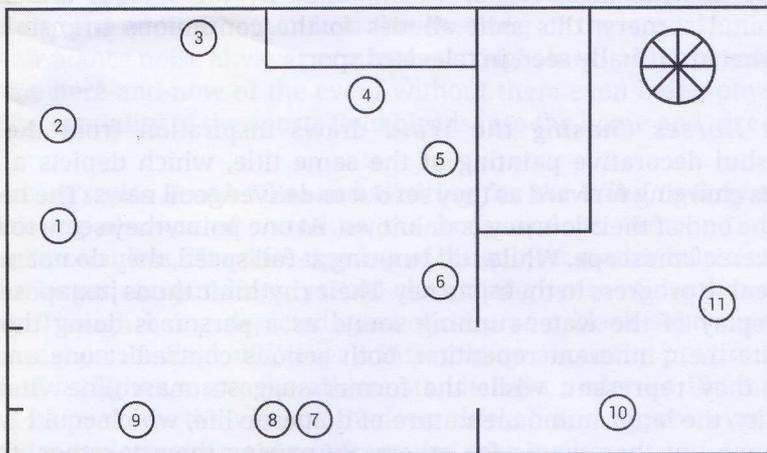


# SOON THE TIME WILL COME

A SOLO EXHIBITION BY NGUYỄN ĐỨC HUY

CURATED BY LINH LÊ

05.05 — 21.05.2023



1 **Break Time 1**  
2022  
oil on canvas  
90 x 120 cm

2 **Break Time 4**  
2022  
oil on canvas  
90 x 120 cm

3 **Eight Horses Chasing the Wind**  
2023  
single-channel video, colour, sound  
8:13 mins, loop

4 **Tweedledum and Tweedledee**  
2023  
oil on canvas  
120 x 90 cm

5 **Waiting for the Wind to Stop 4**  
2023  
oil on canvas  
90 x 120 cm

6 **Waiting for the Wind to Stop 1**  
2023  
oil on canvas  
90 x 120 cm

7 **Waiting for the Wind to Stop 3**  
2023  
oil on canvas  
90 x 120 cm

8 **Cardio**  
2022  
single-channel video, colour, sound  
4:07 mins, loop

9 **Waiting for the Wind to Stop 5**  
2023  
oil on canvas  
90 x 120 cm

10 **Game starts**  
2023  
fresh grass, sound, water  
grass: 384 x 52,5 cm

11 **Swallowing Swallow**  
2023  
single channel coloured video  
installation, steel  
11:44 mins, loop

A debut solo presentation of Nguyen Duc Huy, *Soon The Time Will Come* conjures up an in-between space that hovers over the brink of the domestic and the communal, the hyper-sporting bodies, and the prolonged suspension of time. Here, perspectives are bound to a perpetual shift as the artist's study of physical force jumps from the home to sports fields, and back again. From close-ups to wide-angle views, accompanied by the smooth transitions of background scenery, this shift alludes to the continuous transmission of events that are usually seen in televised sports.

*Eight Horses Chasing the Wind* draws inspiration from the typical feng-shui decorative painting of the same title, which depicts a herd of horses charging forward as they set out to deliver good news. The beginning and the end of their journey is unknown. At one point, they seem to be stuck in a scenic landscape. While still running at full speed, they do not make any noticeable progress in their journey. Their rhythmic thuds juxtapose against the replay of the water-running sound as a person is doing the dishes. Despite their inherent repetition, both actions contradict one another in what they represent: while the former suggests masculine vitality and nobility, the latter mundane nature of domestic life, which could be taxing for some but therapeutic for others. By pairing them together, the work seeks to ease the intensity of the horse running — a deep-seated symbol of success and prosperity, and attempts to put an end to their never-ending journey.

*Cardio* contemplates the state of being alive: the scenes of a man skipping rope maximising his respiratory system's capacity are interwoven with those of a lived home space, whose absent owner's presence is still apparent through animated objects. Dressed in a green chroma-keyed suit, the rope-skipping man remains as himself whereas his background is the element that keeps changing, ironically. As he seamlessly traverses different rooms in the house carrying out his athletic activity, his screen time is interrupted by the laundry cuts. The same rhetoric from *Eight Horses Chasing the Wind* is deployed again as the sporting body is fused with a domestic chore. The thwacks — born out of the steady smacking of the rope on the floor — call for an eerie anticipation of an end as if the living body and the lived space will be out of breath and soon out of life.

