

Bob Bicknell-Knight

It's Always Day One, 2021

Solo exhibition at Office Impart, Berlin, DE, 22nd April - 6th June 2021.



The exhibition *It's Always Day One* forms part of an ongoing research-based body of work by Bob Bicknell-Knight, concerning Amazon Fulfillment Centres and Amazon's relationship to its human employees.

Within the project Bicknell-Knight has produced a number of paintings depicting Amazon workers and their warehouse jobs. Amazon employees, loosely dubbed Amazonians, spend countless hours within Amazon warehouses undergoing a variety of different jobs that will soon be automated, replaced by artificially intelligent machines. Human workers are already being treated as if they are machines within these warehouse environments, with timed bathroom breaks and constant surveillance. Their job titles, ranging from Picker to Water Spider, detail what menial, physically demanding and incredibly repetitive activity they'll be undergoing on a daily basis, from picking up and scanning products to wrapping pallets. These employees are aware of their precarious position but, as Amazon continues to dominate global markets, it's increasingly difficult to find work within this industry and to not be treated like an emotionless machine. Bicknell-Knight's paintings detail the insides of Amazon warehouses, working from photos released to global news outlets alongside tours of Amazon facilities, as a vehicle for speaking about automation, forms of hyper-capitalism and unstable warehouse environments.

Also included in the exhibition are a number of sculptures made from an aluminium modular extrusion system commonly used in autonomous forms of production and to build office partitions. Sitting atop these rigid structures are 3D printed body parts with SD cards embedded within. Each artwork in the sculptural series represents a Amazon worker and the body part that they use on a regular basis in their job whilst working for Amazon, body parts that will soon be replaced by intelligent automated machines. Within each 3D print an SD card

is embedded that contains an interview with the affected employee, speaking about their experience working for the multinational technology company. The embedded technology references the ongoing practice of unpaid and underpaid labourers hiding 'cry for help' notes in different products, attempting to alert authorities to unsafe working conditions and forms of modern day slavery.

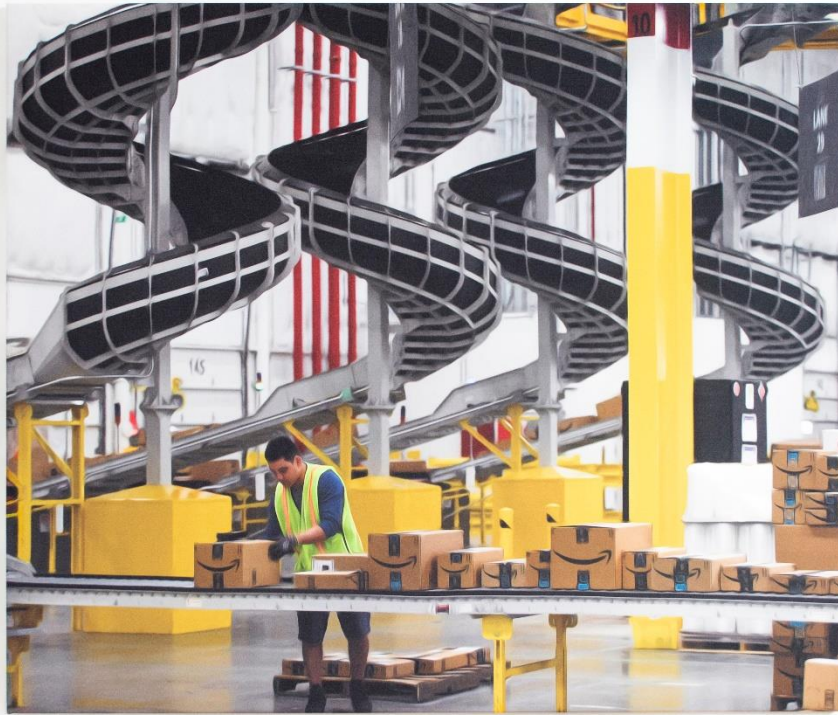
The title, It's Always Day One, refers to Amazon founder and CEO Jeff Bezos and his most popular phrase, used regularly in shareholder letters and press briefings. The term is the basis of Amazon's methodology, to always act as a business that is undergoing it's first day of operation. It's a term that encompasses the idea that businesses, at the beginning of their life, must make tough, unflinching decisions, in order to increase their longevity.

