

Rose Wylie
Henri, Egypt...Bette, Bear

2 April–23 May 2026
108, rue Vieille du Temple, 75003 Paris



Rose Wylie, *Homage to Henri, Bette and Bear*, 2026

© Rose Wylie. Courtesy the artist and David Zwirner

David Zwirner is pleased to announce *Henri, Egypt...Bette, Bear*, an exhibition of new and recent canvases, multipanel works, and works on paper by British artist Rose Wylie at the gallery's location in Paris. Marking Wylie's eighth solo show with the gallery and her first ever in Paris, *Henri, Egypt...Bette, Bear* coincides with her largest ever survey exhibition in the United Kingdom, currently on view at the Royal Academy of Arts, London, until 19 April 2026.

Wylie has become known for her uniquely recognisable, colourful, and exuberant compositions that appear aesthetically candid, not seeming to align with any discernible style or movement, but on closer inspection are revealed to be wittily observed and subtly sophisticated meditations on the nature of visual representation itself. The artist has long been interested in exploring perspectival and compositional strategies other than—and along with—traditional Renaissance perspective, frequently making numerous iterations of a given motif as a means of advancing her formal investigation. Working in both single- and multipanel formats, she regularly juxtaposes apparently disparate imagery, creating visual rhymes and resonances that coalesce into a unified composition. As curator Tanja Boon aptly

notes, “[Wylie’s] paintings exemplify the artist’s ability to absorb powerful impressions from her immediate surroundings. They also illustrate her broad knowledge of cultural production, spanning popular and cliché styles as well as underexamined and non-Western visual traditions.”¹

Henri, Egypt...Bette, Bear is the first ever solo presentation of Wylie’s work in Paris, a city she has frequently traveled to since she was a young woman. For this exhibition, she turns to her long-held appreciation for the visionary French post-impressionist artist Henri Rousseau (1844–1910), whose original, oneiric compositions traverse the personal, the public, and the fantastical—much like Wylie’s. The punchy, rhythmic title is taken from Wylie’s painting *Homage to Henri, Bette and Bear* (2026), honoring Rousseau’s 1899–1901 work *Unpleasant Surprise* (*Mauvaise surprise*; Barnes Foundation, Philadelphia), which centers a nude woman with flowing locks, a mysterious sniper, and a growling bear with sharp claws. In Wylie’s *Homage*, she considers the homonyms “bare” and “bear,” recasting the original nude as the American actress Bette Davis, here clothed modestly in a pinafore, and amplifies the talons of the animal, based on an image she had seen on television of a bear in captivity.

Charting Wylie’s continued mediation and assimilation of publicly circulated imagery, the new paintings also incorporate aspects of art history as well as fleeting impressions from her domestic life. Across several works, the artist renders compositions inspired by an ancient Turkish mosaic whose discovery was reported on in broadcast news in 2016. Wylie features figures—skeletal, a man reaching for the moon—alongside motifs such as an empty Egyptian-style chair and a damaged triangular piece of the mosaic. The color palette of ochres, umbers, and rusty reds recalls that of Fra Angelico’s frescoes—“not overwhelming, not strident,” in Wylie’s words. She moves closer to home in the diptych *The House Next Door, Or, Jumbo Meat Cleaver* (2025). In the right panel, she depicts the house next door to hers, which she was able to see for the first time when her neighbor removed the bushes and shrubs between their gardens to repair a conjoining fence. Together, in movement, the two canvases create an object painting of the titular “meat cleaver,” the fence becoming the handle of the instrument.

Also on view is a selection of works on paper and older paintings that chart the development of Wylie’s recurring images and compositional style. *Manor* (2004) takes as its source an image from a national newspaper. In this painting, Wylie extends the bounds of the original picture’s format to create more space for the bathers—characters in a computer game—who are surrounded by a bright, pale blue-green reminiscent of the waters of a swimming pool. The artist-as-animal appears in *Black Berlin Bear* (2008), a painting that depicts both herself and fellow artist Mark Wallinger in his 2004 film *Sleeper*, which documented his nighttime performance at the Neue Nationalgalerie, Berlin. Wylie portrays Wallinger in his furry costume on the right panel, in close-up, as his image was mass-reproduced in newspapers at the time; on the left, she paints a cross-section of her body, as viewed from the back, in the same velvety blue-black hue as the head of Wallinger-as-bear.

