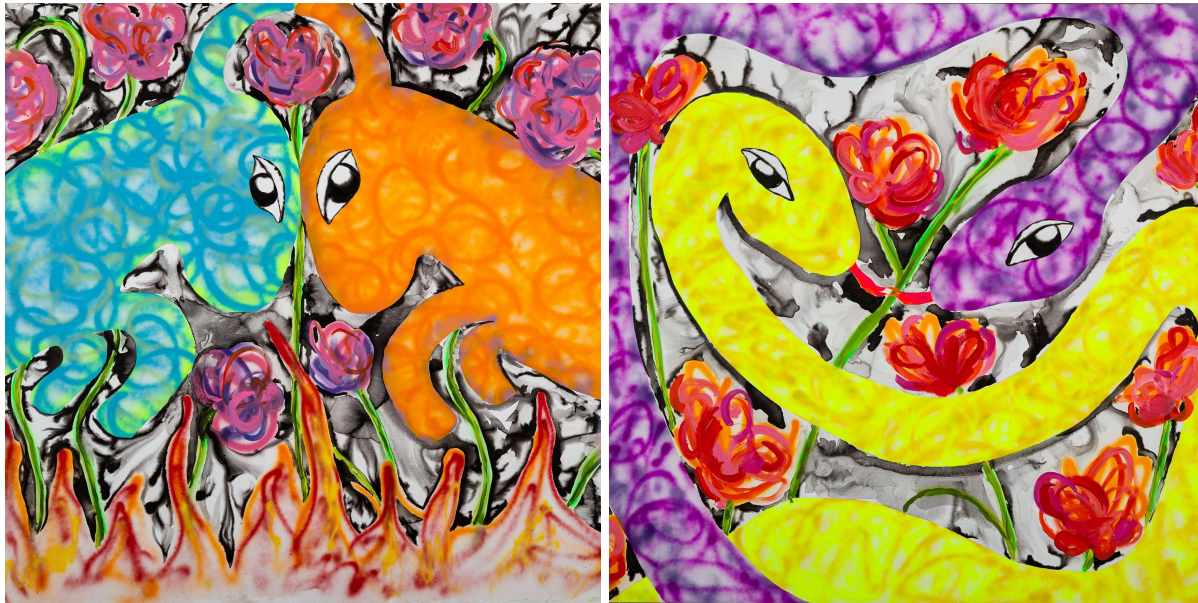


PRESS RELEASE
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**David Kovats Gallery Presents the First Solo Exhibition of Hungarian Queer artist,
Barnabás Lakatos Gelléri**

5 August - 19 September 2021

Private View: 5 August 2021, 6-8 pm, 80 Long Acre, Covent Garden, London, WC2E 9NG



*From left to right: JUMPING BULLS (2021) MIXED MEDIA, CANVAS 200 X 200 CM;
SNAKES LOVE TO PLAY (2021) MIXED MEDIA, CANVAS 200 X 200 CM.*

David Kovats Gallery is delighted to announce the opening of its final summer exhibition dedicated to Hungarian queer artist Barnabás Lakatos Gelléri. Committed to promoting emerging Hungarian and Eastern European talent, David Kovats Gallery closes its summer exhibition programme with a unique and colourful presentation by the emerging Hungarian artist and his large-scale, sensual, immersive canvases. The gallery will host a private view on the 5th of August at the gallery's main exhibition space at 80 Long Acre, Covent Garden, London, WC2E 9NG.

Born in 1997, Barnabás is currently a senior student of the Hungarian University of Fine Arts. A lover of intense and radiant colours, the young artist Barnabás Lakatos Gelléri has freely adopted the palette of Pop Art — or perhaps anachronistically, the Fauves — with gestures of Neo-Expressionism. For the artist's first London exhibition, the gallery's walls will be taken over by large 2 by 2-meter vivid canvases, filling and transforming the space with energy and colour.