Amazon is famous for underpaying their employees, setting unreachable targets and collapsing traditional independent brick and mortar stores. The problem with Amazon having this term embedded within their company policy is that they're a multi-trillion-dollar company. They no longer need to underpay staff or increase their revenue streams, they are no longer a start-up, and can afford to set reasonable work targets and allow their employees to join a union.

Many Amazon employees, particularly pickers who are responsible for picking up and scanning purchased items, have extremely strenuous workdays, timed toilet breaks and will slowly be replaced as artificially intelligent (AI) driven technologies become more widespread.



It's Always Day One, 2021
Installation view



Slides, 2021
Ink and acrylic on canvas
115 x 135 cm
Unique



It's Always Day One, 2021
Installation view



Quality Control, 2021
Ink and acrylic on canvas
77 x 77 cm
Unique



It's Always Day One, 2021
Installation view



Wrap Down, 2021
Ink and acrylic on canvas
30 x 20 cm
Unique



Automaton, 2021
Ink and acrylic on canvas
30 x 20 cm
Unique



Unfulfilled, 2020
Ink and acrylic on canvas
40 x 30 cm
Unique



It's Always Day One, 2021
Installation view



Robert (Picker), 2021

Aluminium modular system, 3D printed PLA, SD card, miscellaneous screws

149 x 56 x 46 cm

Edition of 1, 1AP



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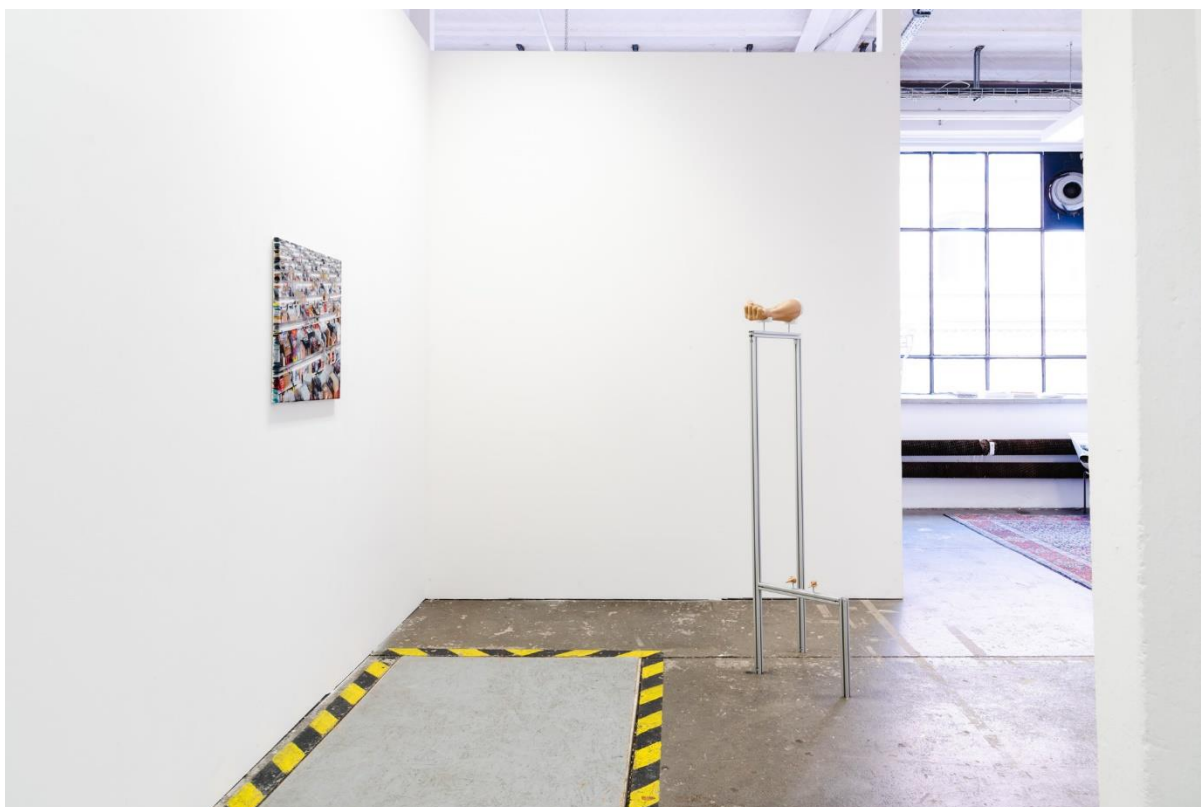
Robert (Picker), 2021
Aluminium modular system, 3D printed PLA, SD card, miscellaneous screws
149 x 56 x 46 cm
Edition of 1, 1AP



