

# Allen Jones

## Taking Shape

Jun 5 — Aug 30, 2026 | Camden Arts Projects, London, UK

Camden Arts Projects is pleased to announce a major exhibition of new and recent work by Allen Jones, organised in collaboration with Almine Rech gallery, opening on the 5th of June 2026. One of the most influential figures in British Pop Art, Allen Jones helped shape contemporary visual culture for over six decades. His bold, graphic style and provocative exploration of the human form have made him a defining voice in the contemporary art world. This exhibition brings together painting, sculpture, alongside a major piece created specifically for this presentation. The show celebrates the artist's remarkable practice and offers a timely opportunity to engage with Jones's ongoing practice and his continued dialogue with colour, form, and diverse approach to exploring the human figure.

### *Taking Shape*

Guarding the exhibition, visitors are greeted by *Sumo II* (2006), located to the front of the building. Interlocking planes mirror each other, creating illusions of muscular limbs as you walk around the sculpture, slowly revealing the human frame. Forged in corton steel, the metal weathers over time, creating a rough, textured surface in contrast to many of Jones' smooth, colourful works. This industrial use of material and mass places an emphasis on weight, physicality and power. The robust figure is locked in a state of tension, much like the name suggests: a sumo wrestler in a wide stable stance, bracing before surging into action.

Presented in a spotlighted side room, *Red Queen* (2014) and *Blue Queen* (2015) appear as a pair of totemic figures that anchor Allen Jones' exploration of colour, form, and figure. Carved from spray-painted timber and topped with radically simplified Perspex profiles, the sculptures merge abstraction and figuration into sharply defined silhouettes. Their glossy, curving surfaces catch and release light, while the use of solid chromatic colour emits a corporeal presence within the space.

The Perspex heads create shifting lines and shadows that appear and vanish as viewers move around them, providing an heightened sense of theatricality. Their simplified forms reflect Jones' interests in fusing opposites: solidity and transparency, sensuality and structure, into an unified language. Nearby photographic works extend this dialogue, revealing how Jones manipulates the human form across media through stylisation, colour and the play between surface and depth.

Undoubtedly, "XXX," created specifically for *Taking Shape* at Camden Arts Projects, becomes the centrepiece of this exhibition. Over 5 meters long, this hanging sculpture hovers above the main gallery space and blurs the boundaries between the upper and lower level of the building. "XXX" disrupts the usual height from which an observer views a sculpture. Although the colossal scale of the piece and the material properties of the aluminium imply solidity, this piece becomes both ethereal and omnipresent.

In the main gallery room, the three pieces by Jones on display unfold as an exploration of the artist's work, in which the distinctions between painting and sculpture, image and object, are not only blurred but constantly renegotiated. Even in three dimensions, Jones remains, by his own insistence, a painter: his vision is governed by the manipulation of light, line, and color, and it is through these means that he evokes movement—real or implied.

In *Belle of Shoreditch* (2020), this pictorial logic produces a striking ambiguity. The work resists any stable reading as two-dimensional or three-dimensional; depending on the viewer's position, the forms seem to advance or recede, as if gliding between surface and volume. The application of color and contour generates a sense of movement that is not mechanical but perceptual, giving the impression that the sculpture is captured in mid-transition, as if the figure were emerging from the picture plane or retreating into it. This becoming or transformation remains in suspense, never fully resolved.

With *In Camera* (2020), this oscillation expands and becomes literal. The presence of a screen introduces real movement into the work, so that the figure no longer merely suggests movement but actively participates in it. Instead of harmonising the relationship between dimensions, the moving image acts to intensify their instability. The figure seems to emerge from the surface, echoing the pictorial illusionism that has long characterized Jones's work, while simultaneously being drawn back into it, absorbed into the piece itself. The encounter between the physical structure and the projected sequence creates a continuum in which body, image, and space unfold like a loop in which no single state can be fixed.

In contrast, *Large Swivel* (2024) distills this sensibility into a form whose movement remains implicit, yet no less powerful. The suggestion of rotation—of turning, revelation, reconfiguration—activates the sculpture as if it were part of an invisible sequence, charged with anticipation in its stillness. As in the other works, it is the painter's gaze that governs this effect: the articulation of the surfaces directs the viewer's gaze like a moving camera, surrounding, framing, and reframing the figure.

In *Taking Shape*, Jones constructs a space in which the figures not only occupy their surroundings but also interact with them dynamically, perceptually moving between dimensions and, in doing so, approaching that moment he describes in which the figure is finally subsumed by light, line, and color.