ALMINE RECH

Allen Jones
Taking Shape

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Camden Arts Projects is pleased to announce a major exhibition of new and recent work by Allen Jones, organised in collaboration with Almine Rech, opening on the 5th of June 2026. One of the most influential figures in British Pop Art, Allen Jones helped shaped contemporaryvisual culture for over six decades. His bold, graphic style and provocative exploration of thehuman form have made him a defining voice in the contemporary art world. This exhibition bringstogether 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 withJones's ongoing practice and his continued dialogue with colour, form, and diverse approach toexploring 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 corten 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 spotlit 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 Perpex 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.

Undoubtedly, *Aerial* (2026), 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. *Aerial* disrupts the usual height from which an observer views a sculpture. Although the colosal 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 colour, 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 colour 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.

In contrast, *Large Swivel* (2024) distils this sensibility into a form in which movement is not only implied but physically enacted. While the sculpture retains that sense of suspended anticipation—of a figure poised within an unseen sequence—it also incorporates a mechanism that allows the viewer to intervene directly: a rack at its base permits one of the legs to be swivelled, subtly altering the figure's stance. This capacity for adjustment transforms the work from a static object into a variable configuration, in which each shift produces a new alignment, a new image. The suggestion of rotation—of turning, revelation, reconfiguration —is therefore both real and perceptual, extending Jones's long-standing concern with movement into the realm of interaction. As in the other works, it is the painter's gaze that ultimately governs this effect: the articulation of the surfaces directs the viewer's eye like a moving camera, surrounding, framing and reframing the figure, even as the viewer themselves becomes implicated in the unfolding sequence.

Lastly, and located in the middle gallery room, *Tirez* (2005), constructs not so much a single image as a sequence dispersed across the surface of a triptych, in which the figure appears to pass through successive states of emergence and dissolution. The work, an oil and montage on canvas, is grounded in a deliberately unstable illusionism: it is neither purely painted nor entirely constructed, but occupies a threshold where the image seems on the verge of detaching itself from its support. Across its fractured field, the boundaries between foreground and background remain unsettled, with planes sliding and reversing so that what should recede appears to advance, and what should project outward collapses back into the surface. Within this shifting pictorial logic, the figure is held in a condition of perpetual becoming, as though moving through unseen frames, and the viewer is left with the persistent sensation that everything is about to change—an implicit, continuous movement generated through Jones's handling of surface, chromatic intensity and compositional tension, which keeps the image suspended between material presence and imminent release.

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 colour.

Allen Jones: Born in 1937 in Southampton, England, Allen Jones is a renowned British artist known for his association with the pioneering Pop Art Movement. He currently lives and works between London and Oxfordshire. Jones studied at Hornsey College of Art in London and the Royal College of Art, where he became associated with the British Pop Art scene. His early education and exposure to radical art movements greatly influenced his unique style, blending traditional techniques with provocative subject matter. Jones' work spans several mediums, including painting, sculpture, and printmaking. His controversial figurative sculptures, such as Chair (1969), alongside his vibrant paintings, explore themes of desire, identity, and the human form, often drawing on inspiration from the likes of Surrealism and German Expressionism.

Over his career, Jones has been featured in numerous prestigious exhibitions worldwide: he represented the UK at the Paris Biennale in 1963, where he was awarded the Prix des Jeunes Artistes. His work is held in major international collections, including the Tate Gallery and the Victoria & Albert Museum in London, the Museum of Modern Art in New York, the Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden in Washington DC, the Museum of 20th-Century Art in Vienna, the Wallraf-Richartz Museum in Cologne, the Moderna Museet in Stockholm and the Stedelijk Museum in Amsterdam. Solo exhibitions have included dedicated rooms at the Tate and Royal Academy, celebrating his extensive contribution to contemporary art and his unique interpretation of the human figure. Retrospectives have been staged in London at the Royal Academy, the Barbican and the Serpentine Gallery and across Europe and South America.

Jones' public commissions include large-scale sculptures and murals for prestigious locations such as London Bridge City, the Chelsea and Westminster Hospital, and Taikoo Place in Hong Kong. He was elected a Royal Academician in 1986,

became an Emeritus Trustee of the British Museum after serving as a trustee from 1990 to 1999, and was awarded an Honorary Doctorate of Arts from Southampton Solent University in 2007. His dynamic career continues to evolve, with ongoing monumental commissions and significant influence on contemporary visual culture.

Allen Jones is represented by Almine Rech.