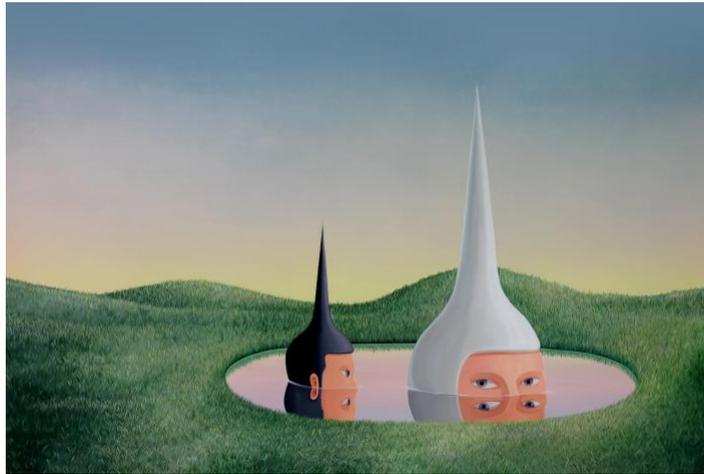




Over the Influence presents

Gongkan The Tip of the Iceberg

Exhibition dates: 01 May – 13 June 2021



Gongkan *Pre_ _ _ _* 2021. Acrylic on canvas, Airbrush. 120 x 180 cm. 47.2 x 70.8 in.
Courtesy of the Artist and Over the Influence. Photo credit the Artist.

Over the Influence is pleased to showcase Thai contemporary artist Kantapon (Gongkan) Metheekul's first solo exhibition with the gallery. The exhibition titled *The Tip of the Iceberg* also celebrates the artist's debut show in America. Known professionally as Gongkan, his art bridges the gap between graffiti art culture and commercial illustration. The exhibition will be on view at Over the Influence, Los Angeles 01 May – 13 June 2021.

Growing up in Bangkok, Gongkan graduated from the School of Arts at Silpakorn University and began a professional career in advertising and graphic design. However it was relocating to New York City for 3 years to study Fine Arts with a focus in painting that altered the direction of his artistic expression. The creative liberation he found in the city had a lasting influence upon his identity as an artist and as a gay man.

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It was during this period he discovered the street art community, finding solidarity with artists who colored the city with their visual monikers. Gongkan lent his street art presence by leaving stickers of surreal scenes throughout New York's subway line. These illustrations would later make up his acclaimed *Teleport Art* works showing people traveling, aka 'teleporting', through black holes and arriving on the other side.

The Tip of the Iceberg expands on the themes of human connection found in *Teleport* to go deeper into environmental and societal issues at play. Black holes have evolved into pools of water where people come together in unison. Existentialist tones highlight the use of water as a moral compass unifying the works together, for Gongkan believes water is spirited and represents freedom of thought and expression. Therefore, it is what lies beneath the water that is a mystery to be solved- is it positive or negative the movement of the water flowing?

"Bangkok means the City of Angels. However, the truth is far from what the name suggests. Many issues of the city and country remain buried, lying beneath the surface of false beauty projected in society. In Thailand, the true power exists with only 0.1% of the people, and another 0.9% with the wealthiest in the country. The remaining 90% are faced with great challenges financially and socially", the artist explained.

Gongkan's art attracts a range of multidisciplinary practices, as he comfortably bridges the gap between commercial and subversive artistic expression. This is evident with recent collaborations including the creation of an AI music video for Australian singer Troye Sivan and designing the album cover for Danish pop band Lucas Graham.

The grouping in *The Tip of the Iceberg* provides an excellent introduction to his creative voice that is inspired by a medley of influences including urban street aesthetics, personal identity, and graphic design.

Location
833 East 3rd Street
Los Angeles, CA 90013

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