

Press Release

George Rouy. The Bleed, Part II

18 February – 1 June 2025

Hauser & Wirth Downtown Los Angeles
South Gallery



Los Angeles... This February, Hauser & Wirth Downtown Los Angeles will host 'The Bleed, Part II,' British artist George Rouy's first US solo exhibition with the gallery. Following Rouy's recent London presentation, this 'second chapter' will feature all new work extending his exploration of human mass, multiplicity and movement. Having emerged as a leading figure among his generation of painters, the artist gives form to a distinctive dynamism that characterizes key experiences of contemporary life—desire and vexation, the urge to connect frustrated by alienation—to address emotional extremities in a globalized, technologically-driven age.

The exhibition takes its title from Rouy's concept of 'the bleed,' the ways in which figure and void manifest and interact on the surface of his paintings, resulting in a physical seeping, bleeding and merging. Rouy further extends the bleed to the related concept of 'the surrounds,' zones where flesh and bodily properties meet their surrounding conditions—from the intensive attributes of temperature, density and speed to extensive forms of mass, volume and entropy. Adhering to these concepts, the paintings on view reflect tensions between individuals and their environments in parallel with conflicts and harmonies among individuals or groups.

Rouy uses abstraction to disrupt familiar paths of interpretation, guiding the pace at which the viewer reads his paintings. Faces are enfolded, blurred or completely removed from the images, stripping it of its function as a powerful signal or signifier to focus on the body. Consequently, the hands of Rouy's figures take on a significant role: they connect different parts of the painting's surface and lead the viewer's eye and mind through the composition. Possessing an uncanny familiarity, each painting's composition, forms and energetic impact arise as much from the artist's mind as from a phantasmagoria.



Rouy refers to his distinctively monochromatic works as 'phantom paintings.' Combinations of silver pigment and black charcoal allow the artist to explore extremes of light and dark, chiaroscuro effects that suggest moments in which previously hidden things are flickeringly illuminated and then erased from view. In 'The Bleed, Part II' Rouy introduces color to the graphite works, which appear as if weight, mass and feeling in the figure has been body mapped at great speed. The influence of photography and screen-based imagery is evident in all the works, conjuring through the visceral, physical medium of paint the fragmented, distorted reality of our digital age.

Illustrating groups of figures in extreme physical and psychological states, Rouy's art harkens back to such art historical milestones of narrative tragedy as Theodore Gericault's 'The Raft of Medusa' (1818), depicting the survivors of a famous shipwreck, or 'The 3 May 1808' (1814) by Goya, which portrays the execution of Spanish rebels by French troops in Madrid, which is directly referenced in Rouy's painting, 'Absentee' (2025).

Marshalling the contradictory forces of stasis and flow, precision and indeterminacy, Rouy uses human figures—and the oscillation of space between and around them—to reflect on issues of collective care and conflict, considering the question of how we tend to one another from birth until death and how our lives are shaped by the search for balance.

Performance

Marking the opening week of the exhibition will be the US premiere of 'BODYDSUIT,' a visionary live work for five dancers by Rouy and internationally acclaimed choreographer Sharon Eyal. Their first collaborative creation, 'BODYDSUIT' is a 45-minute multi-disciplinary live event, with exacting, rigorous and liberated practices in movement, light, sound and environment. 'BODYDSUIT' combines new electronic music composed by Rouy, the signature punctuating choreography of Eyal and a large silver and graphite painting by Rouy—all together alternating from austerity to crisis and euphoria. Performed in combination with a mirrored floor, dynamic lighting systems and costumes designed by British fashion house 16Arlington, 'BODYDSUIT' creates a total stage environment that

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juxtaposes technical precision with rapturous, unapologetic freedom, forcing the world to challenge itself and its boundaries and giving form to the inalienable battle between our deepest feelings.

'BODYSUIT' is commissioned by Hannah Barry Gallery and co-produced with Hauser & Wirth. Details and ticket information are forthcoming.

About the artist

George Rouy (b. 1994, Sittingbourne, Kent, UK) lives and works in Faversham, Kent. Since graduating from Camberwell College of Arts, he has exhibited internationally, including: 'Present Tense,' Hauser & Wirth Somerset, UK (2024); 'The Echo of Picasso,' Museo Picasso Málaga, ES; 'Endless Song,' Nicola Vassell Gallery, New York, USA (2023); 'BODYSUIT,' Hannah Barry Gallery, London, UK (2023); 'Belly Ache,' Almine Rech, Paris, FR (2022); 'Real Corporeal,' Gladstone Gallery, New York, US (2022); 'A Thing for the Mind,' Timothy Taylor Gallery, London, UK (2022); 'Shit Mirror,' Peres Projects, Berlin, DE (2022) (solo); 'Rested,' Nicola Vassell, New York, US (2021); and 'Clot,' Hannah Barry Gallery, London, UK (2020).

His work is represented in the collections of The ALBERTINA Museum & the Albertina Modern, Vienna, AU; ICA, Miami, US; Fondation Cartier pour l'art contemporain and Lafayette Anticipations, Paris, FR; Stahl Collection, Norrköping, SE; M Woods, X Museum and 69 Art Campus, Beijing, CN; and Sifang Art Museum, Nanjing, CN. The first monograph of his work 'George Rouy: Selected Works 2017 – 2023,' featuring a text by Charlie Mills, was published by Tarmac Press in 2023.

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Gallery hours:
Tuesday – Sunday, 11 am – 6 pm

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Caption and courtesy information:

Absentee
2025
Acrylic and oil on linen
240 x 190 x 4 cm / 94 1/2 x 74 3/4 x 1 5/8 in
© George Rouy
Courtesy the artist, Hannah Barry Gallery and
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Photo: Damian Griffiths

Studio view George Rouy 2024
© George Rouy
Courtesy the artist, Hannah Barry Gallery and
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Photo: Damian Griffiths