

ADRIAN GELLER





*C'est vous que ce village là-bas attend
pour s'éveiller à l'existence*

10 September — 17 October, 2026

«You who still believe in miracles, oh ! if only you would seek out this lost village! Remember: the farmhouse and the arch of its barn bridge, the hedge beneath the lamp, the tall church. The inn's staircase has a double banister, and beneath the windows stand two of those iron gates where dragons tie their horses on Sunday afternoons.»¹

If these words by Gustave Roud resonate so deeply with me, it is surely because of the inverted mysticism that animates it, the hope sustained by a promise of faith. A lost village, almost inaccessible, that seems to wait to be rediscovered in order to return to existence. A reality that demands not only to be seen, but to be inhabited by the gaze. I often find myself standing before the easel like a monk without doctrine, ready to offer prayers without words, without gods, without belief. Seeking in the phenomena of nature for what is sublime, beautiful, and eternal. Painting then becomes an attempt to recover a form of verticality in a world where the old spiritual structures have collapsed. A painted bouquet no longer appears as a *vanitas*, a *memento mori*, but rather as a form of infinity with no beyond. I listen to the world around me in search of fragments, which take on so many forms when they emerge from our intangible inheritance. Forms that still bear the traces of a world in which everything seemed connected to a meaning greater than itself. Yet, I struggled to take these symbols seriously. Their metaphor dissolved, the moment I moved closer to look. The discomfort of trying to express myself through symbols in which I no longer believed, and which crumbled both in language and in paint, made art itself feel like a masquerade. It took me some time to understand that this came from the absence of the divine within me, from the absence of faith. My paintings were neither nostalgic witnesses of a vanished world, nor propositions for adapting to a new one. I found myself on the ridge between the two.

Things remain, but their place seems to have shifted. Empty houses, unoccupied shells, abandoned envelopes. That's how flowers, beauty, ornament, and the aesthetic phenomena of life sometimes appear to us. Stripped of their symbolic meaning given by beliefs, unexplained events, faith, and collapsed cultures, they still stand before us, sustained only by humanity's nostalgia.

In a world of faith, everything exists through that faith. It possesses its symbolism, its place, its value in our eyes. Each object takes part in an invisible architecture that links the world. But when belief disappears, hierarchies collapse, and a world devoid of meanings imposed upon us like chaos without bearings. Then, a question emerges: what is the backbone of the world that surrounds us? What still connects things to one another once the beliefs that gave them weight have vanished?

The figures in the paintings bear witness to the possibility of lingering, observing, and admiring the world even if it is devoid of meaning. It is as though a world without faith no longer has a center, but still retains traces of a constant forms of verticality: beauty, cycles, care, painting itself. This is why I paint. It is kind of a consolation, free of any promise to paint a flower with attentive care. It will not need to say anything, will remain silent, because that is enough, but yet its silence will also bears witness to what its significance once was.

Emptiness and infinity are like the serpent devouring its own tail. Doesn't a faithless world present itself to us as a universe whose beauty is sufficient for itself? Perhaps the absence of meaning doesn't signify the absence of value. On the contrary, perhaps freed from their symbolic function, things can finally appear in their simplest presence.

Empty houses, unoccupied shells, abandoned envelopes. Yet an empty shell is not merely an absence. It is also the trace of a former presence, the possibility of a new inhabitant. What interests me is not only what has disappeared, but what remains after disappearance itself. The forms that continue to stand after the beliefs that sustained them have collapsed.

Science, the thirst for knowledge, as well as economics and the desire to possess have separated us from the experience of the unattainable and therefore from mystery. Once we possess the thing, or possess the knowledge, our fascination begins to fade. It is curiosity that carries us into fascination and admiration. Maintaining this balance between possession and discovery is difficult for humans. How can we keep our distance? How can we avoid coming too close, revealing everything, stripping objects of their secrets? For not knowing, and instead imagining rather than explaining, that is where fantasy, culture, and art reveal their true power. Their once abundant, imaginative, and creative richness has gradually given way to an art of documentation and scientific certainty.

Reason, and above all truth, have come to prevail, they fill every void with facts and, sometimes, even dispelling all mythology and belief.

