

ARTISTS TO KNOW

From art school discoveries to gallery breakthroughs – these are a few of the artists exciting us now

FEATURE AMY MOOREA WONG



Artist
Ibi Meier-
Oruitemeka,
known as
Studio IMO

PHOTOGRAPH RUTH SAMUELS PHOTOGRAPHY

Alice Neave

Drifting between figuration, landscape and abstraction, this British painter conjures realms that feel just out of reach. Based in London, she works on unstretched cotton, viscose or found textile, with each composition made up of layers of dyes and pigments in various textures and viscosities, adding an element of chance. Since completing a BA in fine art in 2010, she has had four solo exhibitions in London, most recently with Sister by Studio Ashby, and has been in group shows around the world. Next, she'll be part of The Finch Project at the Enter Art Fair, Copenhagen, 28-31 August.

Instagram @aliceneave_art

Ally Fallon

Awarded the John Moores Painting Prize in 2025, Ally Fallon is the youngest winner of this prestigious competition. The Manchester-based artist's practice bridges realism and abstraction, centring on painting as a space for quiet contemplation. 'I do not believe in forcing a preconceived idea onto the surface,' he says, placing value on the journey of the work rather than the outcome and letting it reveal itself. Ally graduated from Manchester School of Art in 2023 and Apollo Painting School in 2024; his inaugural solo exhibition with Hales Gallery will open on 7 June.

Instagram @ally_fallon



Alice Neave's compositions are delicate, light and gently emotive

Anthony Banks

This London-based artist paints around the subjects of nature and the human-built, the agricultural and the geological. His work is often set aside in the studio for years, awaiting rediscovery and being updated, each evolving piece filled with meaningful hesitations and

pauses. Anthony, who completed his master's in painting at the Royal College of Art in 2016, has exhibited in the UK and US as well as in China and Spain. His 2025/2026 solo exhibition *Gone to Seed* at Cedric Bardawil in London showed finished and unfinished works side by side, and he is part of a group show at Lismore Castle Arts, Ireland, until 25 October.

anthony-banks.com

Catherine Ko Chen

The colourful, dreamlike works of London-based American painter Catherine Ko Chen focus on the ideas of thresholds, transition and memory. Her canvases are abstracts, subtly referencing music, literature and experience, often suggesting windows or doorways. She graduated from Apollo Painting School in 2025, has exhibited in London, Amsterdam, Italy, Spain and the US, and is part of a group show at Grundy Art Gallery in Blackpool, until 28 June.

catherinekochen.com →



Buckthorn
by Ally Fallon

PHOTOGRAPHS (ALICE NEAVE) ANIELLA WEINBERGER; (ALLY FALLON) MICHAEL POLLARD. COURTESY OF THE ARTIST AND HALES, LONDON AND NEW YORK © ALLY FALLON



Jo Hummel uses paper to build patterns and shapes

CHARLOTTE JONERHEIM

Initially training as a sculptor, this Swedish artist now focuses mainly on collages composed of papers, newspaper, wrappers and tickets, combined with wax, varnish and thread. Each piece is imbued with printed text forming fragments of thoughts, while the circle recurs throughout her work. 'I am drawn to the circle's simplicity, completeness and symbolic resonance. It speaks of cycles and the imperfect nature of wholeness,' she says. Having exhibited widely around the UK, she is currently working on a collection responding to the increasing number of people disappearing in today's world.

charlottejonerheim.work

DEBORAH LERNER

Often starting with the surface, colour and light of overlooked parts of the urban environment, such as pavement cracks or city shadows, this London-based artist's work is

informed by both daily observation and art history. The small details are represented with multiple painting techniques including sanding, taping and wiping, with quietness given centre stage. Deborah, who gained a BA in fine art (painting) in 2023, is part of Drawing Room's Drawing Biennial in London, until 23 June, and New Contemporaries' group exhibition in Middlesbrough, until 16 August. She has her first solo show with Particular Ideas in November.

