

HAUSER & WIRTH

Press Release

Pat Steir. Song

Hauser & Wirth Zurich, Limmatstrasse
13 June – 13 September 2025

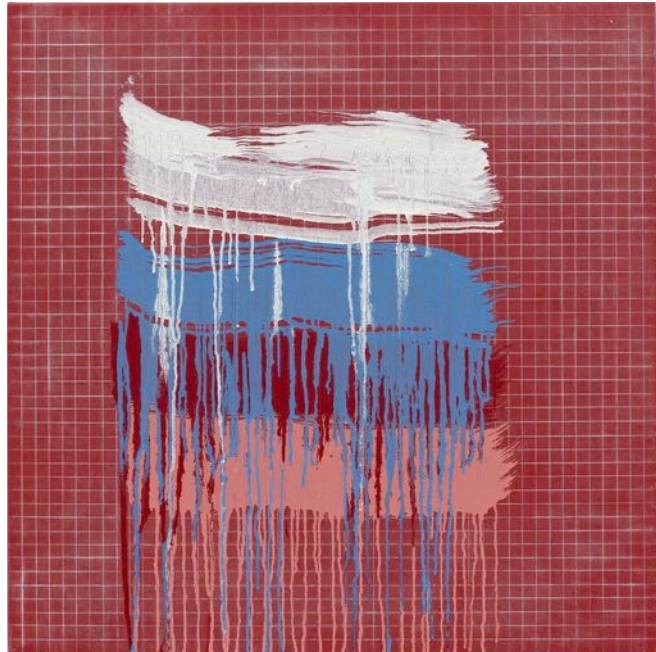


Opening during Zurich Art Weekend 2025, celebrated New York-based artist Pat Steir unveils a suite of new paintings for her exhibition at Hauser & Wirth in Zurich, her first solo show with the gallery in Europe.

Expanding upon the language of her iconic Waterfall paintings, Steir's newest canvases further reveal the visual philosophy behind the artist's signature process. The dialogue between the idea, the conceptual foundation or thought grid that underlies her paintings, and their materiality—the physicality of her gesture—is especially evident in these new works. Steir has said, 'By pouring the paint, I take myself out of the painting, but there's always intention and setting limits.' Steir, who is 87 years old, has for decades remained committed to these conditions. Her work is defined by a fundamental concept; a rule to surrender control, to allow the formal outcome of her paintings to be determined by chance and by gravity's effect on the paint she pours or which cascades from her brush. Within this framework, Steir selects the variables of viscosity, color and the location of her marks on the canvas mapped with a drawn grid.

A throughline that connects her work to Agnes Martin, Sol LeWitt and Piet Mondrian, grids have featured in Steir's paintings, drawings and wall drawings since the early 1970s. While the grid is sometimes covered by another layer, it is elemental to her work and can have both a symbolic and a structural function. Read as possessing an end or purpose in itself, a grid is a matrix of knowledge, a space for logic perceived as anti-narrative. Set against the objective chalk grid background of these new paintings, Steir's brushstroke becomes subject, allusion and material reality—a stream of color cascading according to natural forces. But legible there too is the history of how the painting was made. Preceding this chance event is the record of a consciousness—Steir's premeditated mark made in a specific time and space that she leaves to unfold in endlessly beautiful ways. As Jonathan Crary wrote in a 1976 Arts Magazine review, 'viewing Steir's work can be like coinciding with the movement of her mind, experiencing the succession of her own uncertainties and discoveries.'

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Switzerland is home to one of Steir's masterworks, 'The Brueghel Series (A Vanitas of Style),' from 1984. First shown at the Brooklyn Museum in an exhibition which traveled across the US and Europe, the painting entered the collection of the Kunstmuseum Bern. Using a 17th-century still-life by Jan Brueghel as her subject, Steir's painting comprising 64 panels, each painted in a different artist's style spanning the history of art, was her inquiry of the limits or longevity of a style's relevance in an era straddling the modern and postmodern. The painting was a breakthrough for Steir, inaugurating her acclaimed Waterfall series, which challenged the divide between figuration and abstraction. This exploration developed into Steir's own continuously evolving visual language. 'Song,' the title of this exhibition in Zurich, is also the title of a 1974 painting by the artist. At the center of the canvas are three brushstrokes in the primary colors, red, yellow and blue. Steir's new paintings in Zurich, some with red, yellow and blue brushstrokes at the center, demonstrate that through her chosen syntax and dedicated process of working for over six decades, she continuously brings forth new and remarkable outcomes.

This exhibition will coincide with Steir's solo presentation at Hauser & Wirth's Wooster Street gallery in New York from 9 July, in which the artist reimagines one of her early wall drawings almost 50 years after its first installation.

'Pat Steir. Song' also anticipates the release of a new artist monograph from Hauser & Wirth Publishers, 'Pat Steir: Paintings,' charting the artist's work from 2018 to the present, and featuring a newly commissioned text by award-winning writer Colm Tóibín.

For more information on the artist, please read see [here](#).

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Hauser & Wirth Zurich, Limmatstrasse

Limmatstrasse 270, 8005
Zürich

Opening hours:

Tue – Fri, 11 am – 6 pm
Sat, 11 am – 5 pm

Caption and courtesy info:

All images: © Pat Steir
Courtesy the artist and Hauser & Wirth
Photo: Elisabeth Bernstein

Pat Steir
Big Girl
2024-2025
Oil on canvas
182.9 x 121.9 cm / 72 x 48 in

Pat Steir
I Love You Green 2024-2025
Oil on canvas
182.9 x 121.9 cm / 72 x 48 in

Pat Steir
Untitled
2024-2025
Oil on canvas
61 x 61 cm / 24 x 24 in