The television transmission of sports events requires multiple cameras with several fixed cameras in addition to mobile ones helping the audience establish their main, static point of view. Though the audience's viewpoints will alternate all the time, they always find themselves bouncing back to this main perspective as a dual point of arrival and departure. Thanks to

technological abundance — that is the advanced visual and sonic recording equipment — the audience of televised sports is said to have a more comprehensive experience of the event as compared to that of the real-life spectator. The zooming in and zooming out of the camera, the replay of an action usually at its normal speed, and then in slow motion helps the audience get closer than ever to every crevice of the game. Sounds from the field are thoroughly captured — whether it is the cheering of the crowd or a faint thump — ambiance noise always permeates through. Inevitably, the audience exists in the here-and-now of the event without them even being physically present. The spatiality of the sports field bleeds into the home and vice versa.

The painting series *Break Time* and *Waiting for the Wind to Stop* evokes a disquieting absence of sound as the body and its surroundings are rendered motionless. The close-up view of the subject matter helps isolate it from the larger surroundings, yet too close that a sense of depth becomes obsolete. Though being depicted symbolically as a black solid mass, the shadow cast on the field still reveals information about the proximity and density of its light source: the athlete stands right under an illuminating force at its peak. As the viscous shadows thicken and appear ever more defined the passage of time slows down and then stalls.

Male figures dominate throughout the exhibition space with their individualism being completely masked: from a person dressed entirely in a chroma-keyed bodysuit to athletes whose bodies either complement or merge with their sports fields — all pointing to the fluidity of their presence. One cannot help but wonder if these figures are their shadow doubles — the immortal component of the self, or the soul of the body — all along. Towards the last part of the exhibition awaits another shift in perspective, only this time it is lightly disorienting.

*Game Starts* reveals to be a grass cut out of a human shadow, which in fact was Huy's own. Right above locates a tap that is dripping at an incredibly slow, measured pace rendering the presence of the droplets fathomable only when the water hits the grass ground. A sensual, seemingly delicate collision of force and materiality can still result in significant friction as time goes by. In order to inspect the work, visitors are required to cram inside the room and tread carefully around it, which in turn traps them in a simulation of the here-and-now experience. The body is still nowhere to be seen, but its double has finally materialised. In the coexistence of movement and idleness — enabled and punctuated by the rhythmic trickling of water — questions about what kind of information a shadow can reveal and what it is missing arise.

Gazing up toward the glowing square right above, a green pair of feet are jumping up and down in the middle of nowhere. *Swallowing Swallow* serves as the final attempt to manipulate the viewer's point of view as their eyes are now penetrating minute particles of action. Intrigued by the fleeting imbalance that precedes seconds right before the feet land on the ground reaching a state of stability, the work ruminates on the possible entanglement between physical force and state of mind. Swallows are often associated with the passage of time due to their seasonal migratory habits (they migrate when the temperature begins to drop, and return when it starts to warm up), thus the work also imagines the possibility of time manipulation through a physical act.

## Biographies

**Nguyễn Đức Huy** (b.1995, Hanoi) is a visual artist whose mediums include painting, illustration, digital art, installation and animation. Huy's aesthetic is full of vivid colours with red, blue, green dominating his paper, canvas and screen, which suggest the influence of digital aesthetic. Neat in details and composition, his works are imbued with humour, quirkiness yet at the same time evoking a sense of confusion and detachment. His works have been featured in various group exhibitions and screenings include: Kontrapunkte - Voices On SCREEN (Staatlich Kunstsammlungen Dresden, Germany, 2022), This is not a love song (Like the Moon in A Night Sky 3, Hanoi, 2022), Running on a golden road (Á Space, Hanoi, 2021), Virtual Private Realms (Manzi Art Space, Hanoi, 2021), Second Opinion (Manzi Art Space, Hanoi, 2019), Hobbling Pedestrian (Nhà Sàn Studio, 2016).

**Linh Lê** is a curator and researcher currently based in Sài Gòn. Her work taps into the performativity of archives, space, and the body in artistic practice. In 2020, she was selected for a curator exchange between Vietnam and Sydney – a programme by 4A Center with support from the Australian Council. Some of her previous projects include Măng Ta journal and the CáRô arts education programme.