deborahlerner.cargo.site

JO HUMMEL

Known for her minimalist yet multilayered pieces, Jo creates odes to sacred geometry, natural cycles and human rituals from her Isle of Wight studio. A 2006 graduate of the Royal College of Art, she uses paper to build patterns and shapes with methods such as weaving, marquetry and joinery, in 'sculptural paintings', studying the balance

between emptiness and possibility. She has had multiple solo and group shows and is currently artist in residence at Thread in Senegal with the Josef & Anni Albers Foundation.

johummel.com

JOE WARRIOR-WALKER

Using mixed media such as oil paint, raw pigments and soft pastels, Joe echoes the journeys and memories of his childhood, which was split between St Ives and India. While abstract, the British Indian artist's strong images hint at landscape and the real world, playing with opacity, translucence, texture and intricate lines. Having completed a BA in fine art in 2009, Joe has exhibited extensively; his solo show at Fred Levine in Bruton opens on 19 June.

joewarriorwalker.com

KWOK TSUI

Originally from Hong Kong and now based in Belfast and London, Kwok works primarily in subtraction, removing paint from the surface of canvases, revealing light and forms and creating shadows within. His practice explores his experience as an immigrant, examining displacement, absence and presence. Kwok is completing an MA in painting at the Royal College of Art; his solo exhibition at Belfast's Metropolitan Arts Centre ends on 5 July.

klttsui.com



Joe Warrior-Walker creates abstracts in mixed media

PHOTOGRAPHS (JO HUMMEL) MARIA BELL PHOTOGRAPHY; (JOE WARRIOR-WALKER) FOR TOAST, HERMIONE GRACE RUSSELL



Mahrokh Mofid Nakhaei painting in her studio

L LÂL YILMAZ

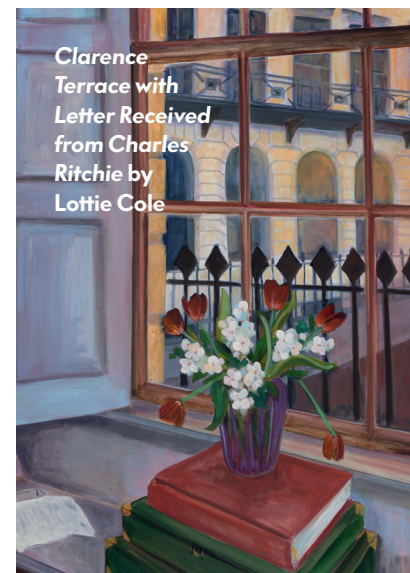
Arising from her subconscious, this London-based Turkish artist's paintings and drawings are filled with figures, symbols and emotionally charged motifs. Fusing the mystical, spiritual and philosophical with the everyday, each piece features an earthy palette alive with textural marks. Lâl is currently undertaking the Drawing Year at the Royal Drawing School, London, and will soon be part of several London exhibitions, including the 2026 Drawing Year's end-of-year shows. **Instagram @lalyilmaz**

LOTTIE COLE

'Interiors are landscapes; these spaces hold our stories, and we exist within them, defined and confined by them,' says Lottie. From her Sussex studio she paints imagined interiors, which act as portraits of the lives of conspicuously absent owners, each item an artefact that represents identity and humanity. Her work is rooted in art history, which she studied before developing painting on the side of a career. Her solo show *My Relation, Elizabeth Bowen* is at Long & Ryle, London, 3-28 June. **lottiecole.com**

LUCY NAUGHTON

Aged books and papers with signs of wear come together intuitively in this Surrey-based artist's abstract collages and paintings. 'I play around, offering up compositions to a frame to see what sings,' she says. 'This haphazard process means my work is very eclectic.' With faded, muted tones, her calming pieces display beautifully as collections as well as individually, and she'll occasionally use book covers for more colour. Lucy's work is available through Partnership Editions and M.A.H Gallery, London, as well as directly. **Instagram @lnaughtonart**



