



OVER THE INFLUENCE

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Gongkan: *Monsters in You*

A solo show of monstrous paintings

Opening Reception: Saturday, September 23, 2023 5pm - 9pm

Exhibition Dates: September 23 - November 19, 2023



***Flyte*, 2023, Courtesy of the artist and Over the Influence**

August XX, 2023 (Los Angeles, CA) — Over the Influence is thrilled to announce ***Monsters in You***, an exhibition of new work from the artist known as Gongkan. This will mark Gongkan's second solo exhibition with Over the Influence Los Angeles, following *Tip of the Iceberg* in 2021. The show will feature a new series of paintings in Gongkan's signature pop surrealist style that tackle the idea of "monsters" that exist within all of us, and the ways in which we might learn to coexist with them. ***Monsters in You*** will open Saturday, September 23rd with a reception from 5pm to 9pm and will remain on view through November 19, 2023.

Monsters in You marks a continuation of Gongkan's exploration into themes of transformation, freedom, and self discovery. Black portals painted in the picture plane were previously used to depict people emerging and disappearing as if traveling through space or time. In this exhibition, Gongkan trades black portals for mirrors, the viewers' reflections transposed into the images of monsters — strange and imagined creatures that range from eerie oddlings to ethereal beings to fuzzy pet-like beasts. By refusing to depict these creatures as either wholly angelic or wholly demonic, Gongkan adds a level of dimensionality that allows the viewer to decide if the monsters are friend or foe.



Ethereal Echo, 2023, Courtesy of the artist and Over the Influence

Gongkan's work resides in the lineage of Pop Surrealism, a movement that started in the 1970s, with artists such as Mark Ryden, Anthony Ausgang, and Kenny Scharf. In *Monsters in You*, Gongkan's bright, vibrant renderings make the monsters less frightening and more

approachable—maybe even friendly. For example, one painting features a green, flower-pot-like creature with five legs and three faces surrounded by pink petals and leaves. Another shows a person lying on top of a large, pink, bean-shaped creature with dog-like features; they're connected via antenna and embracing. Each distinctive and thought-provoking “monster” represents a different inner demon within each human being, and the healing and fearlessness that comes from facing them. These creatures give physical shape to the inner states of the mind, our personalities, and the deep aspects of ourselves we sometimes refuse to acknowledge.

Throughout the works, the carefully blended scenery creates a sense of minimalism and simplicity that allows the intricate texture of the characters to stand out in sharp detail. While Gongkan's paintings are bright and animated, they also have a deeply human sensibility that creates greater emotional and psychological depth, ultimately imparting them with an ambiance that is both strange and transcendent. For the first time, Gongkan has incorporated mirrors into his work, in which viewers may see their own face as they contemplate the art, and perhaps by extension examine their own monsters within.

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About Gongkan

B. 1989, Bangkok, Thailand – Lives and works in Bangkok, Thailand

Kantapon Metheekul, known professionally as Gongkan, was born and raised in Bangkok, Thailand. He graduated from the School of Arts at Silpakorn University in Bangkok, and had a successful career in advertising and graphic design afterwards. He moved to New York City for 3 years to study Fine Arts with a focus on painting. During his spare time, he created street art throughout the city and became familiar with the local community. He developed an artistic concept that he called Teleport Art, and it gained notoriety in the New York street art scene for its images of people emerging and disappearing from black portals like they were traveling through multiple dimensions.

He found his creative voice in New York. It was there that he witnessed everyday life such as people striving for a better life, gender equality, and overall respect in daily interactions. All this had a great influence on his works. His art incorporates symbols from nature, such as the sky, clouds, and water- items that are fluid and mutable to represent freedom of expression and

spirit. Additional symbols that are found in his art are circular shapes reminiscent of black holes, bodies of water, or doorways to other realms.

Gongkan works with various materials: sculptures, paintings, street art and video installations.

About Over the Influence

Launched in 2015, Over the Influence Hong Kong has served as a unique platform in Asia for an ambitious exhibition program of internationally acclaimed artists. The inaugural program of Over the Influence Los Angeles boasts a strong selection of local and international artists including Ron Arad (UK), Nobuyoshi Araki (JP), Alexandre Farto AKA Vhils (PT), Invader (FR), Kathryn MacNaughton (CA), and Cleon Peterson (CA), along with a curated series of group exhibitions.

Location

Over the Influence
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Los Angeles, CA 90013

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