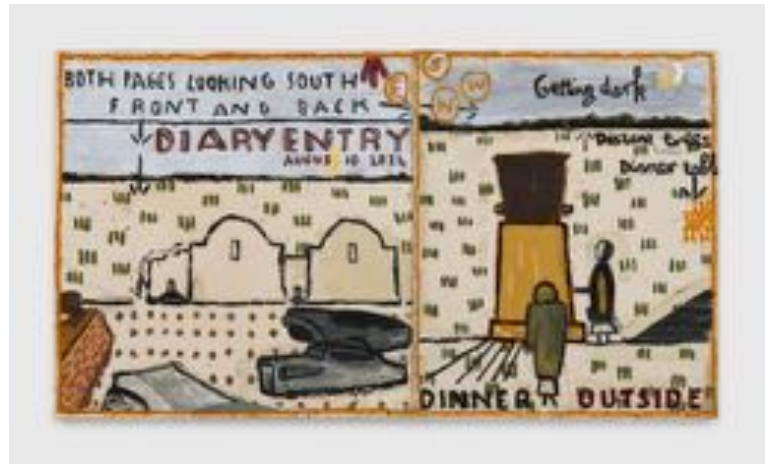


## Rose Wylie *When Found becomes Given*

3 April–23 May, 2025  
24 Grafton Street, London



Rose Wylie, *Dinner Outside*, 2024  
© Rose Wylie. Courtesy the artist and David Zwirner

David Zwirner is pleased to announce *When Found becomes Given*, an exhibition of paintings by British artist Rose Wylie at the gallery's location in London. This presentation includes new and recent canvases and multipanel works that roam diverse chronologies and amalgamate the personal, symbolic, and historical—inhabiting real and imagined timelines within or even between different paintings. *When Found becomes Given* precedes Wylie's forthcoming solo exhibition in the Main Galleries at the Royal Academy of Arts, London, which will open in February 2026.

Wylie has become known for her uniquely recognisable, colourful, and exuberant compositions that appear aesthetically candid, not seeming to align with any discernible style or movement, but on closer inspection are revealed to be wittily observed and subtly sophisticated meditations on the nature of visual representation itself. The artist has long been interested in exploring perspectival and compositional strategies other than—and along with—traditional Renaissance perspective, frequently making numerous iterations of a given motif as a means of advancing her formal investigation. Working in both single- and multipanel formats, she regularly juxtaposes apparently disparate imagery, creating visual rhymes and resonances that coalesce into a unified composition. As curator Tanja Boon aptly notes, '[Wylie's] paintings exemplify the artist's ability to absorb powerful impressions from her immediate surroundings. They also illustrate her broad knowledge of cultural production, spanning popular and cliché styles as well as underexamined and non-Western visual traditions.'<sup>1</sup>

The compositions presented in *When Found becomes Given* explore the fluid line between the moment when a work of art is discovered and the stage in which it is established as canonical. Recent paintings like *Lilith and Gucci Boy* (2024) combine ancient stories with contemporary references. In folklore, Adam's 'first wife' Lilith was created at the same time and from the same clay as her spouse. Here, Wylie inscribes *the first feminist* across the two panels of the diptych, honouring the mythological figure's

<sup>1</sup> Tanja Boon, 'To paint without a duster,' in *Rose Wylie: picky people notice....* Exh. cat. (Ghent, Belgium: Stedelijk Museum voor Actuele Kunst, 2022), p. 55.

refusal to submit to Adam. She replaces him with a fresh avatar—a model wearing a suit from a Gucci advertisement. In an accompanying study on paper, Wylie articulates her source of inspiration: Lilith's form is based on an Old Babylonian terracotta plaque that she first observed in the British Museum's collection.

Similarly, in *Nebuchadnezzar's Dream* (2023), the artist takes as her subject the legendary Babylonian emperor Nebuchadnezzar II and the biblical narrative describing his dream of a monumental man composed in four sections of gold, bronze, iron, and, for his feet, clay—an allegory that has been interpreted numerous times throughout the history of art. In her characteristic style, Wylie uses a strong contrasting palette that variously evokes the work of El Greco, Édouard Manet, and Matthias Grünewald. Other compositions demonstrate a more associative approach to colour choice. In *Opera Singer & Teapot* (2024), the pastel colours of the singer's chiffon scarf, rendered as speckles around her neck, are taken from popular fabric designs from the time that Lily Pons, a French American soprano, was active. The white teapot she faces is an established fixture in Wylie's home, bridging the past and present.

