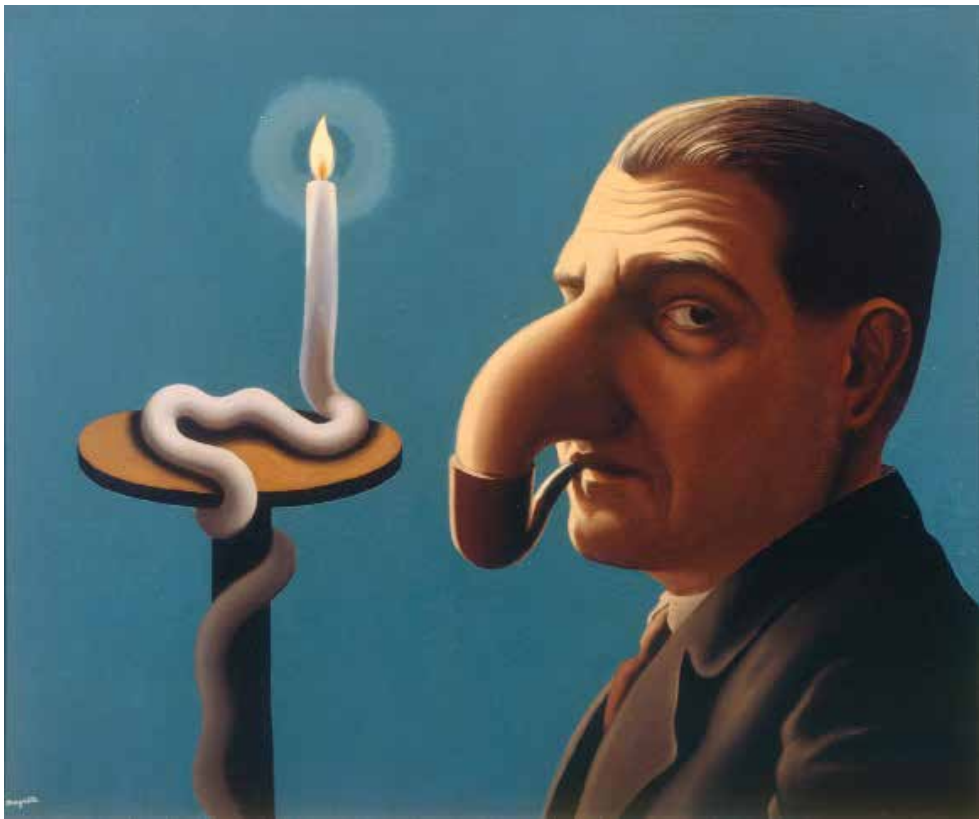


MAGICAL MAGRITTE

Apples, pipes and mysterious bowler-hatted figures. The recurring motifs that define René Magritte are instantly recognisable. But what of his enduring influence on art and popular culture? Opening September 24, an exhibition titled This is Still Not a Pipe at Gagosian examines the legacy of the enigmatic Belgian artist by assembling significant paintings, works on paper, sculptures and photography from across his career. Iconic paintings such as *La Lampe philosophique* (1936) are juxtaposed with works by contemporary artists of different generations, many of them made specially for the exhibition. While he may be an international sensation, Magritte has local significance: held 90 years ago at the New Burlington Galleries, the landmark International Surrealist Exhibition was a watershed moment for the surrealist movement and made Magritte a household name. Runs until December.

20 Grosvenor Hill



RENÉ MAGRITTE, LA LAMPE PHILOSOPHIQUE (THE PHILOSOPHER'S LAMP), 1936
IMAGE © 2026 CHERSCOVICI/ARTIST'S RIGHTS SOCIETY (ARS), NEW YORK/PRIVATE COLLECTION, BRUSSELS, KINGDOM OF BELGIUM

