

Jade Annalise Gaskin and Natasha Malik

The Daughters that Dreamed

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PRESS RELEASE

Opening Thursday 26 June - 6-8pm



Natasha Malik, *Another Birth*, 2025



Jade Annalise Gaskin, *Good Luck*, 2024

Mandy Zhang Art welcomes you to *The Daughters that Dreamed*, a duo exhibition showcasing the work of Jade Annalise Gaskin and Natasha Malik.

Malik was born in Pakistan, where she still resides today. Her work is deeply personal, informed by her own experience as well as her cultural heritage. Gaskin has lived around the world, born into a mixed family she explores and pushes the invisible cultural borders between East and West being of Malaysian descent and growing up in the England. Both artists use their brushes to explore imaginary spaces, mythical encounters and the trials of being a woman.

Malik's storytelling is confined to her miniature paintings. Her mastery of watercolours and gouache is evident as the usual washes of colour and softly defined shapes that we associate with this medium serve as a backdrop to intricate brushwork and minute details. These are permeable and porous worlds - a waking dream state where familiar natural forms are rendered uncanny, out of place and time.

Her human subjects are women, naked and unbound to identity. The female body is a site of conflict and a political subject in in of itself. Perhaps the turmoil of these scenes is confined within their bodies allowing for calmer surroundings. The title *Daughter Tree* explicitly references the close relationship between woman and nature and it feels refreshing to be presented with nudity as unremarkable. Alone, they need not perform for others and exist with complete agency. The fawn, symbol of innocence and youth, is a stand-in for our inner child; here we find it with three heads. The trees grow upside down, floating rootless. Despite these impossible elements, there is a quiet confidence in Malik's work as the soft hues of her colour palette and flowing elements put us at ease. To observe is to escape and allow yourself to slip out of reality.

Gaskin's world is a departure from this seeming serenity - her women are wilder. There is a sense of decided movement in her works as hands are outstretched, kettles steam and cats slink. Her background with prosthetics speaks to how she treats her canvas like a skin, very much alive. Her figures take on a more active role and each work appears caught in motion, brimming with

movement through layered printing techniques and flowing lines. *Good Luck* is full of fiery reds and is spread over two canvases appearing to reject the confines of just one. Gaskin, herself a biracial woman is keenly aware of how one whole can be divided and refuses to fit into a conventional box.

Running alongside is a series of oil and ink monotypes. Like Malik's manipulation of the accepted borders between interior and exterior, Gaskin favours a new domestic space charged with memory and psychological tension. She states Paula Rego as an inspiration, notably her *Dog Woman* series, where her female subjects are on all fours, mouths agape, their gaze uninviting. She is challenging women's need to conform to society's rigid standards and by pushing these boundaries into the surreal she shows us just how ridiculous they are.

These two artists enter into a fascinating dialogue as their parallel universes speak in tongues. By anchoring their liminal spaces with the female figure and feminine experience, they remind us of the accepted absurdity of our everyday. Malik's figures are provocative in their indifference, untouched by the male gaze, whereas Gaskin's 'girls gone wild' dominate their paintings and are defiantly free. *The Daughters that Dreamed* is a demonstration of female agency, set in atemporal settings but underpinned by a radically contemporary viewpoint.

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Mandy Zhang Art is a contemporary art gallery in London dedicated to promoting emerging Asian artists and those from the diaspora. Founded in 2022, after nearly two years of successful operations in the founder's private apartment, the gallery announced the opening of a public exhibition space in Marylebone in central London. Mandy Zhang Art is committed to nurturing cross-cultural dialogues and fostering a culture of diversity and innovation within the contemporary art landscape.

Jade Annalise Gaskin (b. 1994, Hereford, England) grew up in Herefordshire and is now based in London. She completed her BA(Hons) in Hair, Make-up and Prosthetics for Performance at London College of Fashion and is currently enrolled on the Advanced Painting Course at the Essential School of Painting. She has also lived in both China and South Korea and spent time working in a fashion brand along with developing her practice in painting.

Natasha Malik is a multidisciplinary artist who explores dream-like spaces throughout her work. Born in Pakistan, she studied at the National College of Arts in Lahore, specialising in miniature paintings before pursuing an MFA at the Slade School of Fine Art in London. Her aptitude for the miniature has remained with her as she continues to create whole worlds within tiny borders. She has exhibited extensively between Pakistan and London. She is currently artist-in-residence at the Villa Lena Foundation, Tuscany, Italy.