

Modern Freskos

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FOREWORD

Modern Freskos introduces the work of Berlin-based artist Paul Kuntze, whose paintings create a bridge between the past and the present. Since childhood, Kuntze has been drawn to the ceiling paintings of old churches and palaces - places where artists once opened vast imaginary skies. In this series, he reimagines that sense of wonder through a contemporary approach.

Kuntze builds each painting through many layers, starting with soft spray-painted gradients and ending with thick strokes of paint made with brushes and a palette knife. His images hint at figures, clouds, and celestial scenes without fully defining them, inviting viewers to use their own imagination. The balance between precision and intuition gives the works their unique energy.

Modern Freskos marks Kuntze's first solo exhibition in India, and this publication celebrates his ongoing exploration of how history can be transformed through a fresh and personal vision.

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PAUL KUNTZE: MODERN FRESKOS



Paul Kuntze's *Modern Freskos* unfolds as a compelling meditation on how history can be reactivated - not by replication, but through the intuitive logic of contemporary gesture. Born in Berlin in 1995 and shaped by an early, almost devotional fascination with ceiling paintings, Kuntze inherits a relationship to art history that is both reverent and exploratory. As a child visiting churches, museums, and palaces, his instinct was always to look up and experience the mystery of how fresco painters achieved such precision and grandeur on vast, elevated surfaces. This became an early anchor for his imagination. In his mature practice, this childhood wonder persists, but now it is filtered through the fluid, emotive language of abstraction.

Kuntze's work occupies a striking threshold between eras. His paintings recall the celestial drama of Baroque frescoes - the sweeping architectures of sky, the emergence of mythic figures, the suggestion of divine space - but they are built through contemporary strategies: gradients laid down with spray paint, soft veils of atmospheric colour, and thick masses of paint sculpted with a palette knife. Each canvas evolves over extended periods, accumulating layers that evoke both palimpsest and apparition, emphasizing a process that balances deliberate construction with intuitive discovery.

This dialogue between precision and improvisation forms the core tension in Kuntze's practice. He speaks often about the act of relinquishing control - an antidote to the constraints and rules that shape social life. In the studio, he allows intuition and feeling to override learned structures, even while maintaining the high degree of craftsmanship inspired by the Old Masters. The result is a body of work that is neither strictly abstract nor figurative, but rather a shifting field in which forms flicker into being. Figures and faces emerge only as hints, as suggestions rather than resolutions which invite viewers to confront their own creativity in the act of interpretation.

Kuntze describes this hybrid approach as a "bridge between Baroque and contemporary art," and indeed his *Modern Freskos* appear suspended in time: fragments of a sacred ceiling that have broken free from architectural constraint and reassembled themselves into



something newly alive. The contrast between soft brushstrokes and dense, knife-built structures creates an arresting topography of surface. Atmospheric passages dissolve into sculptural formations; illusion gives way to materiality; the divine collides with the raw. In this tension lies the singularity of Kuntze's vision. His paintings do not simply revisit art historical grandeur, rather they reimagine it through the expressive volatility of the present. Gradient mist becomes sky; cloud forms mutate into gestures; the divine is rendered through contemporary tools borrowed as much from street art as classical painting. The works become portals not to a known mythology, but to a generative one, authored collaboratively by artist and viewer.

In these works, history becomes mutable. The heavens open not above us, but before us. And the timeless aspiration of painting - to lift the gaze, to suspend gravity, to channel something beyond the material - returns, transformed, in the hands of a contemporary painter who understands that every act of looking is also an act of imagining.

Modern Freskos, Kuntze's first solo exhibition in India and his most significant international presentation to date, situates his practice within a global conversation on how younger generations engage with the weight of artistic heritage. Presented by Black Cube Gallery, the exhibition foregrounds a painter deeply committed to revitalising tradition without repeating it, affirming that the fresco, once bound to walls and ceilings, can find new life on canvas through reinvention.

