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GREGORY HODGE

b. 1982, Sydney, AU Lives and works in Paris, FR

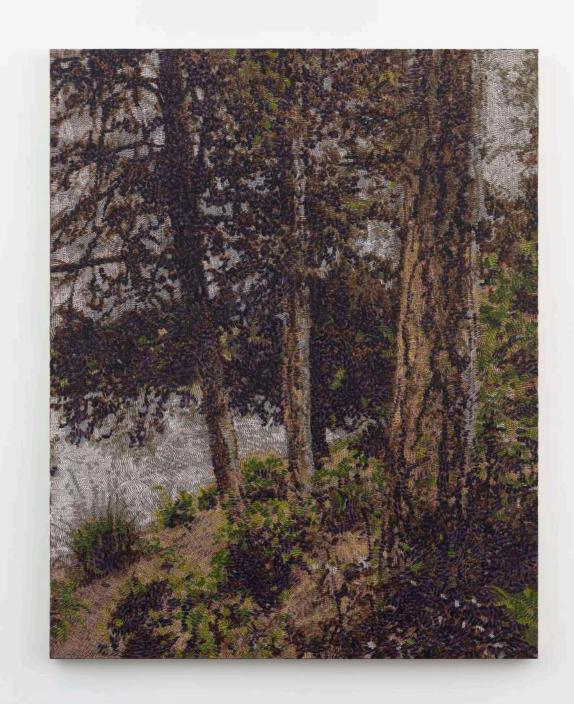


Gregory Hodge's paintings navigate the intersection between abstraction and figuration, layering personal imagery with gestural marks and obscured motifs. His works blur the boundaries between two- and three-dimensional space, creating illusionary compositions that challenge perceptions of reality. Drawing inspiration from artists like Pablo Picasso and Georges Braque, Hodge employs trompel'oeil techniques, cast shadows, and intricate surface manipulations to evoke the fragility and temporality of his original mixed-media collages. His recent works mark a shift from pure abstraction to more representational imagery, incorporating landscapes, interiors, and architectural elements informed by personal memory.

Hodge's landscapes are composites of the places he has inhabited, merging impressions of Parisian forests with the coastal bush of New South Wales. Using a controlled yet expressive painterly language, he creates intricate surfaces that collapse spatial depth, often referencing the textures of textiles. Influenced by 17th- and 18th-century European tapestries, he layers dragged painted marks to emulate woven surfaces, embedding his imagery within a rich, tactile field. Through this interplay of texture, depth, and abstraction, Hodge's work offers a visually immersive experience that invites viewers to question the distinctions between materiality and illusion.

Gregory Hodge (b.1982, lives and works in Paris, FR) holds a BFA from the Australian National University Canberra School of Art, Canberra, AU and graduated there as a Doctor of Philosophy/Fine Arts. He has had solo exhibitions with Sullivan+Strumpf, Sydney and Melbourne, AU; Galerie Anne-Laure Buffard, Paris, FR; Le Pavé d'Orsay, Paris, FR and Bus Projects, Melbourne, AU. Recent group exhibitions were held at Manly Art Gallery & Museum, Sydney, AU; L'Ancien Theatre, Beaune, FR; Carriageworks Sydney, AU and Sullivan+Strumpf, Sydney, AU. His work is held in public collections like the Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney, AU; National Gallery of Australia, Canberra, AU and the Thrivent Art Collection, Minneapolis, MN, US. In May 2026 he will have his first solo exhibition with Nino Mier Gallery in its Soho location in New York, NY, US.

