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As I Bask in Your Light, it Seeps to My Soul

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MALIK THOMAS JALIL KYDD

What happens when we allow ourselves to be affected? By another person. By desire. By friendship. By memory. By landscape. By forces larger than ourselves.

CARBON 12 is pleased to present *As I Bask in Your Light, it Seeps to My Soul*, Malik Thomas Jalil Kydd's highly anticipated second solo exhibition. Bringing together works developed since the acclaimed *Garden of Murmurs* (2025), the exhibition marks a significant evolution in the artist's practice, one in which desire and divinity are intertwined and rendered in quiet persistence.

Where previous works often situated their subjects within expansive, rolling landscapes, imbued with a mythological presence and rendered at what the artist described as "angel scale", the figures in this exhibition shift throughout domestic interiors, intimate encounters, and moments of quiet observation. The figure remains central, but is becoming increasingly human. The anatomy becomes more deliberate. The gestures are less concerned with enormity and more attentive to the particularities of a body or a moment. They are no longer vessels for projection alone but subjects encountered in their own right.

The return to figuration is marked by a desire for something more direct. Central to this development is the recurring presence of a single sitter. Appearing throughout the exhibition, the figure serves as an ongoing meditation on closeness and shared experience. The works emerge from a relationship of ambiguity between romantic and platonic intimacy. As the artist paints, a mirror positioned behind the sitter intermittently captures and reflects his own image, collapsing distinctions between observer and observed. The paintings become records of mutual presence, portraits that quietly contain both artist and subject. Divinity and desire no longer operate as separate registers but become intertwined modes of attention. To look closely at another person becomes, in itself, a devotional act.

There are still uncanny agricultural scenes - pure abstract landscape. These terrains provide further inquiries into the artist's investigation of memory and presence. If the figure dissolves, can presence persist beyond representation? Can traces of a person remain embedded within the spaces they once occupied? While figuration remains essential, absence is equally important as their presence seems to intensify, offering a commentary on metaphysical existence - how one is remembered. What remains when the body is gone? How do we occupy a place, leave it, and continue to exist in the memory of others? The empty landscape becomes less an absence and more a space charged by what has been removed.

The exhibition's title speaks to an act of surrender. Neither passive nor resigned, it is about love, but also about relinquishing control. About accepting that there are forces larger than oneself, and allowing them to be felt. The paintings ask for closeness rather than resolution, asking the viewer to pay attention: to a body, a gesture, an empty field, a reflection, a trace of color.

Materially, Kydd remains committed to the processes that have come to define his practice. Raw silk panels are dyed with sage and stitched together before receiving layers of charcoal, oil, pastel, and pigment. Yet the application of these materials has shifted. Painterly gestures are looser, marks more

deliberate, and compositions increasingly distilled. What remains is a visual language that feels instinctive and assured. The paintings can feel almost like x-rays or inversions: images stripped of their outermost layers until something underneath begins to surface. What once required accumulation can now be suggested with a single gesture.

Repetition has long functioned as a method within Kydd's practice, but here it becomes a means of understanding. Through the repeated returns, the artist arrives at a deeper articulation of his enduring concerns. As the artist has described, the process can resemble prayer: a gesture repeated until, suddenly, a sense of connection returns. Through repetition, Kydd has arrived at a greater sense of instinct and confidence, allowing the poetic voice of the work to remain intact without forcing it into explanation.

In *As I Bask in Your Light, it Seeps to My Soul*, devotion is neither spectacle nor declaration. It is found in attention, in familiarity, and in the quiet persistence of looking. Through paintings that move between presence and absence, tenderness and surrender, Kydd offers a meditation on what it means to remain affected by another long after the moment of encounter has passed.