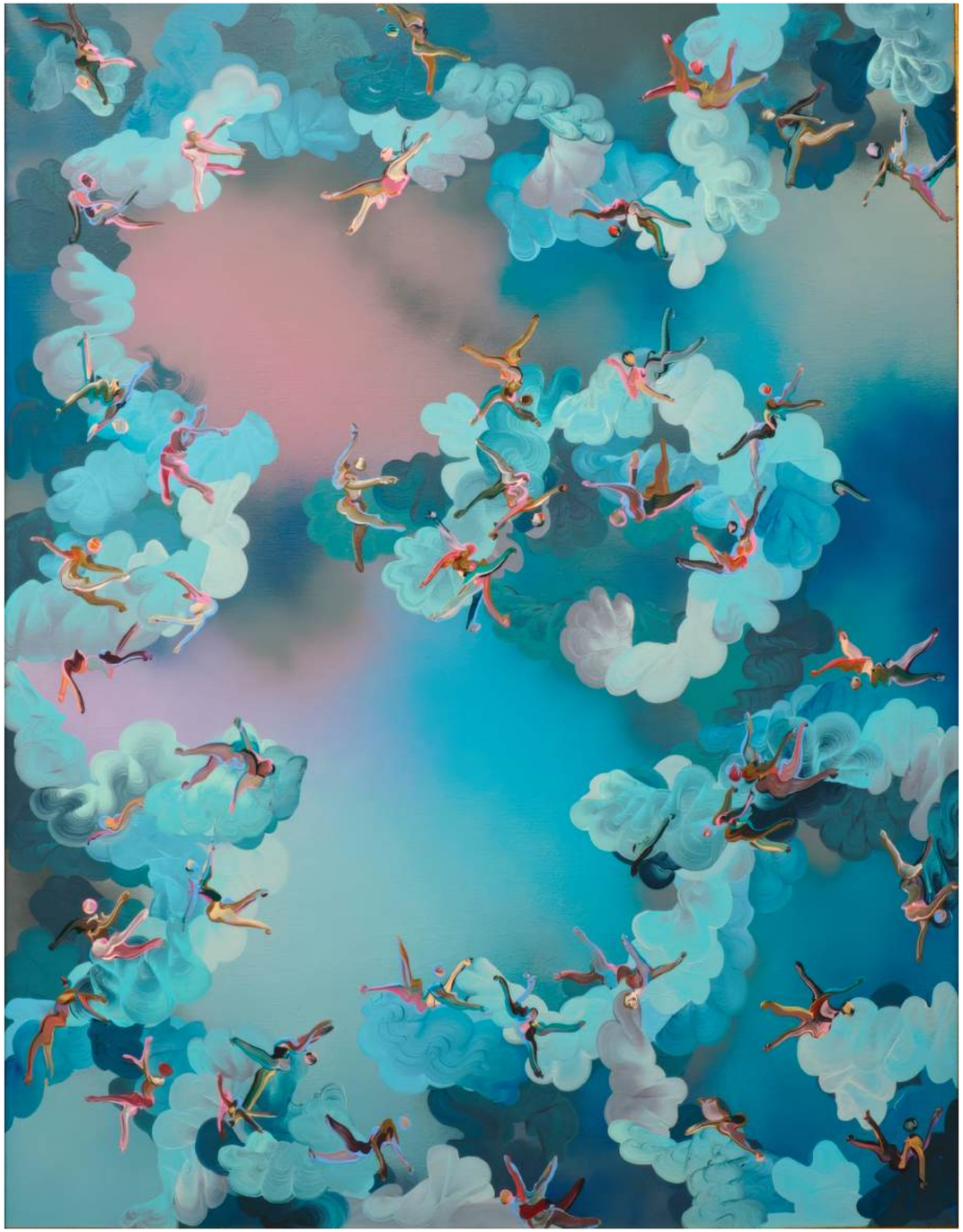
Sanya Malik
Curator and Director, Black Cube Gallery



FRESKO 70

39.5” X 31.5”
ACRYLIC, SPRAY ON CANVAS





FRESKO 71

39.5” X 31.5”
ACRYLIC, SPRAY ON CANVAS





FRESKO 57 59” X 78.5”
ACRYLIC, SPRAY ON CANVAS



FRESKO 68

71” X 80.5”
ACRYLIC, SPRAY ON CANVAS
(Diptych)