It's Always Day One, 2021
Installation view



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It's Always Day One, 2021
Installation view



Mary (Water Spider), 2021

Aluminium modular system, 3D printed PLA, SD card, miscellaneous screws

170 x 50 x 42 cm

Edition of 1, 1AP



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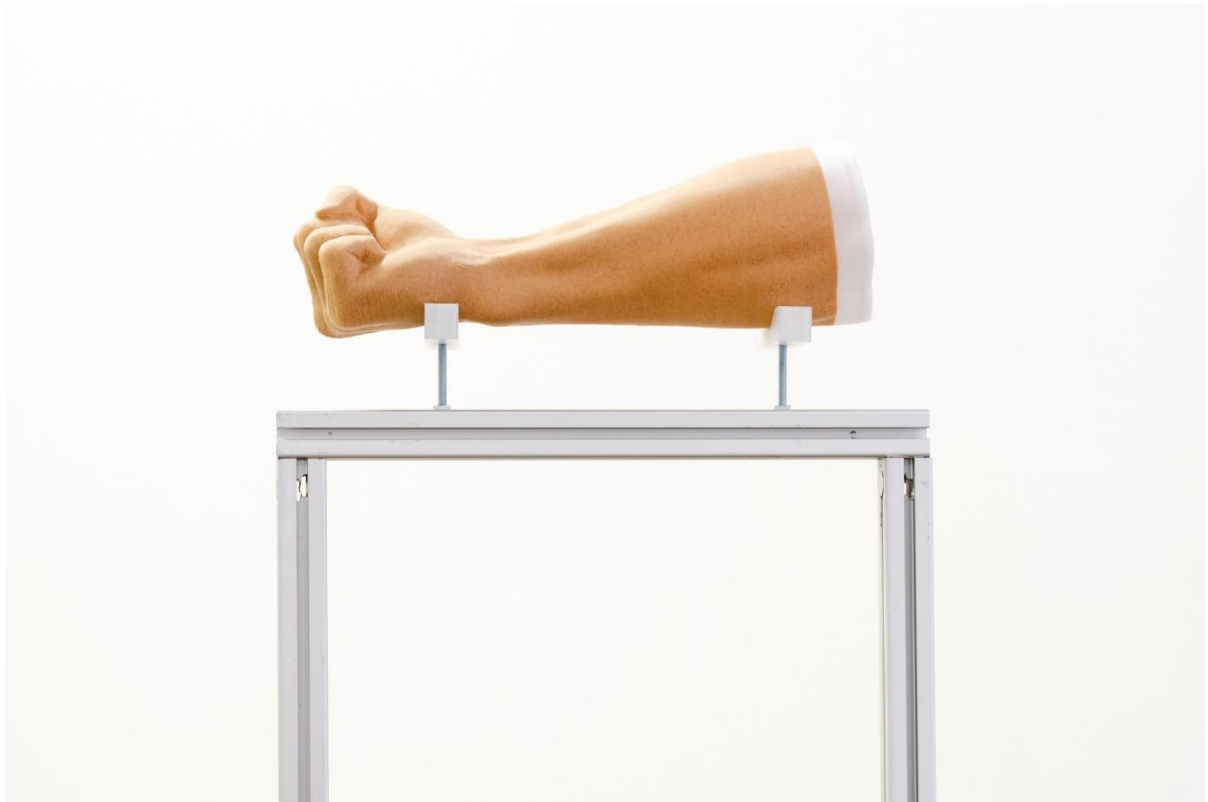


