

# GIOVANNI'S ROOM



**Matteo Callegari**

radix

March 18, 2023 - April 22, 2023

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**Matteo Callegari**  
Envy, 2022  
oil on Indian linen  
14 X 11 inches





**Matteo Callegari**  
Shade, 2022  
oil on Indian linen  
14 X 11 inches





**Matteo Callegari**  
Astralis, 2022  
oil on Indian linen  
14 X 11 inches





**Matteo Callegari**  
Airo, 2022  
oil on Indian linen  
14 X 11 inches





**Matteo Callegari**  
Mago, 2022  
oil on Indian linen  
14 X 11 inches





**Matteo Callegari**  
Omos, 2022  
oil on Indian linen  
14 X 11 inches





**Matteo Callegari**  
Mother, 2022  
oil on Indian linen  
20 X 20 inches





**Matteo Callegari**  
Manasa, 2021  
oil on Indian linen  
34 X 46 inches





**Matteo Callegari**  
Vision, 2022  
oil on Indian linen  
36 X 44 inches





**Matteo Callegari**  
Desire, 2023  
oil on Indian linen  
54 X 42 inches





**Matteo Callegari**  
Macaw, 2022  
oil on Indian linen  
56 X 40 inches





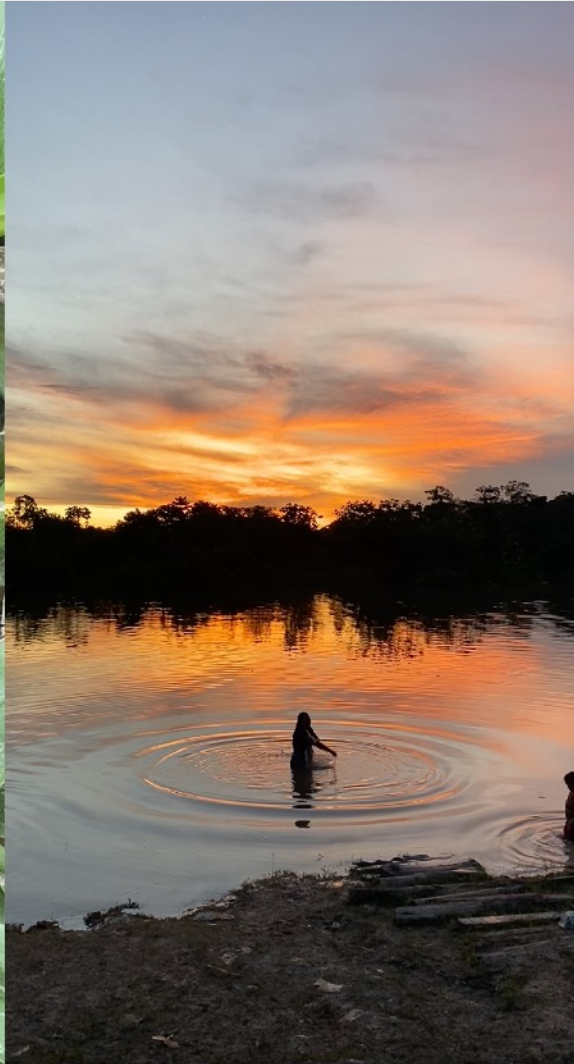
**Matteo Callegari**  
Protection, 2022  
oil on Indian linen  
54 X 46 inches





**Matteo Callegari**  
Veil, 2022  
oil on Indian linen  
60 X 50 inches





Matteo Callegari  
SOULLAND, 2023  
MP4  
Edition of 7 plus 3 AP



## Exhibition Text

Only gradually do your eyes start to make sense of how forms emerge from their black background in Callegari's paintings. Looking cannot be taken for granted, as it is essential to feel the illusion of form and of space created by the colors' material presence.

Thus, the exhibition radix is a visual amalgamation of archetypes and patterns, tenderly organized by Callegari as realistic representations of butterflies, birds, flowers, and other animals. The fifteen paintings, all oil on Indian linen, are detailed and meditative. The animals and insects are surrounded by their luscious habitats. A similar meditative approach can be found in the video work SOULLAND. Filmed entirely with a phone by the artist, the montage offers the backstory of what inspired this exhibition.

Through depictions of patterns that occur in nature, the paintings seem to hold a space that opens up between the canvas, a collective consciousness, and the natural world. From the spots of the black panther to water caustics, to the perfect symmetry of butterfly wings and of leaves, vibrant compositions inject the exhibition with a kind of magic that emphasizes the extension of nature into the spirit and that of spirit into nature.