But just as faith could never explain everything, reason cannot fill every void. Between complete ignorance and absolute knowledge lies a fragile space where imagination, emotion, and the desire to persist in looking are born. Maintaining the balance between not knowing and discovering is difficult. And yet, perhaps it is precisely within this in-between space that objects recover their depth. Not because they necessarily conceal some forgotten meaning, but because they remain open to our gaze. Translating these ideas into paintings gives birth to porous compositions. The forms of emptiness that I construct are meant to be crossed, explored, contemplated, inhabiting the space once occupied by the spiritual. They do not seek to rebuild a lost temple, but to create a place where something may still appear. Just as an architect designs for those who will inhabit a building, a musician imagines the dancer, or a writer writes the heroine, the painter must create such a space. A painting is not merely an object to be looked at, but a place awaiting a presence.

Perhaps this is what draws me to T. S. Eliot's *The Hollow Men*². The hollow men, forms emptied of their substance, voices still searching for a language after the disappearance of former certainties. Yet where Eliot portrays a world suspended in anticipation of redemption, I am perhaps searching for something else: not the return of a lost meaning, but the possibility of inhabiting its absence. The transition between an old world and a modern one, whose completion we believed too hastily accomplished, is not yet over. For the first time, an era is defined more by the future than by the past. After the fall, before solace. We continue to live among the invisible ruins of what once gave objects their significance. But perhaps this loss compels us to look differently. To recognize that meaning no longer resides within objects themselves, but is instead forged through the relationship we cultivate with them.

I want neither to believe nor to deconstruct. I want to inhabit loss with intention and emotion.

And perhaps it is you that this village over there is waiting for, so that it may finally awaken into existence.

Adrian Geller

1. Gustave Roud, «Récit», p. 67, *Air de solitude* (Geneva: Éditions Zoé, 2022).

2. T. S. Eliot, *The Hollow Men* (1925), in *Poems, 1909–1925* (London: Faber & Gwyer).



Exhibition view
C'est vous que ce village là-bas attend pour s'éveiller à l'existence, Adrian Geller, 2026



Look away, 2025

Oil on canvas
51 1/4 x 63 in | 130 x 160 cm





Exhibition view
C'est vous que ce village là-bas attend pour s'éveiller à l'existence, Adrian Geller, 2026