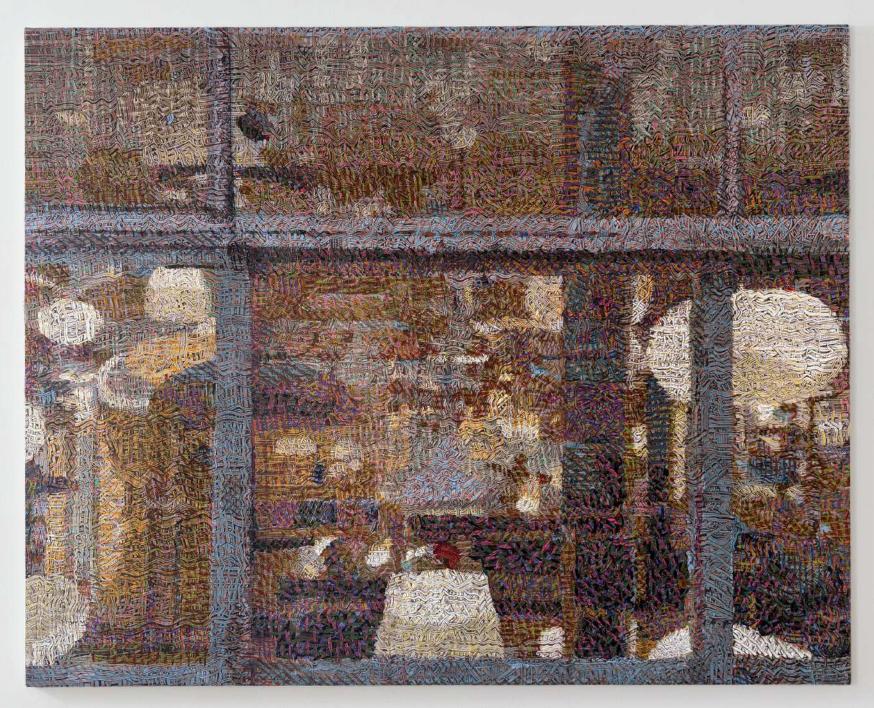




Landscape Morning Light, 2025 Acrylic on linen 78 3/4 x 63 in 200 x 160 cm (GHO25.024)



Red Rug with Plants, 2025 Acrylic on linen 78 3/4 x 63 in 200 x 160 cm (GHO25.018)

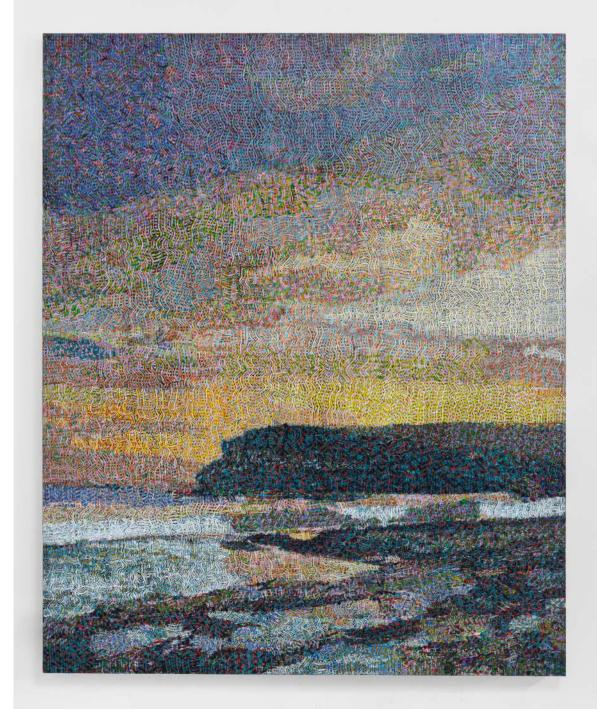


Night Lights 2, 2025. Acrylic on linen. 47 1/4 x 59 in, 120 x 150 cm (GHO25.011)

