

Rory Devine: *post human*

Online Exhibition

June 27 – July 25, 2024

Diane Rosenstein Gallery is happy to announce *post human* – a dedicated online exhibition of paintings by Los Angeles-based artist and curator Rory Devine. This series of figurative paintings depicts robotic figures in familiar landscapes, inspired by the artist's recent experiences with loss and alienation.

Devine cites 20th century surrealists such as Giorgio de Chirico and Francis Picabia as visual and thematic influences on this work, as well as Carroll Dunham and John Wesley. Although the figures represented in these works are non-human, the paintings emanate human emotions. Devine's colorful tableaus are metaphors for this social media landscape that we inhabit, isolating the viewer and often imparting a feeling of emptiness.

Devine is a self-described "pluralistic artist", and this expressive and emotional series is a departure from his broader practice as a painter, which tends to be more conceptual. "In the paintings," Devine writes, "we are introduced to various robotic creatures who are overly adorned with what appear to be jewel-like embellishments and usually exist on the outskirts of the 'town'...The desperate attempt to be noticed, represented by their abundance of jewels, is a metaphor for the present state of social media, where a kind of hyper fiction is constantly being told and projecting a fictitious persona are the norm."

"The creatures are fortunately or unfortunately saddled with human emotions and in the paintings, their sense of anxiety shows through. The matte black backgrounds further highlight the figures' isolation and provide a neutral space on which the dramas can unfold. In all of these paintings There is an implied landscape in which they are portrayed as being on the outside from. This acts as another metaphor for social isolation."

One of the show's key works, *Untitled (variety show rehearsal)*, is the exhibition's sole painting in which the figure seems aware of the viewer. In *Untitled (warehouse fire)*, in which one creature tends to another radiates a sense of compassion and empathy –two qualities very important to the artist himself.

Rory Devine (USA, b. 1966) is a painter who lives and works in Los Angeles. He attended Hunter College and graduated from The School of Visual Arts, New York City in 1988; before relocating to California. Since 1992, Devine has received numerous solo exhibitions, including *Iconoclastic*

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Works of the Early 21st Century at C Nichols Projects (2015). His work was included in *Perfect Day* at Roberts & Tilton (2016) and *Think Pinker* organized by Beth DeWoody at Gavlak Los Angeles (2023).

As an independent curator, Rory Devine was the founder and director of TRI Gallery (1992 - 1995), as well as RDFA (2021 - 2023), both artist-run exhibition spaces in Los Angeles. TRI Gallery, one of the first alternative residential galleries in Los Angeles, was founded in response to the lack of exhibition opportunities for emerging art in the city. TRI presented thirty exhibitions of painting, sculpture, video and performance, notably *Not Men*, a show of eight women painters; and *The Laura Show*, a show of six artists named Laura. In 2021, during the pandemic, Devine opened RDFA, a contemporary art gallery to provide visibility, promotion, and sustainability of mid-career Los Angeles artists. A notable exhibition was *Fun House* which showed sixty Los Angeles-based painters. The exhibition space RDFA is temporarily on hiatus.