The cow, 2025

Oil on canvas
15 3/4 x 11 3/4 in | 40 x 30 cm



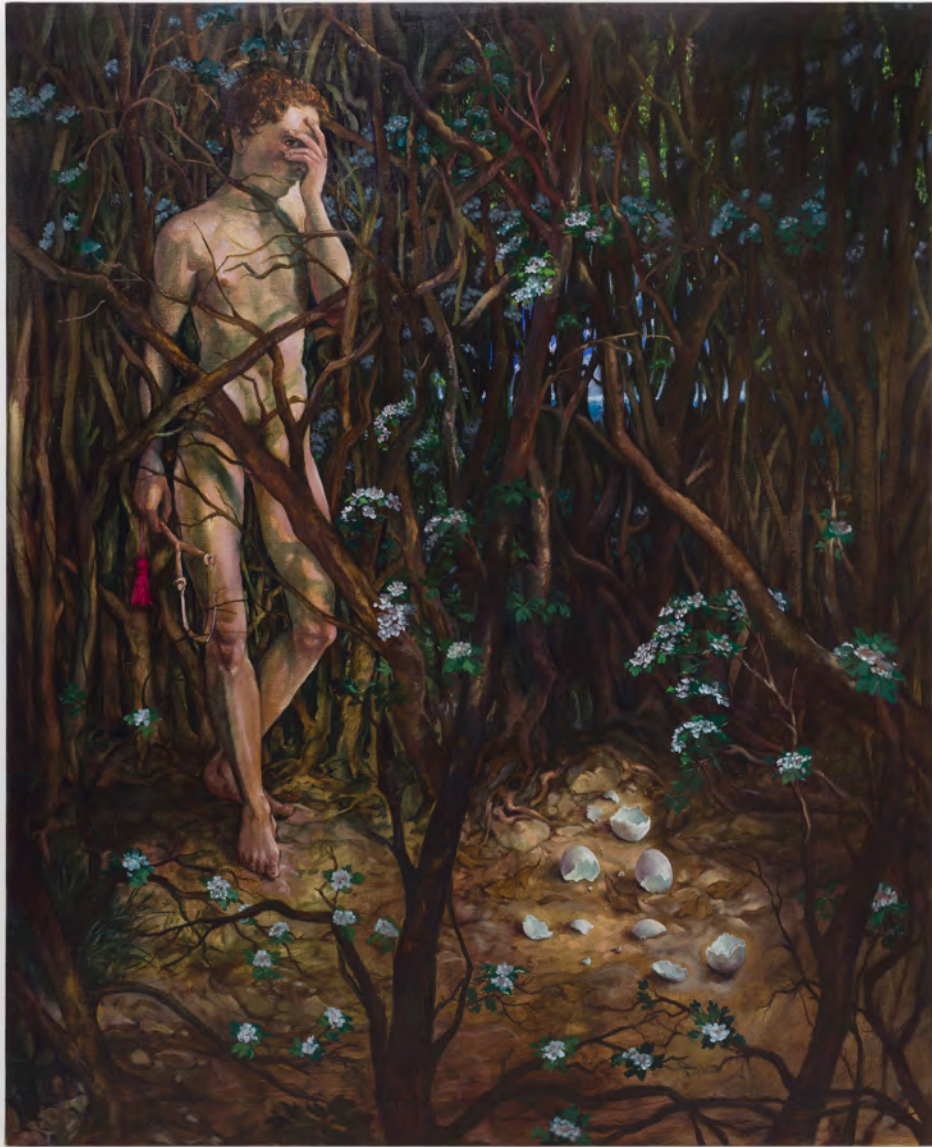
The giant, 2025

Oil on canvas
15 3/4 x 11 3/4 in | 40 x 30 cm

« I have noticed that I often find myself in front of the easel like a monk without doctrine, ready to pray prayers without words, without gods, without belief. To seek in the phenomena of nature the sublime, the beautiful, and the eternal.

(...) I examine the world around me to find debris, which takes so many forms when it comes from immaterial inheritance. Forms that I struggled to take seriously in their innate symbolism, because their metaphor collapsed as soon as I approached them closely. »





Empty shells, 2026

Oil on canvas
51 1/4 x 63 in | 130 x 160 cm



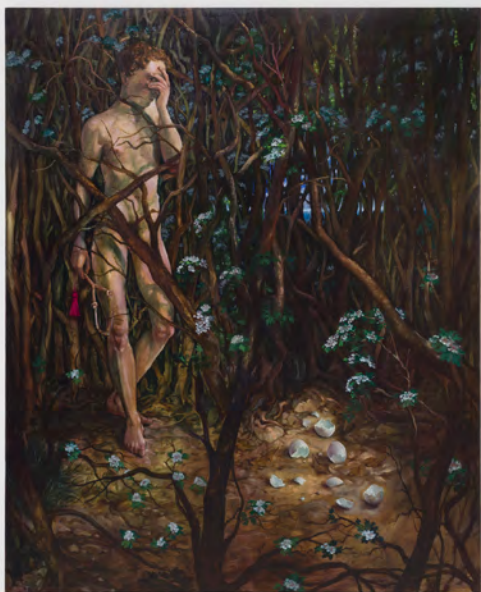
Flashlight, 2026

Engraving on Hahnenmühle paper
Edition of 30 + 10 artist's proofs
7 3/4 x 6 in | 20 x 15 cm
20 1/2 x 15 1/4 in | 52 x 39 cm (paper)



1/30

3026 *[Signature]*



Exhibition view
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« Things remain, but their place seems to have shifted. Empty houses, unoccupied shells, abandoned envelopes. That's how flowers, beauty, ornament, and the aesthetic phenomena of life sometimes appear to us.

Stripped of their symbolic meaning given by beliefs, unexplained events, faith, and collapsed cultures, they still stand before us, sustained only by humanity's nostalgia. »



Knocking, 2025

Oil on canvas
19 3/4 x 23 1/2 in | 50 x 60 cm





Iconoclaste, 2025

Watercolour on paper
9 x 12 1/4 in | 23 x 31 cm





Charpente, 2025

Oil on canvas
90 x 70 cm | 35 1/2 x 27 1/2 in



Ghosts I, 2025

Aquarelle sur papier
10 1/4 x 14 1/4 in | 26 x 36 cm

« Yet an empty shell is not merely an absence. It is also the trace of a former presence, the possibility of a new inhabitant.

What interests me is not only what has disappeared, but what remains after disappearance itself. The forms that continue to stand after the beliefs that sustained them have collapsed. »





The Earring, 2026

Oil on canvas
15 3/4 x 11 3/4 in | 40 x 30 cm



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La Malette, 2025 (detail)



La Malette, 2025

Suitcase, oil paintings on wood panel
3 1/2 x 16 1/2 x 13 3/4 in | 9 x 42 x 35 cm





Orb, 2025

Oil on canvas
23 1/2 x 19 3/4 in | 60 x 50 cm



Look away IV, 2026

Oil on canvas
35 1/2 x 31 1/2 in | 90 x 80 cm



Exhibition view

C'est vous que ce village là-bas attend pour s'éveiller à l'existence, Adrian Geller, 2026