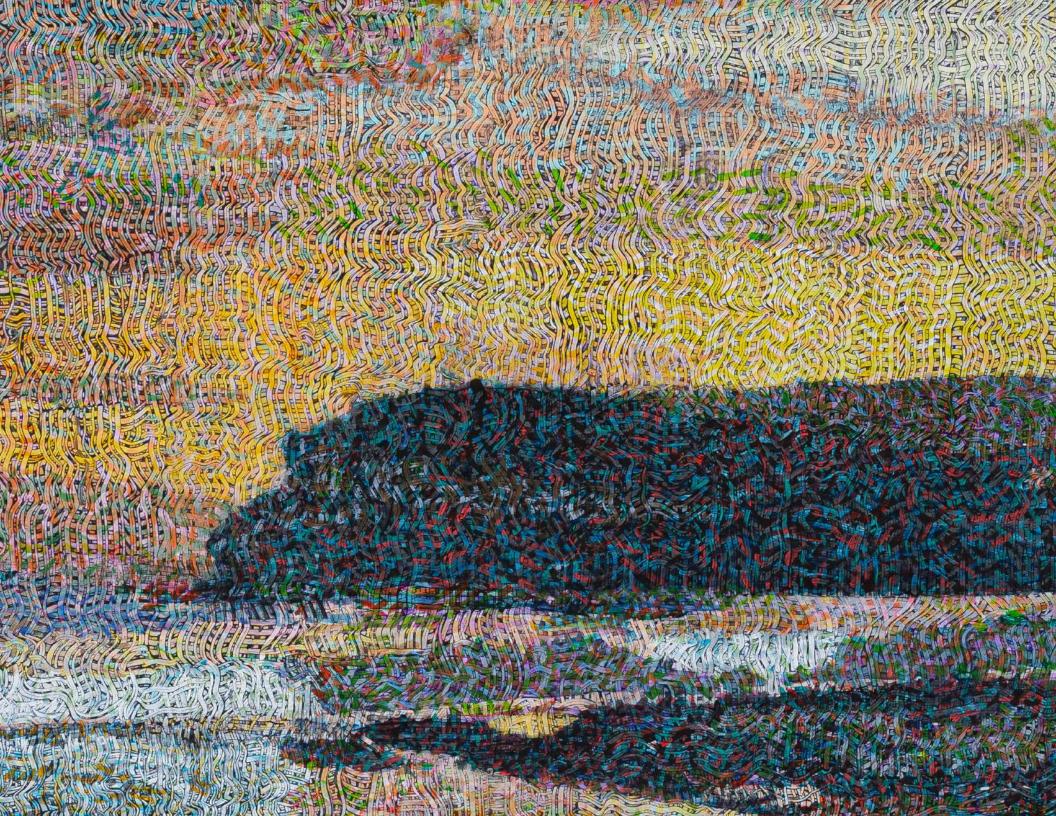


Interior, 2025 Acrylic on linen 78 3/4 x 63 in 200 x 160 cm (GHO25.012)





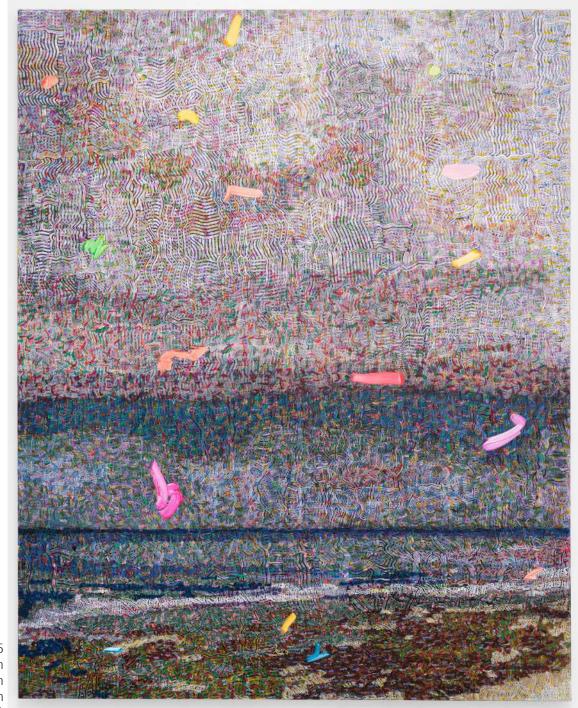
Drift, 2025 Acrylic on linen 78 3/4 x 63 in 200 x 160 cm (GHO25.005)