Lakatos Gelléri is a leading member and proud supporter of the 'Queer Budapest' movement, an initiative bringing together and showcasing queer artists. His artworks usually present a street art aesthetic of flattened perspective, aerosol paint and bold figuration, and, on a deeper

level, a powerful sense of resistance to the conservatism of Hungary's establishment. In his words, *'here in Budapest, we are fighting for survival as queer artists and this kind of collective visibility gave us a lot of strength and power to our community. I hope that through art we can reach people in Hungary and bring them closer to what we do and who we are.'*

Barnabás spends most of his time in his studio experimenting with different techniques and improvising. Before his academic studies, Barnabás used to work with oil and mostly striking, impasto, textured images. When he was later admitted to The Hungarian University of Fine Arts, he also started working with watercolours and later he experimented with a sketchier, felt pen direction and he also discovered spray cans. After taking a short break in the fashion industry, the artist went back to his art, this time developing a mix of spray can, watercolour, and impasto paintings, using all techniques simultaneously. *'In today's world, many different qualities can work side by side from an aesthetic perspective'*, he adds.

The artist is rarely judgemental about his work and thinks that there is not such a thing as good or bad work, as they all form a unique journey, like completing a different puzzle that leads to an exciting finding. There are also specific philosophical questions that inspire Barnabás, such as the significance of silence in the creative practice: *'it can also be seen that I experimented with a few canvases without painting anything in certain spots. This also has a meaning, it is part of the transformation process, like silence in music'*, he adds. As the artist comes from a family of musicians, rhythm and music play an important role in his life.

When it comes to the queer lifestyle, the artist feels very empowered by the fact that his identity and style have an echo and following. *'What I'm painting isn't directly about me being a queer, nor am I waving this flag or label, but I'm still glad people know this about me because it's an integral part of my identity, and I want to encourage others'* the artist states. Barnabás also reflects on the recent political developments: *'In Hungary, unfortunately, politically and legally, we still do not deserve equal treatment: it is sad that in 2021, gay couples are not able to marry and adopt kids. That's why I assume I'm a queer: it is a form of protest in itself. People need to see that we are here, we are present as a community. They need to get to know us, not follow the propaganda; I have no problem with the queer label; I am proud of it. Taking on my queer identity is in itself a political stand by me'* he adds.

'Barnabás is one of the most exciting Hungarian artists of recent years. Rarely does a gallerist meet such a young person who, in addition to talent, has all the tools needed to become a great artist. His works are sensual and represent a genuinely fresh and unique aesthetic. Barnabás as an artist is a statement himself, one that I am excited to stand behind and support' says gallerist David Kovats.

For more information:

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David Kovats Bio:

David Kovats was born in 1982 in Budapest, Hungary. He has over fifteen years of experience in the art market working as a gallerist, auctioneer, and entrepreneur. From an early age he was surrounded by art, as his father, Lajos Kovats founded one of the first private auction houses in Hungary in 1991. Soon after school graduation, David ran his own gallery in Budapest. He focused on contemporary art and introducing international artists to the Hungarian market.

David's career highlight was the exhibition he organised and planned for Hermann Nitsch. Following that project, in 2009, David moved to London where he joined the Art and Business course at the Sotheby's Institute of Art. After a week in the course, he fell in love with auctions, especially after joining an evening sale of impressionist works. David then built his own network, completed an MA in Art and Business, and became an intern, and later a full-time employee, at Sotheby's.

During his time at Sotheby's he worked at the Valuations Department, managing the valuation of important collections. In 2017, David moved back to Hungary to start his own auction house Dobossy with his sister Nora, which focused on Hungarian contemporary art. Together they brought a fresh approach to the market with great success, including a London sale in 2019. He then decided to move back to London so he can expose his work to a global audience. The first exhibition of David Kovats Gallery opened in December 2020 and was dedicated to artist Pista Horror and has presented 5 solo shows to date.