

Tube Gallery

21.11.2025



CYNIC'S BEDTIME



About the Artist

Jack Burton (b. 1988, Barry, South Wales) is a multidisciplinary artist whose practice unfolds as a continuous dialogue between photography, sculpture and collage. His work interrogates the intentionality of fictitious settings which, through materiality, manages to alter our perception of what we understand as “reality.”

His compositions: chaotic, colorful, and eccentric navigate both the celebration and critique of the visual excesses that define contemporary life. Drawing from influences that range from the poetry of the urban environment to pop culture, expressionism, and abstraction, Burton dissolves the conventional limits of photography, giving way to the freedom of a spontaneous and indeterminate visual language.

Burton graduated in PGdip Fine Arts at The Royal Academy Schools, London, 2017 and has recently presented solo and group exhibitions including “Emotional Paintings About Economics” (Josh Lilley, London, 2018) , “Long Distance Highway Hotel” (Mauve, Vienna, 2022), “Must Everything Go” (Cunst-Link, Brussels, 2022), “Music For An Exhibition Vol.1” (The Gimp, Berlin, 2022), “BRI-CO JACK” (10n, Brussels, 2023), and “Memory Palace in Ruins” (C-Lab, Taipei, 2023), “Ubiquitous no.14” (Tube Gallery, Mallorca, 2023) and “Sea Songs” (Superdeals, Brussels, 2025).



Curatorial Text

Let's get cynical.

But what does it mean to get cynical today? We call someone a cynic when they are distant, skeptical, or disenchanted, caught in an attitude that seems to reject sincerity. The cultural drift of words always gives us clues about our own drift as individuals, societies, and communities of knowledge. Perhaps one and the same thing? As a philosophical school, cynicism once meant something quite different: a radical, even humorous posture of leaning toward virtue against power, of reducing life to its essentials. That is another kind of cynicism: not resignation, but a performative form of resistance.

Jack Burton's first solo exhibition at Tube Gallery, *Cynic's Bedtime*, unfolds within this tension. The title carries a double edge: to "put the cynic to bed," suspending the inner skeptic and making room for sincerity, but also the restless night of a cynic who cannot sleep, haunted by runaway thoughts and external noise. The sixteen photographs that compose the exhibition, all hand-printed in the darkroom, form an allegorical group of works: coffee cups, an unmade bed, shattered shells, vinyl records, neon lights, fragments of insomnia. Some images are carefully staged, others improvisational, as if thought itself had pierced the frame. In the artist's own words, *"Art is not a rational activity but a rush."*¹

Burton's universe expands into the gallery space: on the floor, shredded paper from past tests and prints; dice inscribed with titles and ideas for future projects, open to chance and participation; and firecrackers that evoke both sleepless noise and historical references to revolutionary thought, some inscribed with the names of figures from the French Revolution. The gallery walls have been intervened to mirror the environment where the photographs were staged, eroding not only the fragile boundary between sleep and wakefulness but also that seemingly insurmountable distance between the studio and the gallery.

Here, the cynic is also a "self under siege,"² in Rick Roderick's words: a divided, restless consciousness, saturated with stimuli and contradictions. The booth Burton built to produce the images—initially just a technical solution—now functions as an ironic commentary on the reduction of contemporary art to transportable formats: compressed, portable, yet still capable of opening spaces for reflection.

So, let's dream ourselves cynical.