AUTUMN ART

September's art calendar is surreal,
sanguine and sensual

WORDS: WILL MOFFITT

FLEETING BEAUTY

Venice's misty waterways, Portugal's sun-dappled fields, the parochial charm of the British countryside. Norman Smith masterfully captures the fleeting beauty of places near and far. Born in Berkshire in 1949, Smith studied art and design in Bristol before pursuing a career in teaching that took him across the UK, Australia and beyond. Extensive travels throughout Europe, India, the Far East and Australia have left an enduring influence on his work. Adeptly cloaked in colour, light and shade, his paintings and pastels evoke wide-eyed wanderlust. A solo exhibition at Thompson's Gallery this month showcases Smith's travels through Britain and the Mediterranean, revealing his gift for recreating



the spirit of a place rather than simply describing it. Until September 18.
3 Seymour Place

WELSH WONDER

An unwavering voice for a generation of female painters, Shani Rhys James is a totemic figure in Welsh contemporary art. For more than 40 years she has depicted the female form with unflinching honesty and visceral intensity. Now in her 70s, she continues to produce compelling paintings, as evidenced by her latest exhibition at Connaught Brown. Named after a 1963 Australian film by the feminist writer Beatrice Faust, *The Afternoon House* features new paintings inspired by the film that Rhys James featured in as a child. Running from September 10 to October 2, *The Afternoon House* sees Rhys James re-examining domestic spaces and the role that childhood memories play in shaping adult perspectives. Far from being buried, early experiences mark our lives.

2 Albemarle Street



VISUAL VOCABULARY

Hosting the first UK solo exhibition of Emma Reyes' work, White Cube brings the singular and celebrated Colombian painter to St James's. Renowned across South America, Reyes drew on Indigenous beliefs and her self-taught craft to forge a distinctive pictorial language that foregrounded the interconnectedness of the living world. Reclaiming the visual vocabularies associated with South American cultures, she recalibrated portraiture and still life, drawing on pre-Colombian artefacts, embroidery, basketry and organic structures to create densely patterned, animated surfaces. Her final series, Les Masques, represents a stylistic evolution in which Reyes transcended conventional portraiture towards a more expansive image of the human. It was a theme that defined her monumental career for almost six decades. September 4 to October 3.

Mason's Yard



EMMA REYES IN HER ATELIER, RUE PERNETY, CIRCA 1985. PARIS
IMAGE: ARCHIVES MAAP-PENGUEUX



QUENTIN JAMES MCCAFFREY, VIEW, 2026
IMAGE: QUENTIN JAMES MCCAFFREY/STUBBART PHOTOGRAPHY

INTRIGUING IDEAS

Teetering in a liminal zone somewhere between reality and a dream world, Quentin James McCaffrey creates interior spaces that haunt and intrigue. The New York-born artist eschews people, turning everyday objects such as mirrors, flowers and framed paintings into psychological surrogates. By reviving traditional techniques – oil painting, linear perspective and classical composition – McCaffrey makes you feel that these works are historical records; archives from lost periods. In doing so he sparks our curiosity. You can't help scrutinising his paintings, searching for hidden clues or a cohesive narrative. His latest exhibition at Alison Jacques (September 3 to October 3) debuts a collection of fresh paintings that are less cluttered. Space takes precedence over things. The works in question are no less beguiling.

22 Cork Street



TRUDGING, THE SODDEN PRELUDE, 2023
IMAGE: COURTESY OF THE ARTIST AND THE APPROACH, LONDON. PHOTO: MATHIAS VÖLZKE

SENSE OF SELF

Showcasing work by eight contemporary artists, Like Music in the Blood, an intriguing and disparate exhibition at Thaddaeus Ropac, explores selfhood as something carried beneath the skin. Working across painting and sculpture, these artists examine the body through strategies of omission, displacement, projection and abstraction.

Diversity of inspiration and output is a major draw of the show, which opens on September 3. Artists hail from Pakistan to Plymouth, but are united by shared themes. The breadth of work is dazzling – from Suleman Aqeel Khilji's dreamlike paintings steeped in memories of his native Quetta and the mountainous Balochistan landscape to Tanoa Sasraku, whose torso works evoke the memorabilia of war veterans, athletes or even Ken dolls. Until October 1.

Ely House, 37 Dover Street