FRESKO 43

31.5” X 23.5”
ACRYLIC, SPRAY ON CANVAS



FRESKO 44

31.5” X 23.5”
ACRYLIC, SPRAY ON CANVAS





FRESKO 58 39.5” X 31.5”
ACRYLIC, SPRAY ON CANVAS





FRESKO 59 39.5” X 31.5”
ACRYLIC, SPRAY ON CANVAS





FRESKO 49

47” X 55”
ACRYLIC, SPRAY ON CANVAS



MINI FRESKO SERIES

19.5” X 15.5”
ACRYLIC, SPRAY ON CANVAS





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19.5” X 15.5”
ACRYLIC, SPRAY ON CANVAS





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MINI FRESKO SERIES

19.5” X 15.5”
ACRYLIC, SPRAY ON CANVAS





FRESKO 36 (WIEN)

43.5” X 35.5”
ACRYLIC, SPRAY ON CANVAS





FRESKO 37 (WIEN)

43.5” X 35.5”
ACRYLIC, SPRAY ON CANVAS





FRESKO 26 39.5” X 31.5”
ACRYLIC, SPRAY ON CANVAS





FRESKO 29 47” X 39.5”
ACRYLIC, SPRAY ON CANVAS







FRESKO 33 55” X 47”
ACRYLIC, SPRAY ON CANVAS



FRESKO 34 55” X 47”
ACRYLIC, SPRAY ON CANVAS





FRESKO 31

39.5” X 31.5”
ACRYLIC, SPRAY ON CANVAS





FRESKO 42 39.5” X 31.5”
ACRYLIC, SPRAY ON CANVAS





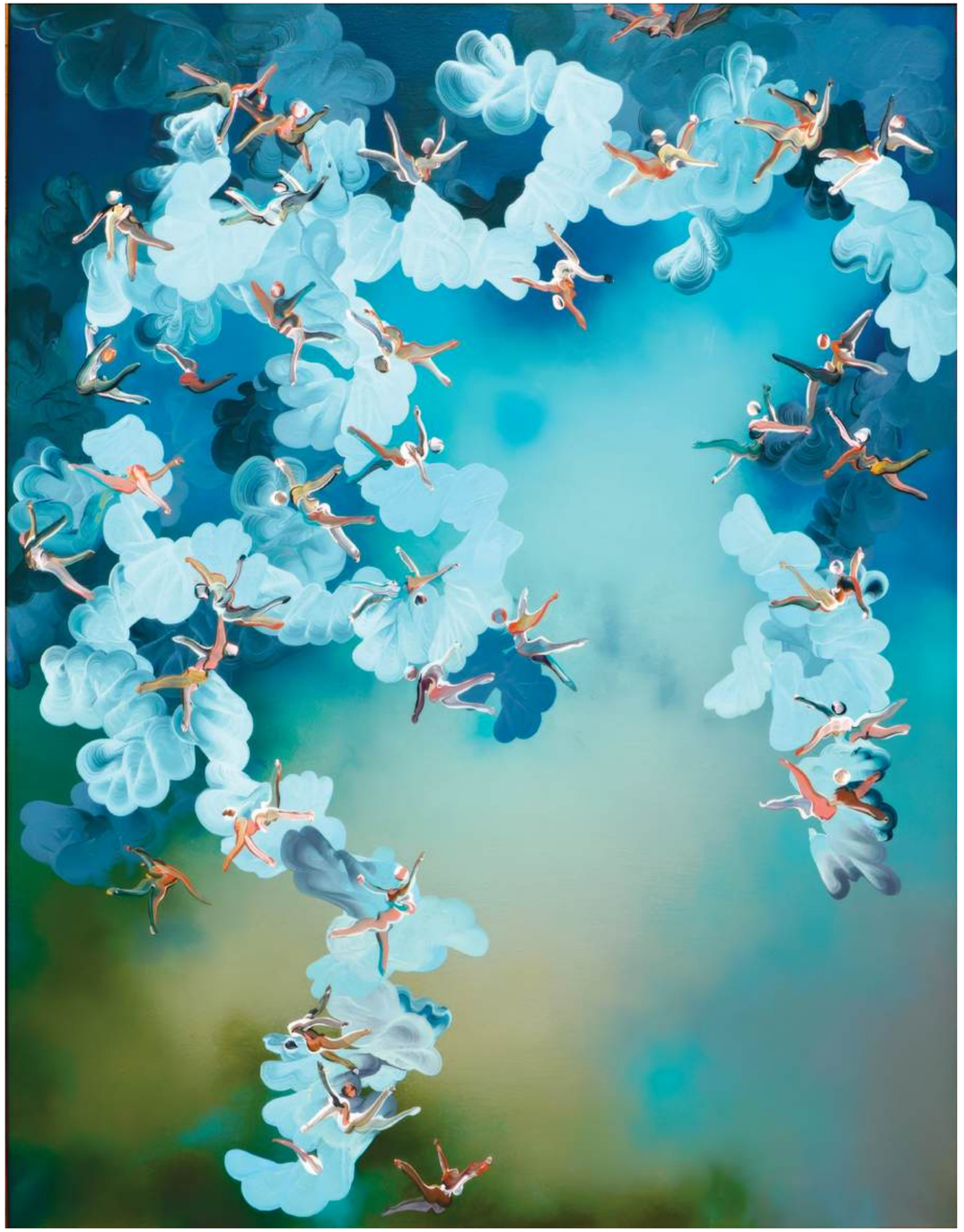
FRESKO 50 47” X 39.5”
ACRYLIC, SPRAY ON CANVAS