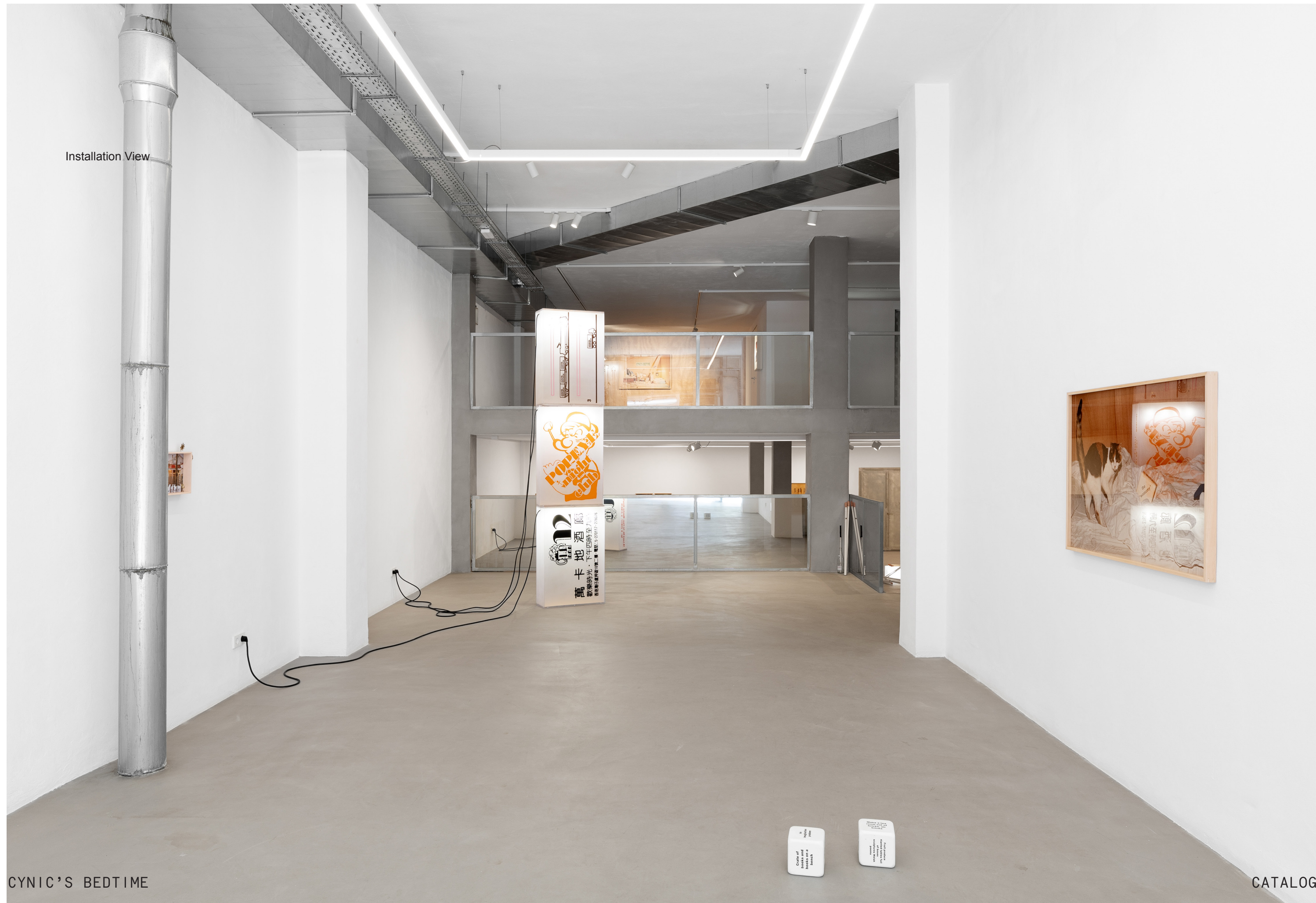
To dream cynically might be not to give up, but to share with others the restless wakefulness of thought. The exhibition opens a collective space of doubt, insomnia, and imagination, inviting us to wander through the fragments of a mind that resists easy answers. How to make art in a time of crisis? In its mixture of the intimate and the theatrical, *Cynic's Bedtime* is not only about insomnia, but about what keeps us awake as a society.

Esmeralda Gómez Galera
Palma, 2025.

¹ Unpublished conversation with the artist on September 3rd.

² Rick Roderick, *The Self Under Siege: Philosophy in the Twentieth Century* (1993), lecture series produced by The Teaching Company.

