

GEORGE BLACKLOCK

ALCHEMY

21 CORK STREET
LONDON W1S 3LZ

16 January 2026 - 7 February 2026

Private View: Thursday 15 January, 6–8 pm

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Flowers Gallery is pleased to announce *Alchemy*, an exhibition of new abstract paintings by George Blacklock (b.1952), marking the British artist's exploration into the evolving, intuitive processes that define his practice. Known for works that fuse gesture, structure, colour and metaphysical suggestion, Blacklock continues his longstanding investigation into painting as both subject and site of transformation.

In *Alchemy*, Blacklock presents a series of works that emerge from what he calls the "*studio narrative*" - a process that moves between discipline and improvisation, instinct and constant vigilance. For Blacklock, painting is not a means of illustrating pre-formed statements; instead, as the artist reflects, "*I believe that my paintings do not depict or represent ideas, they are the ideas.*"

Recurring shapes - at once emblematic, eroded, and mutable - thread throughout this body of work, as in Blacklock's oeuvre. For the artist, the form functions as a metaphor for an "*internal identity*", a shifting state of being. These forms, which appear in various guises, become touchstones around which colour, gesture, and intention collide into a metaphorical and pictorial narrative.



George Blacklock, *Alchemy #2*, 2025, Oil on canvas, 120 x 100 cm

Blacklock claims his methodology was shaped in part by his study of Jiu Jitsu, where he first encountered the idea of a dual consciousness - an instinctive, rapid upper level and a slower, analytical lower level. This dynamic resonates within his painting process, which he describes as a conversation between these two states, mediated through the evolving surface of the canvas and the resultant pictorial space.

His interest in transformation - its discipline, unpredictability, and occasional absurdity - also draws on literary and theatrical influences. The alchemical and magical titles of the works reference both scientific inquiry and sleight of hand, echoing the unstable territory between truth and obfuscation.

A significant influence for this body of work is Mikhail Bulgakov's *The Master and Margarita*, whose anarchic narrative Blacklock couldn't help but read through the lens of the Marx Brothers' chaotic comedy.

Blacklock has stated that something like the "*observer effect*" from quantum mechanics appears to relate to his observation of his painting process, in that the tools and actions involved in making, inevitably alter the work's outcome or meaning. Embracing this instability, he often relinquishes control to encourage the

painting to “*lead the way forward*,” allowing its internal logic to surface: “*I find I uncover the core of the painting rather than consciously put it in... I am beginning to suspect the paintings are ahead of me.*”

The works in *Alchemy* utilise Blacklock's feeling for colour and mark-making, as agents of change that guide the artist toward moments of revelation. His knowledge, instinct, and material intelligence of paint evolve into paintings of colourful resolution and freedom.

ABOUT GEORGE BLACKLOCK b. 1952

George Blacklock (b. 1952, County Durham) studied at Sunderland Polytechnic, Stourbridge College of Art, and Reading University. He lectured at Wimbledon School of Art for over two decades (1989-2011) before serving as Dean of Chelsea College of Art and Design from 2011-2017. Exhibiting widely in the UK and internationally, over several decades, Blacklock's practice has engaged deeply with the languages of abstraction, gesture, musicality and colour. He lives and works in London.

Exhibition Opening Hours: Monday - Saturday, 11 am - 6 pm

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PRESS ENQUIRIES: For more information and images please contact Emily Flowers:
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