On all fours, 2026

Oil on canvas
35 1/2 x 31 1/2 in | 90 x 80 cm

« The void and infinity are the serpent biting its own tail. Does not a world without faith present itself to us as a universe of beauty sufficient unto itself? »

To turn these ideas into paintings creates porous compositions. The forms of emptiness I construct allow them to be traversed, explored, admired—where the spiritual once lived. Like an architect who considers the inhabitant, a musician imagining the dancer, or a writer serving the adventurer, the painter must create such a space. »



Exhibition view

C'est vous que ce village là-bas attend pour s'éveiller à l'existence, Adrian Geller, 2026



Look away II, 2026

Watercolour on paper
12 1/4 x 9 in | 31 x 23 cm



The haybale, 2026

Oil on canvas
35 1/2 x 31 1/2 in | 90 x 80 cm



Adrian Geller

(b. 1997 in Basel) is a Swiss artist based in Normandie.

Adrian Geller's paintings trace back to the contemplation of the Goethean heroes, characters from folklore, tales and legends, artisans, traveling to unearth their own peace and serenity through wild and dramatic landscapes, and in the process uncovering reality's detachment from nature thus becoming unnatural. The relevance and accuracy of Geller's recreated world resides in his questioning and re-imagining of a symbiotic bond between humans and nature.

At a time when environmental and sociological crises have unpredictable impacts on our collective experience, and life in general, Adrian Geller unveils our very own condition and leaves us gazing at the world in disbelief. Adrian Geller studied illustration at the atelier Angoulême, France, and at the Beaux-Arts de Paris, France. Recent exhibitions include Perrotin, Paris, Capsule Shanghai, Villa Noailles, in Hyères, Chez Valentin, in Paris, Stone Oven House, in Turin, François Ghebaly, in Los Angeles ...



ADRIAN GELLER

Born in 1997 in Basel, Switzerland

Lives and works in Normandy, France

EDUCATION

2023 Beaux-Arts de Paris, Paris (FR)

2017 L'atelier Angoulême, Illustration, Angoulême (FR)

2016 Prepa Gobelins, Paris (FR)

EXPOSITIONS PERSONNELLES

2025 *Meine Weltlandschaft*, Tanya Leighton, Berlin (GE)

2024 *APARTE*, Super Dakota, Brussels (BE)

2023 *Cloudburst*, Fracois Ghebaly, Los Angeles (US)

2022 *Warping Lines*, Capsule, Shanghai (CN)

Liste Art Fair, Basel (CH)

2021 *idle hands are the devils workshop*, Super Dakota, Bruxelles (BE)

The Loom, Villa Noailles, Hyères (FR)

Don't let the dogs bite, AMG Bucharest, Roumanie (RO)

2019 *I was pretty lucky*, Stone Oven House, Turin (IT)

GROUP EXHIBITIONS

2024 *Une Chambre à soit*, Galerie Richard Rogers, Château La Coste (FR)

When We become Us², Capsule Venice, Venezia (IT)

2023 NADA MIAMI, Miami (US)

Healing Ruins, Zeyrek Çinili Hamam, Istanbul (TR)

West Bund Art Fair, Capsule Shanghai (CN)

Prélude, Super Dakota, Brussels (BE)

Cache-Cache, Perrotin, Paris (FR)

Who is your Master, 1969 Gallery, New York (US)

Art Brussels, Super Dakota, Brussels (BE)

2022 *Spring Antidote*, Capsule Shanghai at Blanc Art Space, Beijing (CN)

La Forme de l'Eau, Galerie Joseph, curated by Nicolas Dewavrin, Paris (FR)

Crush, Beaux-Arts de Paris, Paris (FR)

2021 Art Antwerp, Super Dakota, Anvers (BE)
Art-O-Rama Marseille with Editions Villa
Noailles, Marseille (FR)

Le bonheur-du-jour, Double Sejour,
Paris (FR)

SNAP TIME IS OVER, Galerie Valentin,
Paris (FR)

Plant B, Beaux-Arts de Paris, curated
by Noelia Portela, Paris (FR)

2020 *Work from home*, AMG Bucharest,
Roumanie (RO)

2019 *Quand vient le dernier quartier de
lune*, Off on Focus

RESIDENCIES

2022 Beecher Residency (US)

2021 Villa Noailles, Hyères (FR)

2019 Stone Oven House, Turin (IT)

COLLECTIONS

Yuz Museum, Shanghai

X Museum, Beijing

Green Family Art Foundation, Dallas

Collezione Taurisano, Naples



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