Installation View



CYNIC'S BEDTIME

CATALOG

JACK BURTON
“The Economy”

2025
80 x 120 cm
Unique hand printed c-type print on Fujicolor Crystal Archive paper, Spanish Beech wood frame
with Ultravue UV70 non-reflective glass





CYNIC'S BEDTIME

JACK BURTON
 "Cafe Bar O Navio"

2024
 32 x 24 x 6 cm
 Direct print on aluminium, wood, acrylic paint, acrylic varnish, gilded steel leaves and flowers





JACK BURTON

Up to Down: “ OCL Transport Solutions” , “ Popeye Night Club” and “Makati Inn”

2025
100 x 65 x 30 cm
Wood, plexiglass, vinyl and lights



Installation View



JACK BURTON

“Fireworks + Matches + Cat” and “Matches”

2025

30 x 45 cm

Unique hand printed c-type print on Fujicolor Crystal Archive paper, Spanish Beech wood frame with Ultravue UV70 non-reflective glass



JACK BURTON

“Cynic’s Shelter”

2025

80 x 120 cm

Unique hand printed c-type print on Fujicolor Crystal Archive paper, Spanish Beech wood frame with Ultravue UV70 non-reflective glass



JACK BURTON
“Or just ... Flight?”

2024
32 x 24 x 6 cm
Direct print on aluminium, wood, acrylic, paint, badges, cast tin and enamel paint



JACK BURTON
“Ocean Fleets Limited”
2025
100 x 65 x 30 cm
Wood, plexiglass, vinyl and lights

Installation View



JACK BURTON

“The Valleys” and “Night Visitor”

2025

30 x 45 cm

Unique hand printed c-type print on Fujicolor Crystal Archive paper, Spanish Beech wood frame with Ultravue UV70 non-reflective glass



JACK BURTON

“Top 9 French Revolutionaries”

2025

80 x 120 cm

Unique hand printed c-type print on Fujicolor Crystal Archive paper, Spanish Beech wood frame with Ultravue UV70 non-reflective glass



Installation View



CYNIC'S BEDTIME

CATÁLOGO

JACK BURTON

“Cynic’s Shelter II” and “Top 9 French Revolutionaries II”

2025

30 x 45 cm

Unique hand printed c-type print on Fujicolor Crystal Archive paper, Spanish Beech wood frame with Ultravue UV70 non-reflective glass



JACK BURTON

“I’m Totally Wired (for Jamie)”

2025

80 x 120 cm

Unique hand printed c-type print on Fujicolor Crystal Archive paper, Spanish Beech wood frame with Ultravue UV70 non-reflective glass



Installation View



CYNIC'S BEDTIME

CATALOG

Installation View



JACK BURTON
“Self Portrait in Paper with Still Life”

2025

80 x 120 cm

Unique hand printed c-type print on Fujicolor Crystal Archive paper, Spanish Beech wood frame with Ultravue UV70 non-reflective glass



JACK BURTON
“Alpine Kitsch”

2024
32 x 24 x 6 cm
Direct print on aluminium, teak, wax polish and ribbon

Installation View



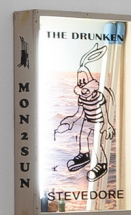
JACK BURTON
“My Studio”

2024
32 x 24 x 6 cm
Direct print on aluminium, playwood, matches, pipe and castor wheels

Installation View



Installation View



JACK BURTON
“Club New World”

2025
70 x 50 x 12 cm
Archival pigment print, mirror, glass, wood, paint and light



JACK BURTON
“Sports Road Happy Valley”

2025
70 x 50 x 12 cm
Wood, UV print on plexiglass, mirror, light and assemblage



JACK BURTON
“The Drunken Stevedore II”

2025
70 x 50 x 12 cm
Plywood, glass, vinyl, wood, paint, archival pigment print, mirror, light and sandpaper



JACK BURTON
“The Drunken Stevedore I”

2025
70 x 50 x 12 cm
Plywood, glass, vinyl, wood, paint, archival pigment print, estruary bottles, light and sandpaper



Installation View



Installation View



JACK BURTON
“Cynic’s Bedtime”

2025
80 x 120 cm
Unique hand printed c-type print on Fujicolor Crystal Archive paper, Spanish Beech wood frame with Ultravue UV70 non-reflective glass.



Message from Jack Burton:

I would like to thank Axel for the general enthusiasm he has applied to the making of this exhibition, and the team at Tube for their competence and good spirits. Thanks also to the installers and thank you especially to Esmeralda for the text and discussions.

I would like to also thank Aisha Christison, whose advice helped me bring together so many elements into what I hope is a coherent whole.