

Pilar Corrias

Press Release

Flirter avec l'abstrait
Alexis Ralaivao
13 March–23 May 2026

Pilar Corrias
51 Conduit Street
London W1S 2YT



Alexis Ralaivao, *Les écrits spontanés*, 2025. Courtesy the artist and Pilar Corrias, London.

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Pilar Corrias is pleased to present the first UK solo exhibition by Alexis Ralaivao. Titled *Flirter avec l'abstrait*, the exhibition brings together a new suite of paintings that push figuration to its limits, flirting with but never fully embracing abstraction.

Ralaivao draws on Old Master techniques, particularly those associated with 17th-century Dutch painting and its meticulous treatment of fabric and surface. For the first time in his practice, he works in vivid, saturated colour. This marks a significant departure from his earlier, predominantly monochromatic paintings, in which colour appeared only in muted pastel tones. Bold blocks of colour come to the fore, reflecting the influence of Swiss painter Félix Vallotton, alongside minimalist artists including Ellsworth Kelly, Suzan Frecon and Robert Mangold, for whom colour operates as a fundamental compositional element.

The paintings depict tightly cropped images, sections of midriff or draperies that, through their isolation from the wider image, approach geometric abstraction. In these works, composition, texture and colour take precedence over narrative. The result is a series of bright, sensual studies that resist spectacle and instead invite sustained looking and a sense of emotional proximity.

On the reverse of each canvas, Ralaivao has handwritten diaristic texts, recording fragments of thought and feeling from the moment of each work's completion. While the paintings themselves appear timeless, these annotations are firmly rooted in the present, creating a tension between the immediacy of spontaneous writing and the deliberation of the carefully composed paintings. Together, image and text form a single contemporary artefact.

Alexis Ralaivao (b. 1991) lives and works in Rennes, France. His work is held in institutional collections in the United States and abroad, including the Nerman Museum of Contemporary Art, Kansas; the Institute of Contemporary Art, Miami; Musée des Beaux Arts de Rennes, France; Powerlong Museum, Shanghai, China; and the He Art Museum, China.

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