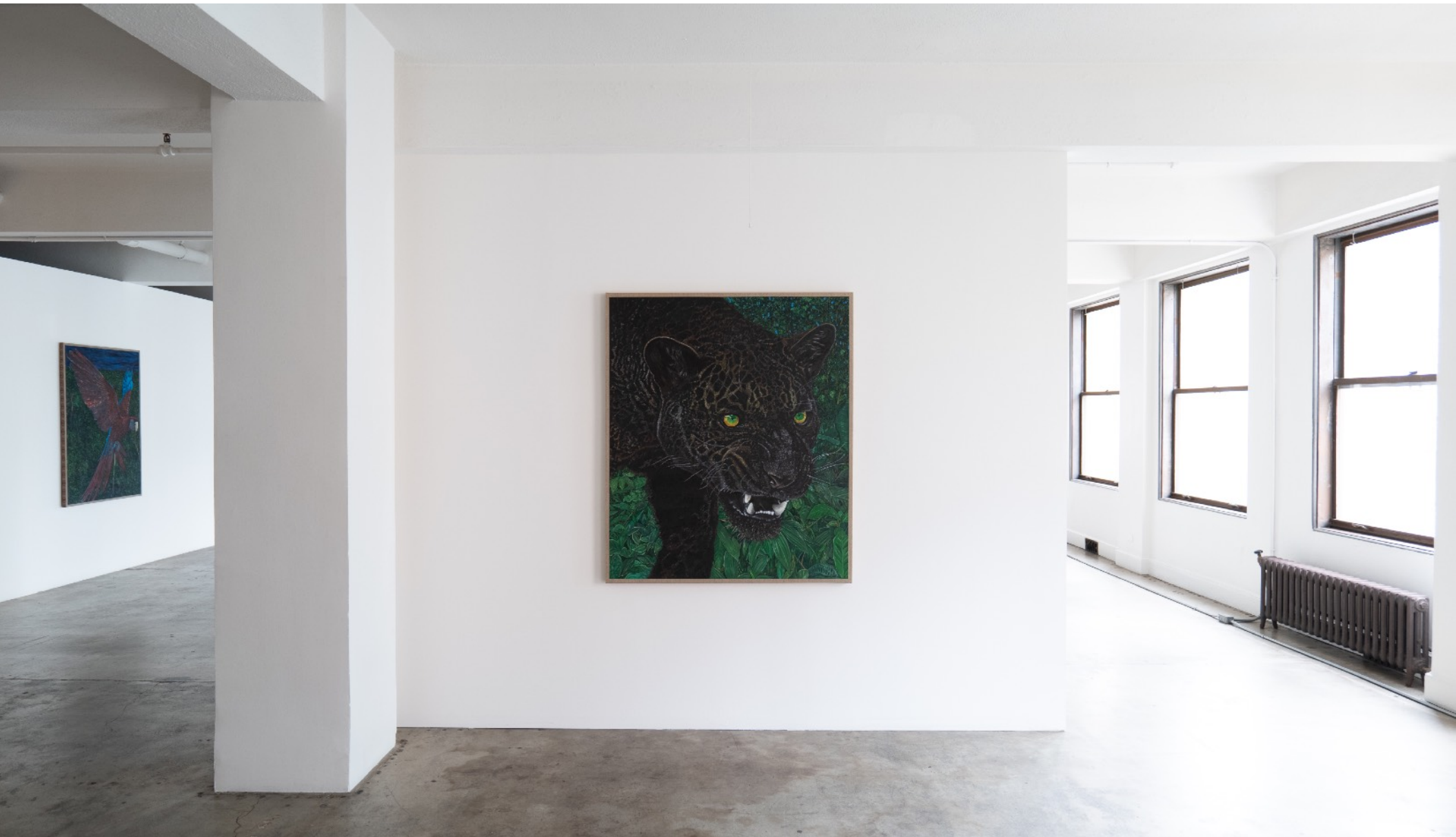
In our first studio visit, when I asked Matteo about his process, he told me that the compositions are often sketched first so that when the transition from the sketch to the canvas happens, it allows him to have a clear vision of what he needs to achieve whilst entering an introspective and speculative realm. Unlike a taxonomical representation, where the projection on the subject overtakes its identity, the critters' essence in Matteo's paintings feel complicit in the slippery production of meaning. Simultaneously, what the artist calls "energy patterns" decorate the sides of the works, making the objects feel celebratory and hyper-aware of their beauty. The video in the exhibition pulls expectations in the opposite direction. It shows a spontaneous sequence of shots of the river, of people, and of the animals and insects, that the artist spontaneously encountered on his trips in the Amazonian rainforest. Both bodies of work balance a highly structured approach and an unconstrained, more playful one, offering a full picture of the euphoric sense of freedom that Callegari experienced in the jungle.

Undeniably, the work also brings to mind topics of territory and identity. It seems to beg the question of how we can represent nature in a symbolic way, whilst reconnecting social and political relations with its material reality. The exhibition gently implies that this can only start from an internal and individually rendered process, where one must acknowledge that our evolution with our environment continues to hold a multiplicity of symbolic attributes and the many scaffoldings of social constructions. Making space for such complexities and paradoxes to exist, whilst also seeing through their artifice, feels essential. This presents an understanding of nature through a socialized and fractured historical structure, "haunted" by an ancient collective memory, but it also foregrounds its presence, with its unruly and sometimes untranslatable logic.

The exhibition radix, points out that poetic exercise can help us hold these contradictions. Whilst acknowledging that nature's political, social, and cultural framing can be an essential vehicle for its protection or its destruction, it is also important to acknowledge that living and working with forces beyond our control will always be the case.

- Adriana Blidaru









EXIT



34



































# GIOVANNI'S ROOM

Giovanni's Room is pleased to announce "radix", Matteo Callegari's first solo exhibition in Los Angeles, opening on March 18 through April 22, 2023.

Matteo Callegari (b. 1979 Latisana, Italy). Lives and works in New York, where he moved after receiving a Bachelor of Economics from Università Ca' Foscari, Venezia, 2003 and a Master in Fine Arts from Hunter College, 2011. He has had solo exhibitions at Ramiken Crucible, New York, Carl Kostyál, London, And Now, Dallas, Downs and Ross, New York. His work has been published on Artforum, Flash Art, Kaleidoscope. Flash Art Publishing printed his first monograph in 2016.

He has organized several exhibitions with the goal of creating a dialogue around central issues of his practice, working closely with artists of different generations. He started the nonprofit Light For the Amazon with the goal to conduct beneficial activities for the community of Santa Maria de Ojeal in Perú.

