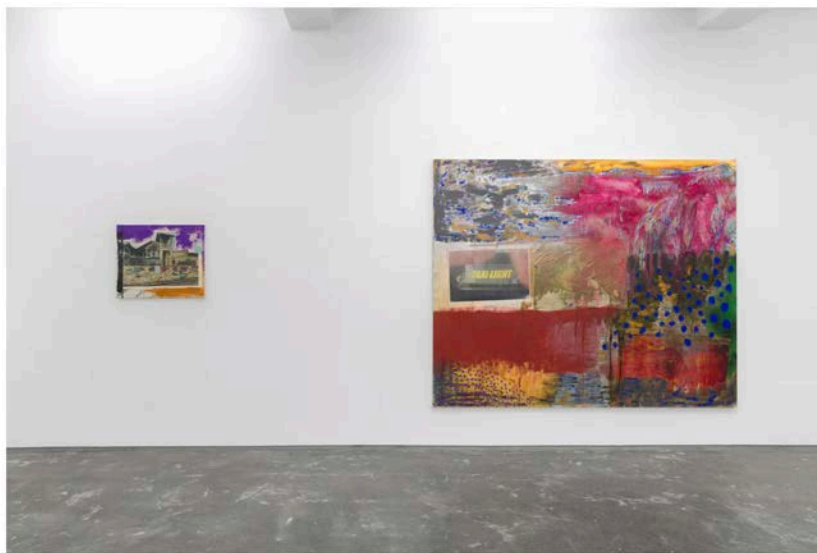


KLASSEKAMPEN

On a journey through: Mickael Marman allows his abstract paintings to be infiltrated by the world

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April 9, 2025*



FLYKTIG TID: Mickael Marmans «hello driver!». FOTO: OSL CONTEMPORARY

A widespread definition of the essence of art is that it is an attempt to make sense of the world and its problems. For Norwegian-Gambian Mickael Marman, educated at the Städelschule in Frankfurt and based in Berlin and Oslo, however, it is just as much the aesthetic processing that is at the center.

In the exhibition "hello driver!" at OSL Contemporary, the paintings reflect the wandering lifestyle of an artist who travels a lot and who exhibits more often internationally than in Norway. It is as if they have chaotically absorbed all the visual impressions and energy from these experiences onto one and the same surface, without a clear hierarchy.

Marman's paintings consist of large rectangular color fields in soft colors that often overlap and penetrate each other. On this background, there is again a plethora of curly lines, expressive gestures and colorful dot patterns.

In "hello driver!" He also uses a technique he has often used before: photo prints pasted onto the paint. This time, they are often clearly processed – torn off, pasted back on or cut up and

apparently taken with a mobile phone during trips to various warm and tropical regions. They often show decorated walls and facades, thus creating the impression that the paintings themselves are weathered wall surfaces that have been painted over and covered with posters again and again.

The painting “World of its mouth” (2025) is a good example of Marman’s expression. A large pink field of sand-mixed paint gives a texture reminiscent of a rough plastered wall. Green and gray drips break up the raw canvas. A pasted photograph shows a worn wall with a painted map of Jamaica flanked by American and Jamaican flags, while a clipping from a Jamaican tabloid newspaper reinforces the tension between abstraction and real-life references, but also between immediate experience and the mediated. These are works that give a sense of time and place, but are also blurred and fleeting.

An untitled work is dominated by red, golden yellow and silver fields with cobalt blue dots and rapid drips and stains. Here, a pasted photograph shows a taxi lamp – a clear reference to the exhibition’s title. Next to it hangs a small picture where a photograph of a beige brick wall in front of a house with a sloping roof is pasted on a background of loose yellow and orange paint stripes. The wall itself in the photograph has random patches of blue, red and yellow – like unfinished color samples. It is as if a piece of aesthetic inspiration has been pasted directly onto the painting.

Among younger artists on Oslo's gallery scene, a tendency in recent years has been to create figurative paintings that connect to the artist's immediate surroundings, lifestyle or social circle. Marman stands out by choosing an abstract approach, which at the same time allows reality to penetrate. The sensuality of painting as a medium merges with his subjective impressions of traveling to different places. The paintings give form to the traveler's mode - a sharp look at the surface of places, without necessarily penetrating the life lived there. It is conceptually interesting, but most importantly, engaging to look at.