Mary (Water Spider), 2021

Aluminium modular system, 3D printed PLA, SD card, miscellaneous screws

170 x 50 x 42 cm

Edition of 1, 1AP

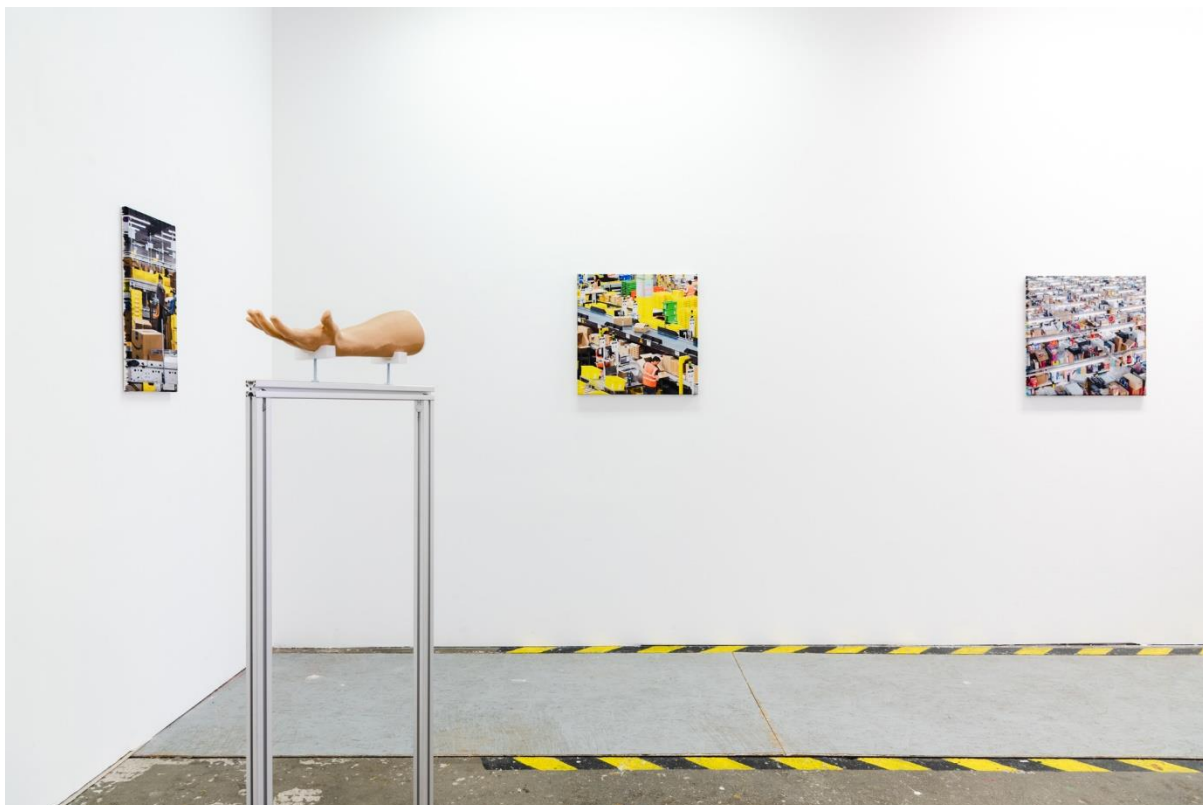


Mary (Water Spider), 2021

Aluminium modular system, 3D printed PLA, SD card, miscellaneous screws

170 x 50 x 42 cm

Edition of 1, 1AP



It's Always Day One, 2021
Installation view



Mandatory Overtime, 2021
Ink and acrylic on canvas
60 x 30 cm
Unique



John (Stower), 2021
Aluminium modular system, 3D printed PLA, SD card, miscellaneous screws
