

# Esther Schipper

**Martin Boyce**

**Unhome**

Esther Schipper, Paris

May 23 – July 26, 2025



Martin Boyce, **Drawn from Depths**, 2025, painted steel, galvanised steel, hand blown glass, electrical components, 300 x 300 x 200 cm (118 1/8 x 118 1/8 x 78 3/4 in) (overall), 300 x 15 x 7 cm (118 1/8 x 5 7/8 x 2 3/4 in) (beam), 275 x 12 x 7 cm (108 1/4 x 4 3/4 x 2 3/4 in) each (leg), 90 x 90 x 90 cm (35 3/8 x 35 3/8 x 35 3/8 in) (chandelier frame). Glass production: Cirva, Marseille. Photo © Eoin Carey

Esther Schipper is pleased to present **Unhome**, Martin Boyce's second solo exhibition with the gallery, and his first in our Paris space. It is part of two concurrent exhibitions of Boyce's work opening on the occasion of Paris Gallery Weekend, the second show, titled **Walk with Me**, being hosted by Galerie Natalie Seroussi.

In **Unhome**, Boyce invites viewers to reconsider the boundaries between the intimate and the domestic, introducing a sense of eeriness and uncertainty into our perception of familiar spaces. At our gallery located on Place Vendôme, he unveils a collection of new sculptures and photographic works, brought together in an immersive installation that oscillates between decay and renewal, offering a sensitive meditation on the passage of time.

Martin Boyce has reworked and reformulated objects from the built environment, developing his own pictorial language based on a reading of the formal and conceptual histories of applied and decorative arts, architecture and urban planning. His works simultaneously pay homage and deconstruct or reinterpret these traditions. The use of unlikely elements and materials, freed from their function as demarcation or restraint, creates oddly affecting sculptures.

In the main room, to the right upon entering, **Drawn from Depths**, a sculptural installation transforms the space, darkened by grey filters on the windows and a curtain made from debris netting. A large-scale chandelier, composed of 90 hand-blown pink glass modules, is suspended from a black steel structure. The shape of the chandelier with its tentacle-like metal chains may evoke associations with sea creatures, while the tapered structure is reminiscent of spider legs. The juxtaposition of fragile, delicately hued glass and industrial steel also creates a sense of misplacement, as if the chandelier is presented in a state of construction or renovation.

The form of the chandelier is inspired by a 1960s design by Carlo Scarpa, while the metal structure recalls Marcel Duchamp's famous **Bottle Rack** (1914). The glass modules – produced by the Centre International de Recherche sur le Verre et les Arts Plastiques (CIRVA) in Marseille – borrow a component shape from the **Concrete Trees** by Jan and Joël Martel, created for the 1925 International Exhibition of Modern Decorative and Industrial Arts in Paris. These forms have been a recurring source in Boyce's formal vocabulary since 2005.

Nearby, a delicate sculpture is placed facing a mantelpiece mirror. **Do Not Look Away** (2025) consists of a folded brass sheet evoking the shape of a mask, mounted on a display stand. Its polished surface, etched and inked with stylized letters, spells out the work's title in reverse, which can thus only be deciphered in the mirrored reflection. This typography is an evolution of a typeface Boyce developed in 2006, as part of his research into the Martel brothers' work. Since the late 1990s, masks have been a recurring motif in Boyce's practice.

Two brass sculptures, mounted on the wall at hand height, take the form of door handles: **Out of This Day** is adorned with a perforated yellow metal disc, resembling a solar figure, and **Into This Night** is topped by a stained white lunar disc. Linked by chains reminiscent of weeping willow branches, the sculptures form mobile-like compositions with the appearance of stylized landscapes, where nature and industry intertwine.

Similarly, the installation **Somewhere There Are Trees**, 2022, blends nature and artifice and implicitly invites the outside world into the gallery interior through the presence of wax-coated paper leaves, which, as if moved by a breeze, collect in the corners across the exhibition space.

On the walls, three works created in 2025 – **Dead Stars**, **Last Snows**, and **Endpapers** – fuse sculpture, typography, and architectural references. Each consists of a woodblock panel (in black, red, and blue, respectively), drilled with spaced holes, onto which polished steel letters spelling out the titles are mounted, and a print that was made from it. Mounted in a steel frame, the pairs evoke the tradition of woodblock panel printing with the steel letters rendering the woodblock obsolete and unable to produce more prints, each print presented as the last.

Inconspicuously placed at the bottom of two walls are a pair of ventilation grills bearing cut-out letters that form the words **Other** and **Rooms**. The work hints at what lies out of sight, what remains hidden – in this case, the imaginary air ducts concealed behind the walls, theoretically connecting the two vents. Boyce often integrates everyday elements such as power outlets or ventilation grilles into his work; objects whose functional banality tends to render them invisible.

In the second half of the exhibition, Boyce presents a new photographic series created specifically for this exhibition. Images of door handles from the artist's own home in Glasgow are arranged in four diptychs: two photographs of either side of the same door, each showing a different handle. Mechanically connected yet never seen together, the handles form both a single entity and two distinct elements: one facing inward, the other outward. The door, from a house built around 1908, bears a century of human presence. The series contributes to a broader reflection on the uncanny: the familiar home becomes a stage for a diffuse strangeness, perceptible in everyday objects which, once isolated, reveal their symbolic power.

Martin Boyce was born 1967 in Hamilton, Scotland. He studied at the Glasgow School of Art and at the California Institute for the Arts. He lives and works in Glasgow.

In 2011, the artist received the Turner Prize. In 2009, Boyce represented Scotland at the 53rd Venice Biennale and participated in the Skulptur Projekte Münster in 2007.

Boyce has exhibited extensively. His institutional solo exhibitions include: **Before Behind Between Above Below**, Fruitmarket Gallery, Edinburgh (2024); **Recurring Dreams**, FAHRBEREITSCHAFT, haubrok foundation, Berlin (2021); **Just Beyond the Undertow**, CONVENT Space for Contemporary Art, Ghent (2019); **An Inn For Phantoms Of The Outside And In**, Mount Stuart, Isle of Bute (2019); **Hanging Gardens**, LUXELAKES·A4 Art Museum, Chengdu

(2018); **Remembered Skies**, Clore Gallery Courtyard, Tate Britain, London (2018); **Do Words Have Voices**, Tate Britain, London (2016); **Spook School**, CAPRI, Düsseldorf (2016); **Martin Boyce**, Museum für Gegenwartskunst, Basel (2015); **When Now is Night**, Rhode Island School of Design, Providence (2015); **Study: Eyes – Martin Boyce**, David Roberts Art Foundation, London (2013); and a commission for the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Cambridge, Massachusetts (2010).

His works are part of the following collections: Museum of Modern Art, New York; Tate, London; Museum für Moderne Kunst, Frankfurt; British Council, London; Gallery of Modern Art – GoMA, Glasgow; Rhode Island School of Design, Providence; Massachusetts Institute of Technology List Visual Arts Center, Cambridge; National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne; LACMA, Los Angeles; Henry Moore Institute, Leeds; Scottish National Gallery of Modern Art, Edinburgh; Carnegie Museum of Art, Pittsburgh; and other institutions worldwide.

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Concurrent exhibition:

**Martin Boyce**

**Walk with Me**

Esther Schipper at Natalie Seroussi's  
34 rue de Seine  
75006 Paris

May 23 – July 26, 2025

Tuesday – Saturday, 2 – 7 pm

[www.natalieseroussi.com](http://www.natalieseroussi.com)