

空白空间 WHITE SPACE

Francisco Rodríguez | *Distant Star*
8.30-10.18, 2025

WHITE SPACE is delighted to announce *Distant Star*, the second solo exhibition of Francisco Rodríguez at the gallery, opening on August 30 and running through October 18, 2025.

When starlight pierces the night sky and reaches the human eye, its source has often already extinguished millions of years ago. This romantic yet cruel displacement of time and space serves as the ultimate metaphor that Chilean artist Francisco Rodríguez seeks to unfold in the exhibition. If in *The City and the Dogs* the growls of stray dogs tore through the heat of youth and daylight, then in *Distant Star* the artist immerses the canvas in damp, hushed night, composing a fragile poem of memory, migration, and diaspora.

Suspended between his London studio and his former home in Santiago, Rodríguez presents over twenty new paintings that construct an intimate cosmos bridging Chile and London, past and future. He invites viewers into a magical-realist narrative woven from starlight, rooms, and traces of emotion. Painting here becomes a bridge through which memory's fissures can be traversed: the warmth of Chile's homeland overlaps with London's blurred cold fog, the intimacy of a bedroom swells into the vast South American plains, and the silhouette of trees—under moonlight or sunset—rises with the majesty of mountains.

Elongated ghostly figures in dusky courtyards, adolescent bodies under a desk lamp's halo, and a crescent moon hooked to a window ledge—physiological and psychological memories begin to scab across the canvas. A boy curled at the edge of a poster-covered bed summons the echo of the Andes in the folds of his sheets; a black dog swells to surreal proportions, its golden pupils radiating a dazzling yet terrifying glow. These deliberate ruptures of scale translate the lingering dissonance of migrant experience into visual terms: landscapes of the homeland fade into hazy impressions, while memory itself, torn between charcoal and oil, reveals its fictive core.

The bedroom recurs as a metaphorical space throughout the exhibition. Its graffitied walls and collaged posters function as riddles of consciousness, while “missing” doors and walls mark the fault lines of memory. Within these interiors, adolescents undergo three rites of vulnerability: a girl at the window probing her body enters an “uncertain metamorphosis”; a boy hesitating at the street corner embodies the hesitation of adolescence; and night itself becomes a catalyst that exposes private narratives. Rodríguez deftly dismantles spatial hierarchies, dissolving the boundaries between the physical and the psychological: the night in his paintings is not only visual atmosphere but a breathable, physiological field—it seeps from the canvas and envelopes the viewer's senses. Whether a boy crouches in the glow of a bedside lamp or stands in a “blurred” courtyard, these non-hierarchical compositions allow intimate emotions to converse with the immensity of the cosmos, resonating between personal experience and collective memory.

In this new body of work, Rodríguez also departs from the conventions of oil painting, injecting the immediacy of drawing and the raw energy of sketchbooks into large-scale canvases. Charcoal lines, like the skeletal framework of memory, cut across layers of pigment; unfinished brushstrokes and spontaneous blank spaces form “wrinkles of time.” By aligning sketchbook and canvas, the artist creates a pictorial logic where abrupt shifts of scale gain coherence through their sketch-like quality, as if memory itself had been warped by temporal tension. The viewer is thus invited to complete the “final stroke” through imagination, piecing together fragments into a narrative that spans continents.