

The Alluring Art of Allen Jones at Galerie Gmurzynska St. Moritz

BY NICHOLAS FORREST | JANUARY 08, 2016



Installation view
(Courtesy Galerie Gmurzynska)

Galerie Gmurzynska is presenting a major showcase of works by British pop artist [Allen Jones](#) at its St. Moritz space in Switzerland until January 31. The exhibition features a selection of sculptures and paintings from the early 1980s until 2014 on the theme of reality and magic both as actual subject matters and in their reference to the magic of painting and depiction.

Jones, who describes himself as “a painter who sculpts,” was closely associated with the rise of Pop Art in the early 1960s alongside the likes of David Hockney, R.B. Kitaj, and Patrick Caulfield. His practice spans painting, sculpture, and printmaking but he is perhaps best known for his sexually charged sculptures of female figures as pieces of furniture.

In an interview with the Tate, Jones says that during the 1960s he spent a lot of time developing a very stylised, very volumetric language for describing the figure in paint. “Then I thought, if I’m trying to make it look three-dimensional, why not just make it three-dimensional? That produced the furniture sculptures, and after that the implications took off in several directions,” he says.

The works on show at Galerie Gmurzynska are from the later part of Jones’s career, after he had made the transition from the provocative eroticism of his early sexually charged works to a more timeless style “centred on an economical and elegant drawing of the human figure.” Although his visual vocabulary evolved as his career progressed, the human form has remained his central focus.

In the introductory text, art historian and curator Marco Livingstone states that the show could take its title from the earliest work, “Counterpoint,” to convey the musicality of his art as well as the “the fruitful relationship in all Jones’s work between two and three dimensions, between the suggestions of space on the flat canvas and their realisation in the round as sculptural forms”

Highlights of the exhibition include the paintings “Counterpoint” 1980 and “The Chair is the Trick” 2012, which Livingstone says confirm Jones “as one of the great colourists of his generation,” and the sculptures “Man About Town” 1986/2013 and “Dancing Couple” 2006 showcase his unique approach to the portrayal and of the human figure and his profound understanding of the human form.