135 x 40 x 40 cm
Edition of 1, 1AP



John (Stower), 2021
Aluminium modular system, 3D printed PLA, SD card, miscellaneous screws
135 x 40 x 40 cm
Edition of 1, 1AP



John (Stower), 2021
Aluminium modular system, 3D printed PLA, SD card, miscellaneous screws
135 x 40 x 40 cm
Edition of 1, 1AP



It's Always Day One, 2021
Installation view



Human Error, 2021
Ink and acrylic on canvas
58 x 58 cm
Unique



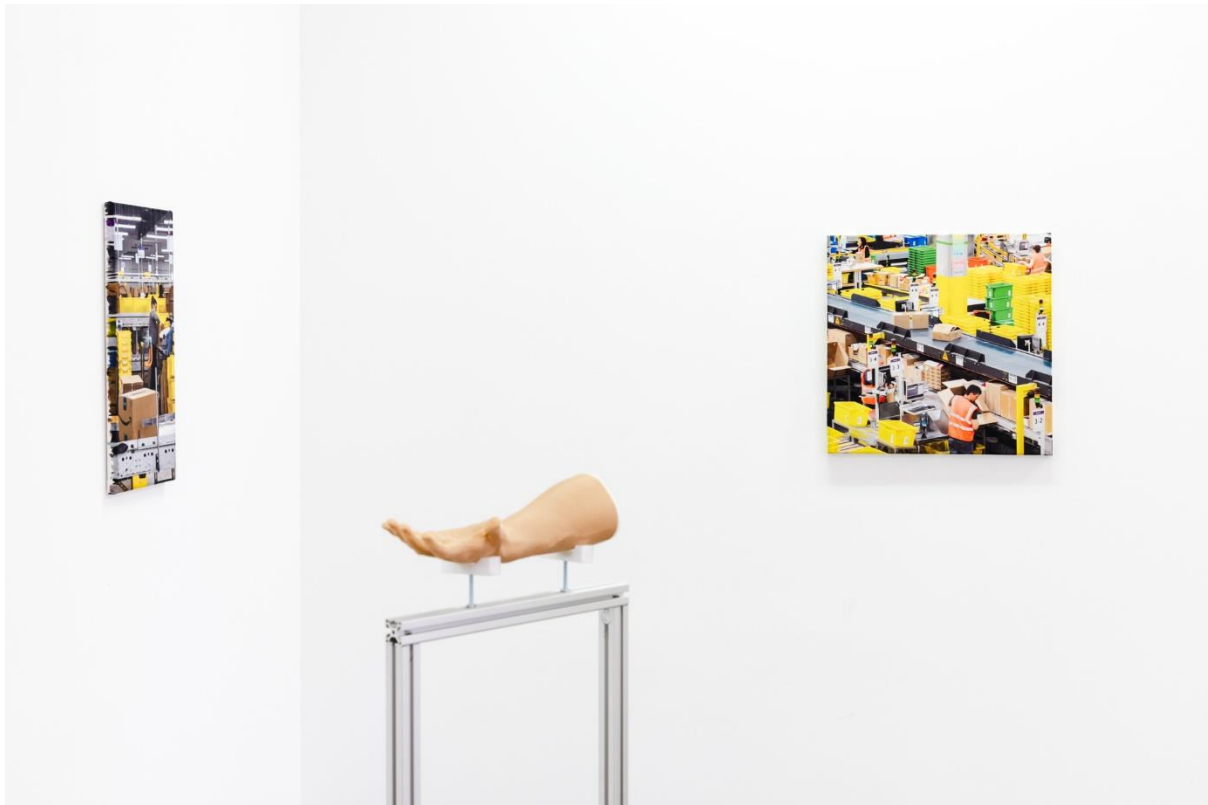
Water Spiders, 2021
Ink and acrylic on canvas
58 x 58 cm
Unique