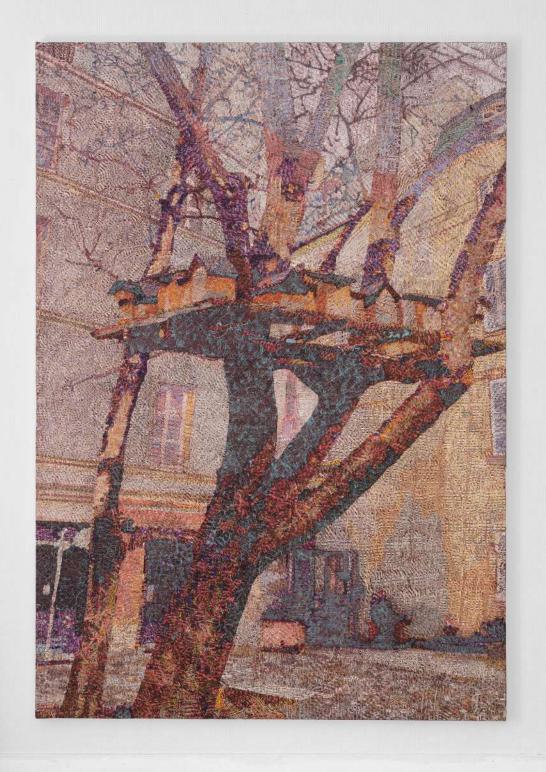
Bouquet, 2025 Acrylic on linen 51 1/8 x 38 1/4 in 130 x 97 cm (GHO25.001)



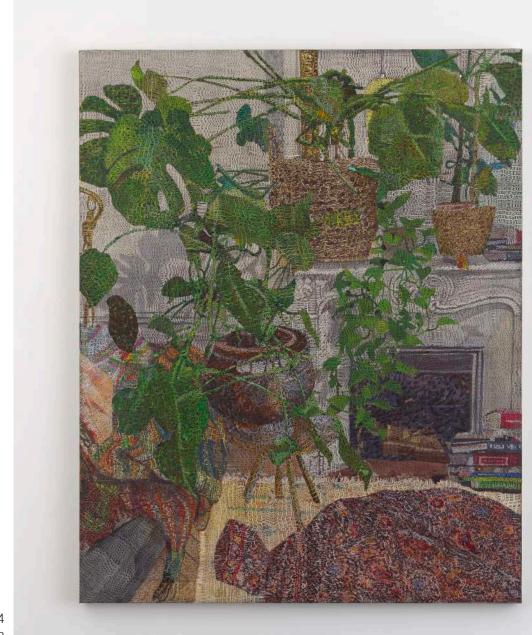


Seascape, 2025 Acrylic on linen 78 3/4 x 63 in 200 x 160 cm (GHO25.003)



