

**On The Road Again**

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**Exhibiting at JGM Gallery London**



# On The Road Again

20 September to 21 October 2023

An exhibition of new paintings by Juan Bolivar.

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Juan Bolivar, *Styx*, 2023, acrylic on canvas, 25cm x 21cm.  
Image courtesy of Daniel Browne.

**LONDON, 20 September, 2023** - JGM Gallery presents *On The Road Again*, an exhibition of 23 new paintings by the Venezuelan-born British artist, Juan Bolivar.

A central theme of this exhibition is the idea of the 'long-haul', used by Bolivar as a metaphor for the creative journey and the isolation of the studio. He establishes this analogy by bringing together canvases of variable sizes which, in combination, represent large vehicles. Many of the works in this exhibition, then, function both as sculptures and as paintings.

Art historical references are frequently made. When integrated with unexpected subjects, such as a truck or a fire engine, these works become springboards for novel aesthetic and conceptual explorations. In much the same way that a film director brings together disparate components (music, words and a script), Bolivar integrates rogue elements with well known artworks. In this way, he modifies their meaning and directs his audience toward unexpected conceptual territory. Moreover, the ostensibly low-brow nature of the long-haul vehicles negates the gravitas of their art historical counterparts, encouraging the viewer to engage with both in new and unorthodox ways.

Bolivar says that he wants "... to make slightly mischievous paintings... thought experiments that invite the viewer to question the understood significance of historical works." This "mischievous" approach manifests in a variety of visual puns and tromp l'oeil effects, motifs that expose the inner workings of these pictures and the illusionistic nature of representation. In *Styx*, by example, a painted postcard Malevich is fixed to the canvas with painted sticky tape. The tape fulfil its function as a rogue element, but also continues Malevich's pictorial logic, mimicking as it does the rectangular shapes of the original composition.

*Stevadore*, a work which overtly references the structure of an altar piece, also indicates Bolivar's interest, not just in certain artworks, but in the contexts with which they have previously been displayed. By integrating this religious structure with the secular context of a contemporary art gallery, Bolivar evokes an intriguing dissonance, what he himself describes as a kind of "sillyness."

Far from undermining the Canon, Bolivar views *On The Road Again* as an extension of that tradition, a remixing of the aesthetic ingredients that were once used by Giotto, Mondrian, Albers and der Leck, amongst others. Jennifer Guerrini Maraldi (Director of JGM Gallery) says that "Juan's work reminds us that Art is mutable and an ever evolving challenge to our powers of perception. There is a potent magic in these paintings which exists as much in the mind's eye as it does in the gallery."

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For further information and press enquiries, please contact the gallery at [info@jgmgallery.com](mailto:info@jgmgallery.com) or + 44 (0) 207 228 6027.

## Opening Reception:

Wednesday, 20 September, 6:00pm - 8:00pm

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