Clarence Terrace with Letter Received from Charles Ritchie by Lottie Cole

PHOTOGRAPHS (MAHROKH MOFID NAKHAEI) EMAD HAGHI



Lucy Naughton is inspired by collected materials

M MAHROKH MOFID NAKHAEI

An Iranian artist based in Manchester, Mahrokh is interested in the relationship between feeling, perception and space. Painting mainly in oils, her ethereal work contemplates recollection, distance and belonging. Each piece is created from a carefully staged still-life composition filtered through her memories and emotions, and often expands into a series to allow her thoughts to evolve. Mahrokh finished her MA in painting at Manchester School of Art in 2024 and the Apollo Painting School programme in 2025, and has exhibited in group shows in Manchester and London. **mahrokh.uk** →

RAOUL ORZABAL

This London-based British artist's paintings are created from highly complex configurations he builds on Photoshop. Fusing elements of contemporary architecture, classical ruins and nature, which become fractured and dystopian, he manipulates and distorts line, colour and viewpoint. Each monumental canvas takes months to create as small areas are painstakingly painted in sections. Raoul, who has been in a string of group exhibitions, is now planning to focus on creating from imagination, with his latest work concerned with climate change.

raoulorzabal.com

ROMY ELLIOTT

Trained in classical sculpture and drawing and painting at the Florence Academy of Art 2013–2016, British artist Romy now works mainly in acrylics on canvas. 'Animals are the love of my life, and my work explores interactions between us and them,' she says of her paintings featuring stylised dogs, lambs, cats, cows and more. Keeping mark-making varied and loose, she uses light and shadow to describe anatomy and structure, putting atmosphere and energy above the need for every detail. Her second solo show at London's Portland Gallery finished in March, and she's already preparing for number three.

romyelliott.com



Uncontainable Night, chalk pastel on paper, by Tyga Helme



Stylised animals are the focus of Romy Elliott's paintings

STUDIO IMO

Artist Ibi Meier-Oruitemeka, aka Studio IMO, is based in Hastings. Inspired by her British Nigerian identity, her work is a celebration of stylised black figures dominating the frame, as a metaphor for black bodies being seen. Her pieces emphasise posture and interaction, speaking of friendships, family and love. Self-taught, she began painting in 2024 – her first collection sold out within a week; her third in 15 minutes. She will be at the Affordable Art Fair with Art Friend gallery later this year.

studio-imo.art

TYGA HELME

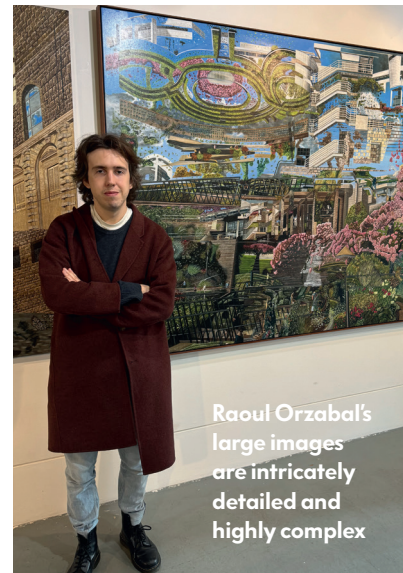
This British artist is often to be found outside, immersed in the main subject of her work: nature. Based in Wiltshire, she creates in oil paint, pastel and ink, reacting to nature's directness and constant changes. She builds a feeling for a place by returning again and again until her leaf- and stem-covered creations are interwoven and alive. A graduate of Edinburgh College of Art, 2012, and the Royal Drawing School, 2014, she had a solo show last year at Messums London and has been part of group exhibitions in London and New York.

tygahelme.com

YESIDE LINNEY

'Born in Nigeria, then schooled in England, it was only later in life that I confronted the fact that I had lost touch with my identity and heritage,' says Yeside. Turning to painting a decade ago after a career in teaching, she creates a mix of landscapes, abstracts and figurative pieces that intuitively examine her conflicted sense of self. This year, she was part of New York's Harlem Fine Arts Show and will exhibit in October with the Lemon Seed Project in Walthamstow during Black History Month.

yeside.com



Raoul Orzabal's large images are intricately detailed and highly complex

PHOTOGRAPHS (ROMY ELLIOTT) LUCY BIRKHEAD