

Æmen Ededéen *The Glass Dream Game*

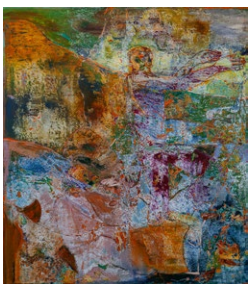
January 15 – February 28, 2026
Avenue Louise 430, 1050 Brussels



Æmen Ededéen
The Koan is in the Stomach, the Demand is Inconvenient, 2024-25
Mixed media with glass beads on canvas
193 x 167.6 cm | 76 x 66 in

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Æmen Ededéen
The Garden is Trembling but the Dreamer is Still, 2025
Mixed media with glass beads on canvas
Diptych, each painting: 193 x 167.6 cm | 76 x 66 in

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MARUANI MERCIER is delighted to present *The Glass Dream Game*, the first solo exhibition of Æmen Ededéen (Joshua Hagler) with the gallery, opening in Brussels on 15 January 2026. Composed of contending layers and strokes of pigment, the works in *The Glass Dream Game* unfold into echoes of figures in a dream-like realm. Now adding, now scraping away the paint, each gesture reveals disparate elements gradually taking shape in our visual field, assembled through the artist's continued exploration of the unconscious.

The title of the exhibition references Hermann Hesse's renowned novel *The Glass Bead Game*, in which the players exercise their in-depth scholarship to unearth elegant associations across the breadth of human knowledge. Ededéen, for whom both Hesse and I Ching arrive through a long-time fascination with Jungian thought and psychoanalysis, assumes the often uncanny synchronicities between texts to have deep significance. Thus, he understands himself and his library to be entangled in an ongoing collaboration through which the Unconscious unveils itself.

Ededéen begins each painting with a chance selection of six books, called a Hexagram, from his personal library inspired by the ancient divination practice of I Ching, which the artist practices in his personal life. Through working with these books, he writes what he calls Dreams, and from the Dreams, come the paintings, or Visions. Spanning references from every subject – from art history and philosophy, to religion and science – each painting stages a singular vision, hovering between the subjective and the universal, wrought in collaboration with the parameters of the game. As the artist notes, “I don't actually want to know more; I want to know less. I don't know what the work is about, and maybe that's why I go to all this trouble inventing a game. So I have something to hang this love of unknowing on.”

In *The Koan is in the Stomach, the Demand is Inconvenient*, the painting begins with connections between books such as *Wisdom of No Escape* by Buddhist teacher Pema Chödrön and, comically, even the pregnancy book *What to Expect When You're Expecting*. In the course of making the painting, Ededéen struggled with a months-long bacteria-born stomach illness for which he spent a night in the hospital. Thus the meanings of passages from such books change for the artist as his life circumstances change. For Ededéen, *The Glass Dream Game* itself is a kind of query into mystery and an attempt at integrating art and daily life into a single experience, while creating language to express it. Painting itself, for the artist, is just one aspect of a contemplative life for which all activity aims toward deeper awakening and transformation.

Portraying two figures reaching towards one another, *The Garden is Trembling but the Dreamer is Still* turns to the garden of creation. Drawing on the alternative narrative of Adam and Eve from the mystical book the Zohar, in which they were originally one being that was separated into two, the diptych stages the unattainable longing for human connection. Interweaving echoes of found texts and images – including a painting by Vuillard and a poem by Seamus Heaney – the composition coalesces these found fragments around a meditation on companionship and the origins of human knowledge.

Reflecting on the interconnectedness of writings and images across disciplines and geographies, the paintings in *The Glass Dream Game* present a space for meditation. Eschewing direct argument, each work reveals a multitude of visions into the workings of human thought and our present cultural moment.