

Joe Bradley *Animal Family*

6 June–1 August, 2025
24 Grafton Street, London



Joe Bradley, *Parade*, 2025
© Joe Bradley. Courtesy the artist and David Zwirner

David Zwirner is pleased to announce *Animal Family*, an exhibition of new paintings by American artist Joe Bradley at the gallery's London location. This will be Bradley's second exhibition with David Zwirner since the announcement of his representation in May 2023. His celebrated debut at David Zwirner New York, *Vom Abend*, was presented in spring 2024. In November 2025, a major survey of Bradley's works from the past ten years will open at Kunsthalle Krems, Austria.

In these new paintings, figurative elements—which Bradley had begun to develop in previous works—emerge as central compositional structures. 'I have never really felt comfortable calling myself an abstract painter,' says Bradley. 'There have always been flashes of figuration in my work. For whatever reason, at this moment, I feel ready to let it all come to the surface.' ¹A group of horizontal paintings feature black contour lines that serve as scaffoldings for swaths of colour, floral blots of brushy paint, and scraped and stippled textural patches, which coalesce into hulking, animal-like forms that fill the surface of the support. Bradley builds up these forms until they achieve a loose balance between assembled wholes and disparate parts, establishing a dynamic tension in the work between cohesion

and dissolution. In one painting, pinkish triangles read like teeth extending along a pronounced blue-and-white snout. Lines, shapes, and blots of colour momentarily read like a tail or paw but just as quickly come to stand as distinct visual components. This figural mass rests against a black ground dotted with white, suggesting a dark, star-filled sky.

While related to those paintings, several vertical canvases represent a notable evolution in Bradley's work in which the human form becomes a broad organising principle. Shades of mid-century deconstructed figuration and other art-historical references and associations come through in these large, frontally oriented figures. Like his constant working and reworking of the formal and compositional elements in his paintings, such associations are part of Bradley's open and deliberative method of painterly accumulation and adaptation, whereby he constantly reacts and responds to the process of creation itself.

In some of these paintings, the figure is quite discernible. In others, the formal elements share only a general relationship to the human form with eyelike ovals or leglike protrusions suggesting bodily architectures. Like the animal associations in the horizontal canvases, these roughly human-scale paintings reinforce such bodily associations, reflecting Bradley's sensitivity to the formal, compositional, and material qualities of his medium.

Joe Bradley (b. 1975) is widely recognised for his expansive visual practice that encompasses painting as well as sculpture and drawing. Over the past twenty years, Bradley has constantly reinvented his approach to his art, creating a distinctive body of work that has ranged from modular, minimalist-style paintings and sculptures to rough-hewn, heavily worked surfaces featuring pictographic and abstract elements to refined and layered compositions that, as critic Roberta Smith notes, "balance gracefully between representation and abstraction."

Bradley was born in Kittery, Maine, and received his BFA from the Rhode Island School of Design in 1999. He presently lives and works in New York.

The artist's inaugural solo exhibition took place at Allston Skirt Gallery, Boston, in 2002. In 2006, Bradley's first institutional solo exhibition opened at MoMA PS1, New York. The artist's work has since been the subject of several international exhibitions. Notably, a mid-career survey of Bradley's work was organised in 2017 by the Buffalo AKG Art Museum (formerly known as the Albright-Knox Art Gallery) in Buffalo, New York, which later travelled to the Rose Art Museum, Brandeis University, Waltham, Massachusetts. In the same year, the Fundación Almine y Bernard Ruiz-Picasso organised a presentation of Bradley's sculptures at Pablo Picasso's former home and studio at the Château de Boisgeloup, Gisors, France. A solo exhibition of Bradley's work was presented at Le Consortium, Dijon, France, in 2014.

Significant group exhibitions including the artist's work have been presented at the de la Cruz Collection, Miami (2019 and 2020); The Brant Foundation Art Study Center, Greenwich, Connecticut (2017 and 2018); Kunstmuseum Bonn, Germany (2015); The Museum of Modern Art, New York (2014); MoMA PS1, New York (2013); and Centro per l'arte contemporanea Luigi Pecci, Prato, Italy (2013), among others. In 2008, Bradley was selected to participate in the Whitney Biennial.

Work by the artist is held in distinguished public collections such as the Buffalo AKG Art Museum, New York; Fondation Louis Vuitton, Paris; George Economou Collection, Athens; Hall Art Foundation,

Reading, Vermont; Mead Art Museum, Amherst College, Massachusetts; The Museum of Modern Art, New York; and Whitney Museum of American Art, New York.

Notes

1. Quoted in Jayne O'Dwyer, "Here's How Artist Joe Bradley Ended up Plucking His Show Title from a Foreign Children's Book, Despite Not Speaking a Word of German," *Cultured*, 7 May 2024, accessed online.

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