



paintings by Max Prus at Somers Gallery
96 Chalton Street, London, NW1 1HJ
07/12/2022 – 07/01/2023

Responsible Oil Spill

Carefully I pour a homemade recipe of oils, solvents and pigments over some previously laid oil paint. This viscous mix forms a glowing smooth brown globule on the canvas, a veritable reflection of the universe. In two years' time it will have contorted and shrivelled into the giant raisin type thing I am looking at now. I am fairly sure this will happen; indicated by earlier tests. Since then, more paint has been added and now I call this particular painting finished.

There are some clearly defined figurative elements, namely a clarinet and a boy. Could this boy be a woodwind prodigy? What relation is his image to the clarinet's? What does it matter. Any seemingly meaningful connection between things could descend into a kind of madness, but the manner in which oil sits upon a surface is an actuality. In truth it can be useful to inhabit disparate realms when orchestrating. Indeed, to acknowledge and explore a madness will likely generate fresh understanding and meaning. And then there is the oversized raisin.

Paintings as objects are often the incidental leftovers from a life lived. Painting is a perversion but it is at least harmless, particularly in instances where there is no real political intent. To paint is to step aside, it is to be responsible by not pretending the responsibility of others. To paint seriously is to permit a flicker of vain optimism amongst the pessimistic cinders, it is an attempt to build something to outlive its maker, it is to pursue an end of perverse refinement, it is to commit considerable time to a vocation that ultimately does not matter.

These paintings have been made using an environmentally friendly process. Surplus materials have been recycled. The oil is contained. Please let them exist as they are. I am on your side. Thank you.

Max Prus 2022



Sonny's Raisin, oil on linen, 80 x 80cm, oil on linen, 2022



Nine Mice and the Nymphs of the West, 50 x 80cm, oil on polyester, 2022



Still Bound Tape Chain, watercolour on paper, 75 x 105cm, 2022



Sailorless, watercolour on paper, 153 x 104cm, 2022



The Boat on the River Lea, oil on linen, 40 x 70cm, 2022



Ramblers, oil on linen, 61.5 x 71cm, 2022



Red Bed, oil on cotton duck, 70 x 100cm, 2022



Discreet 8, watercolour on paper, 105 x 75cm, 2022



Transcendental Tear, oil on cotton duck, 85.3 x 95cm, 2022



Guardians of the Battenberg, watercolour on paper, 75 x 105cm, 2022



Gone, oil on linen, 25.4 x 35.6cm, 2022