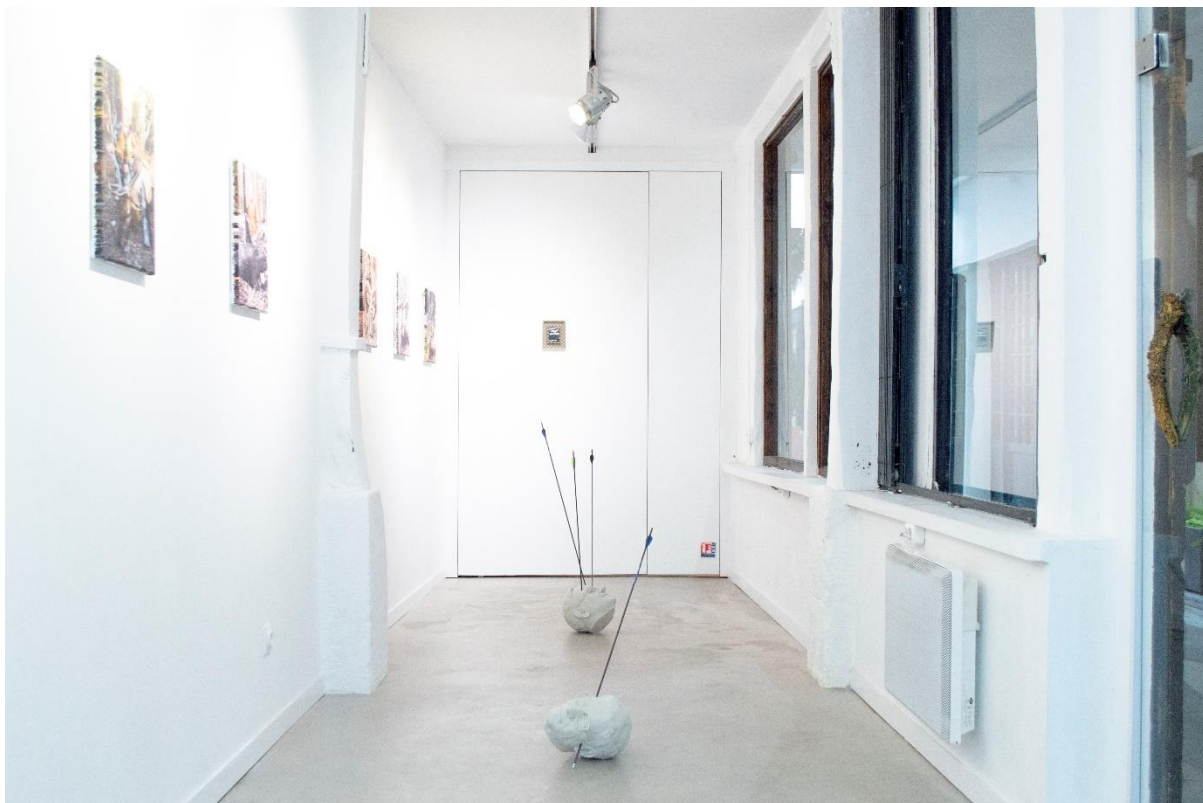Ink and acrylic on canvas
40 x 30 cm
Unique

Carlos' First, 2021
Ink and acrylic on canvas
40 x 30 cm
Unique

Steve's Second, 2021
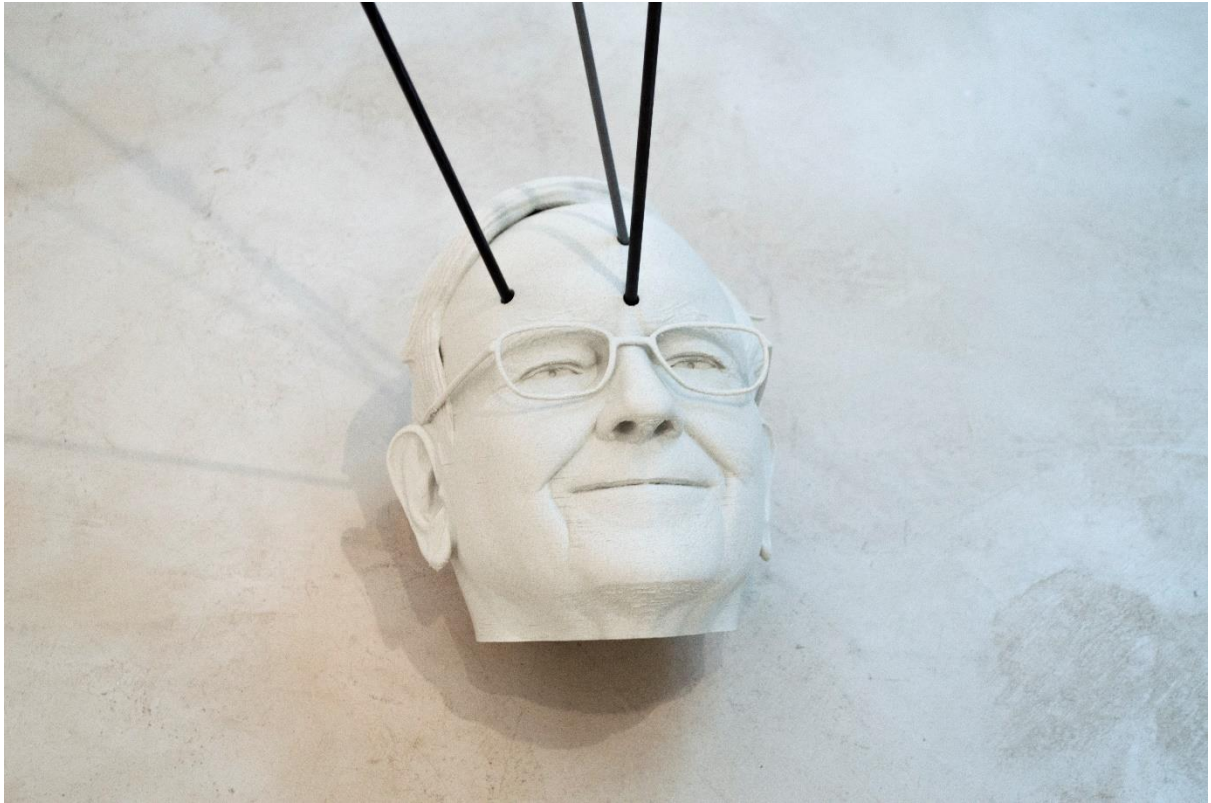Ink and acrylic on canvas
40 x 30 cm
Unique

Mukesh's First, 2021
Ink and acrylic on canvas
40 x 30 cm
Unique

Eat The Rich, 2021
Installation view

The Hunt (Warren), 2021
3D printed marble PLA plastic, fiberglass arrows
98 x 31 x 42 cm
Ed 3 + 1 AP

The Hunt (Warren), 2021
3D printed marble PLA plastic, fiberglass arrows
98 x 31 x 42 cm
Ed 3 + 1 AP

Warren's First, 2021
Ink and acrylic on canvas
40 x 30 cm
Unique

Zhong's First, 2021
Ink and acrylic on canvas
40 x 30 cm
Unique

Most Wanted, 2021
Card deck, 3D printed marble PLA plastic
14.7 x 7.2 cm x 3 cm (framed)
Edition of 100

Most Wanted, 2021
Card deck, 3D printed marble PLA plastic
14.7 x 7.2 cm x 3 cm (framed)
Edition of 100

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Card deck, 3D printed marble PLA plastic
14.7 x 7.2 cm x 3 cm (framed)
Edition of 100