It's Always Day One, 2021
Installation view



It's Always Day One, 2021
Installation view



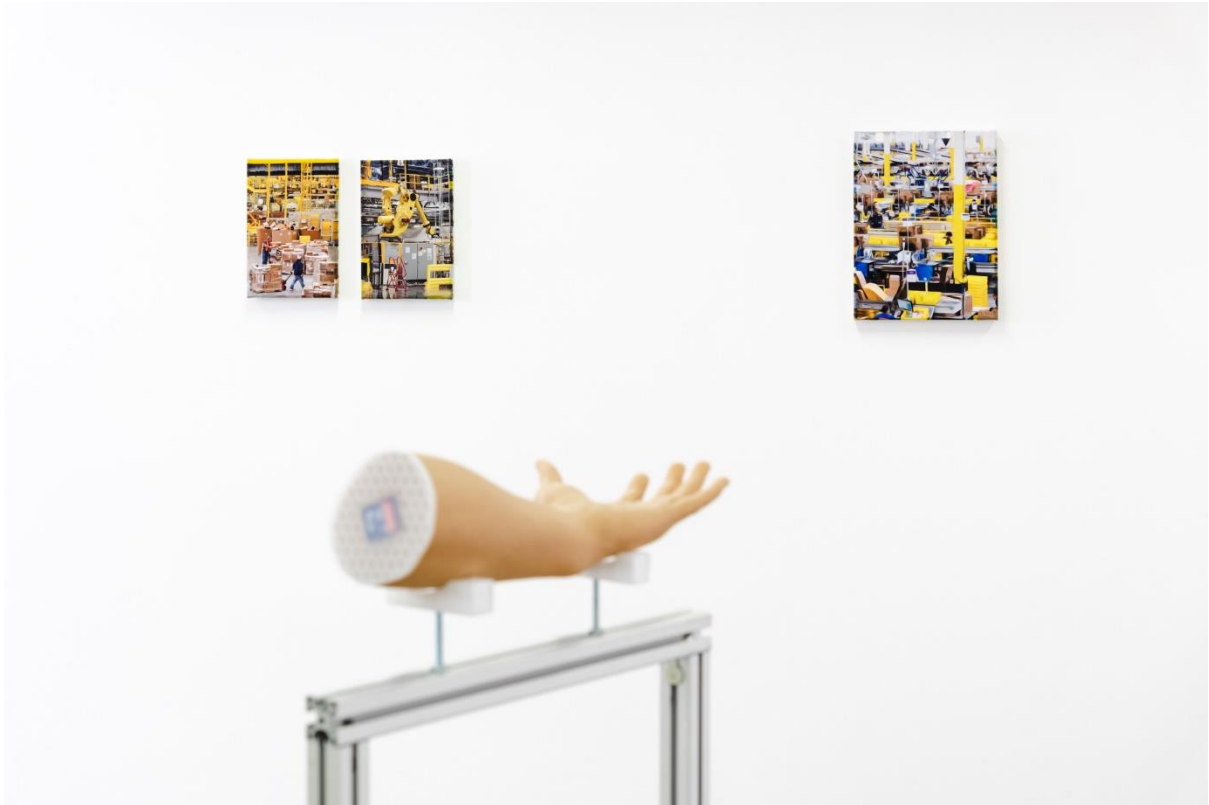
It's Always Day One, 2021
Installation view



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