In her paintings, Wylie traverses personal and public histories as well as dreamscapes that encompass her pictorial world. Based on an earlier watercolor, *A Dream* (2024) confronts the viewer with the layered brick floor of the artist's home. Wylie depicts herself as she experienced the dream: as an abstracted black stick figure dutifully scrubbing the floor. In the diptych *Dinner Outside* (2024), she illustrates on the left panel the arrival of guests and cars parked in front of the host's home; on the right, she shows the scene after forty-five minutes, the sky growing dusky and a dinner table set for a party. Within the composition, she introduces a dot motif—a pictographic representation of the pebbles atop which the cars are parked—and connects these to the widely used shorthand for green blades of grass that punctuate both panels and signify the outdoors. Wylie sees *Dinner Outside* as a kind of schema: 'The painting reminds me of a map, or a report from a seventeenth-century discovery ship, where the resident-artist has recorded the transport, habits, homes, and dress of some newly found "peoples" ... only here, it's now, and I am the "people".'<sup>2</sup>

Also on view are a selection of older paintings that chart the development of Wylie's recurring images and compositional style. The titular character of *Yellow Henry* (1996) is Henry IV, who reigned as King of England from 1399 to 1413, and is also the subject of a four-volume biography by the artist's grandfather, the historian James Hamilton Wylie (1844–1914), who wrote a three-volume biography of Henry V as well. Here, she paints the facial profile of Henry IV in the center, his head outlined in green; this portrayal has appeared in other works, incorporated as a kind of mark of intergenerational Wylie history.

British artist Rose Wylie (b. 1934) studied at Folkestone and Dover School of Art, Kent, England, and the Royal College of Art, London, from which she graduated in 1981. The artist's first solo exhibition took place in 1985 at the Trinity Arts Centre, Kent. In recent years, she has had solo presentations at venues including the Rosenwald-Wolf Gallery, University of the Arts, Philadelphia (2012); Jerwood Gallery, Hastings, England (2012); Tate Britain, London (2013); Haugar kunstmuseum, Tønsberg, Norway (2013); Städtische Galerie Wolfsburg, Germany (2014); Douglas Hyde Gallery, Dublin (2015); Space K, Seoul (2016); Chapter Arts Centre, Cardiff, Wales (2016); Turner Contemporary, Margate, England (2016); Serpentine Gallery, London (2017); Plymouth Arts Centre and The Gallery at Plymouth College of Art,

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<sup>2</sup>The artist, in conversation with the gallery, January 2025.

England (an exhibition that traveled to Newlyn Art Gallery & The Exchange, Cornwall, England); Centro de Arte Contemporáneo de Málaga, Spain (2018); and The Gallery at Windsor, Vero Beach, Florida (2020).

In 2020, *where i am and was*, the artist's first solo museum presentation in the United States, was on view at the Aspen Art Museum in Colorado. Also in 2020, the solo exhibition *Hullo Hullo Following-on* was on view at the Hangaram Art Museum, Seoul, before traveling to the Aram Nuri Arts Center, Goyang, South Korea, in 2021. A solo exhibition of the artist's work was on view at the Museum Langmatt, Baden, Switzerland, in 2021. In 2022, the Stedelijk Museum voor Actuele Kunst (S.M.A.K.), Ghent, Belgium, presented the exhibition *picky people notice...*

Wylie is the recipient of the John Moores Painting Prize, presented by the Walker Art Gallery, Liverpool, in 2014, and the same year was also elected a senior academician to the Royal Academy of Arts. In 2015, she received the Royal Academy of Arts' Charles Wollaston Award. In 2018, she received the South Bank Sky Arts Award in recognition of her exhibition at the Serpentine Galleries the previous year and was awarded an OBE (Officer of the Order of the British Empire) for her services to art.

The artist's work has been represented by David Zwirner since 2017. Wylie's first exhibitions with the gallery include *Horse, Bird, Cat* (London, 2016), *Lolita's House* (London, 2018), and *painting a noun...* (Hong Kong, 2020). In 2021, David Zwirner presented *Which One*, the artist's first solo exhibition at the gallery's New York location. The solo exhibition *Car and girls* was on view at David Zwirner London in 2022, and *CLOSE, not too close* was on view at David Zwirner Los Angeles in 2023. Wylie lives and works in Kent, England.

Wylie's work can be found in prominent collections throughout the United States, Europe, and Asia, including Arario Museum, Seoul; Hammer Museum, Los Angeles; High Museum of Art, Atlanta; Jerwood Art Foundation, United Kingdom; National Museum of Women in the Arts, Washington, DC; Portland Museum of Art, Maine; Royal Academy of Arts, London; Space K, Seoul; Städtische Galerie Wolfsburg, Germany; Stedelijk Museum voor Actuele Kunst (S.M.A.K.), Ghent, Belgium; Tate, United Kingdom; and Walker Art Gallery, Liverpool.

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