FRESKO 69

39.5” X 31.5”
ACRYLIC, SPRAY ON CANVAS





FRESKO 38 31.5” X 23.5”
ACRYLIC, SPRAY ON CANVAS





FRESKO 39 31.5” X 23.5”
ACRYLIC, SPRAY ON CANVAS







PAUL KUNTZE

Paul Kuntze, born in 1995 in Berlin, Germany is a contemporary painter whose practice explores the boundaries of figurative and abstract art. Inspired by the artistic lineage of his grandfather, who studied drawing with Max Liebermann, Kuntze began his painting career as a self-taught artist in 2019. He has since developed a distinctive visual language, launching his acclaimed ‘Modern Fresko’ series in 2023.

Rather than recreating classical scenes, Kuntze draws from abstract expressionism to evoke the atmosphere, motion, and sense of grandeur associated with traditional baroque frescoes. His work has been featured in Haze Magazin and other notable publications, and he has exhibited extensively throughout Europe, organizing and participating in artist residencies in Vienna and Tuscany. Upcoming exhibitions include shows in the United States and India, as well as Kuntze’s first museum exhibition in Germany, reflecting the growing demand for his work.

‘Modern Fresko’s’ is Kuntze’s first solo exhibition in India, following his debut showcase at Art Mumbai in 2025 by Black Cube Gallery. The artist lives and works in Berlin, Germany.

ABOUT NAMTECH FINE ART

Namtech Fine Art is committed to fostering a wider appreciation for Indian Modern and Contemporary Art through thoughtfully curated publications. With a focus on producing high-quality books, catalogues, and critical writings, the initiative seeks to document, preserve, and illuminate the diverse practices and legacies of Indian artists. Through its publishing efforts, Namtech Fine Art cultivates a rich dialogue between artistic heritage and contemporary thought, offering a platform that connects scholars, collectors, and wider audiences to the evolving narrative of Indian art.

ABOUT BLACK CUBE

Black Cube Gallery is a modern and contemporary art space that challenges conventional hierarchies by bringing together established and emerging artists in a shared dialogue. Founded on the belief that art should exist beyond structured divisions, Black Cube creates a space where different artistic languages interact, where tradition and experimentation coexist, and where critical discourse is extended to all artists, not just the historically recognized. The gallery remains committed to fostering meaningful engagement with contemporary art, offering exhibitions that challenge, provoke, and expand the way we experience visual culture. At its core, Black Cube is more than a gallery—it is a space of exchange, experimentation, and new possibilities for artistic thought and presentation.

