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Gagosian to Present Kathleen Ryan's Solo Debut at the Gallery

Opening in London on June 5, 2025, *Roman Meal* Features Two New Sculptures



Kathleen Ryan, *Sliced Bread (Golden Hour)*, 2025, agate, labradorite, aventurine, argonite, jamesite, copper malachite, citrine, calcite, zeolite, magnesite, amazonite, celestite, prehnite, turquoise, quartz, rhyolite, carnelian, garnet, jasper, serpentine, pink opal, ruby in zoisite, amethyst, quartz, amber, marble, acrylic, steel pins, polyurethane foam, aluminum, and king-size mattress, 80 × 80 × 35 inches (203.2 × 203.2 × 88.9 cm) © Kathleen Ryan. Photo: Maris Hutchinson

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LONDON, May 29, 2025—Gagosian is pleased to announce *Roman Meal*, an exhibition of two new sculptures by Kathleen Ryan at 17–19 Davies Street, London. In this, her solo debut at the gallery, Ryan mines ideas of utility and excess, luxury and repulsion, pondering culture's inherent state of perpetual transformation while maintaining an appealing sense of the absurd.

Ryan is known for her surreal interpretations of everyday objects. To date she has realized a glistening jack-o'-lantern at human scale, fashioned a delicate pearl necklace from preloved bowling balls, and pierced the trunk of a 1968 AMC Javelin with an aluminum umbrella to produce cocktail garnish. Applying traditional techniques of making and ornamentation to natural and manufactured objects and materials, Ryan unites the organic and the artificial, producing tense yet self-aware meditations on desire, overabundance, and the cycle of life and death. Like one of the handwrought birds that reoccur within her practice, she plays among the ruins of late-capitalist America, gathering together both remnants of natural beauty and the emblems of overconsumption that led to this ultimate decay.

The exhibition at the Davies Street gallery comprises two new large-scale sculptures, *Fender Bender* and *Sliced Bread (Golden Hour)* (both 2025)—the first a pair of triangular lemon slices leaning upon each another, the second a slice of moldy bread slouched against the back wall of the room. Both

works are contiguous with the ongoing series *Bad Fruit* (2018–), in which Ryan meticulously coats the surfaces of enlarged, decomposing foodstuffs with a near-painterly abundance of semiprecious stones. But *Fender Bender* and *Sliced Bread (Golden Hour)* are also linked by the shared history of their subjects as everyday and oft-discarded things, something that extends Ryan’s long-standing interest in salvage: in locating and illuminating the beauty that can be found in seemingly common things, from two thin slivers of lemon to the bumpers that were wrenched from the same car to form their aluminum rinds.

Much of the humor that characterizes Ryan’s work stems from an animated back-and-forth between subject and object: between that which she depicts and the often-incongruous materials that she employs to do so. In *Sliced Bread (Golden Hour)*, for instance, it is the lingering pattern of crisscross stitching that reveals the foundational presence of a king-size mattress. That this once-discarded mattress and the slice of mass-produced bread that it has come to portray coexist in such a way is indicative of the manner in which, throughout Ryan’s practice, seemingly quotidian subjects are imbued with a richness of collective and individual stories. *Sliced Bread (Golden Hour)* is, in addition to the subject it represents and the object that gives it form, an absurd indulgence in and critique of opulence; a meditation on growth, the passing of time, and mortality; and an enduring memory, preserved within a specific brand of pre-cut bread, of the artist’s own childhood.

From May 4 to October 12, 2025, Kistefos in Jevnaker, Norway, is presenting the first major museum survey of Ryan’s work, which originated at the Hamburger Kunsthalle in Germany in 2024.

For Kathleen Ryan’s biographical information and exhibition history, [please visit gagosian.com](https://www.gagosian.com).

#KathleenRyan

KATHLEEN RYAN

Roman Meal

Opening reception: Thursday, June 5, 6–8pm

June 5–August 15, 2025

17–19 Davies Street, London

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