British artist Rose Wylie (b. 1934) studied at Folkestone and Dover School of Art, Kent, England, and the Royal College of Art, London, from which she graduated in 1981. The artist’s first solo exhibition took place in 1985 at the Trinity Arts Centre, Kent. In recent years, she has had solo presentations at venues including the Rosenwald-Wolf Gallery, University of the Arts, Philadelphia (2012); Jerwood Gallery, Hastings, England (2012); Tate Britain, London (2013); Haugar kunstmuseum, Tønsberg, Norway (2013); Städtische Galerie Wolfsburg, Germany (2014); Douglas Hyde Gallery, Dublin (2015); Space K, Seoul (2016); Chapter Arts Centre, Cardiff, Wales (2016); Turner Contemporary, Margate, England (2016); Serpentine Gallery, London (2017); Plymouth Arts Centre and The Gallery at Plymouth College of Art,

England (an exhibition that traveled to Newlyn Art Gallery & The Exchange, Cornwall, England); Centro de Arte Contemporáneo de Málaga, Spain (2018); and The Gallery at Windsor, Vero Beach, Florida (2020).

In 2020, *where i am and was*, the artist's first solo museum presentation in the United States, was on view at the Aspen Art Museum in Colorado. Also in 2020, the solo exhibition *Hullo Hullo Following-on* was on view at the Hangaram Art Museum, Seoul, before traveling to the Aram Nuri Arts Center, Goyang, South Korea, in 2021. A solo exhibition of the artist's work was on view at the Museum Langmatt, Baden, Switzerland, in 2021. In 2022, the Stedelijk Museum voor Actuele Kunst (S.M.A.K.), Ghent, Belgium, presented the exhibition *picky people notice...*

Wylie is the recipient of the John Moores Painting Prize, presented by the Walker Art Gallery, Liverpool, in 2014, and the same year was also elected a senior academician to the Royal Academy of Arts. In 2015, she received the Royal Academy of Arts' Charles Wollaston Award. In 2018, she received the South Bank Sky Arts Award in recognition of her exhibition at the Serpentine Galleries the previous year and was awarded an OBE (Officer of the Order of the British Empire) for her services to art.

The artist's work has been represented by David Zwirner since 2017. Wylie's first exhibitions with the gallery include *Horse, Bird, Cat* (London, 2016), *Lolita's House* (London, 2018), and *painting a noun...* (Hong Kong, 2020). In 2021, David Zwirner presented *Which One*, the artist's first solo exhibition at the gallery's New York location. The solo exhibition *Car and girls* was on view at David Zwirner London in 2022, and *CLOSE, not too close* was on view at David Zwirner Los Angeles in 2023. In 2025, the solo exhibition *When Found becomes Given* was presented at David Zwirner London. Wylie lives and works in Kent, England.

Wylie's work can be found in prominent collections throughout the United States, Europe, and Asia, including Arario Museum, Seoul; Hammer Museum, Los Angeles; High Museum of Art, Atlanta; Jerwood Art Foundation, United Kingdom; Museum Ludwig, Cologne; National Museum of Women in the Arts, Washington, DC; Portland Museum of Art, Maine; Royal Academy of Arts, London; Space K, Seoul; Städtische Galerie Wolfsburg, Germany; Stedelijk Museum voor Actuele Kunst (S.M.A.K.), Ghent, Belgium; Tate, United Kingdom; Walker Art Gallery, Liverpool; and Zentrum Paul Klee, Bern, Switzerland.

Notes:

1. Tanja Boon, "To paint without a duster," in *Rose Wylie: picky people notice....* Exh. cat. (Ghent, Belgium: Stedelijk Museum voor Actuele Kunst, 2022), p. 55.

For all press inquiries, contact:

Sara Chan
sara@davidzwirner.com

Philippe Fouchard-Filippi
phff@fouchardfilippi.com