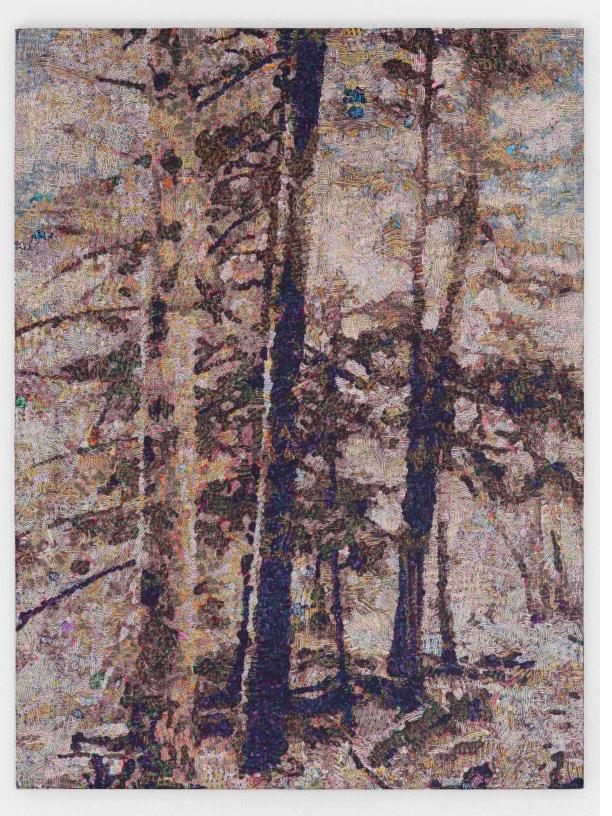


Morning Walk, 2024 Acrylic on linen 90 1/2 x 63 in 230 x 160 cm (GHO24.006)

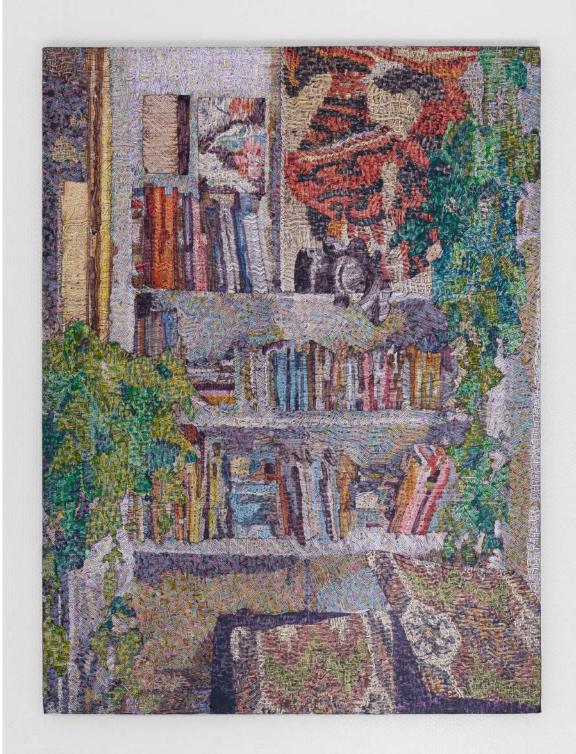


Home Corner, 2024
Acrylic on linen
78 3/4 x 63 in
200 x 160 cm
(GHO24.011)





Landscape II Saint-Sabin, 2024 Acrylic on linen 51 1/8 x 38 1/4 in 130 x 97 cm (GHO24.001)



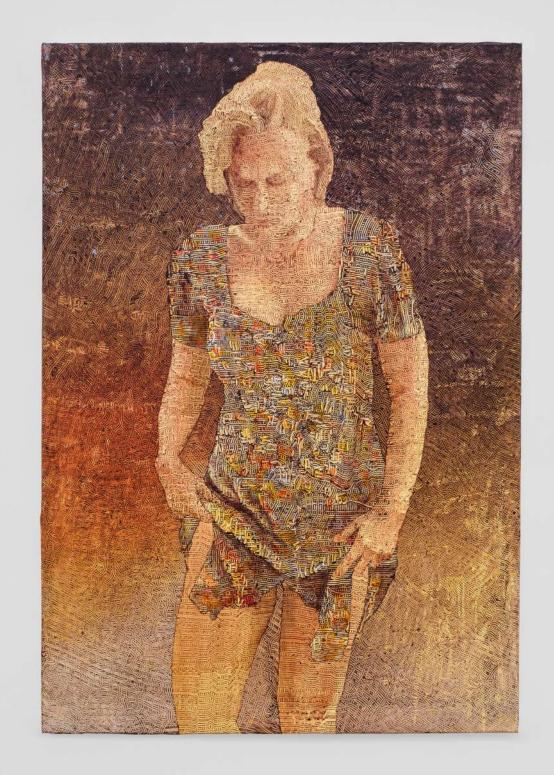
Interior with Plants, 2024
Acrylic on linen
51 1/8 x 38 1/4 in
130 x 97 cm
(GHO24.003)



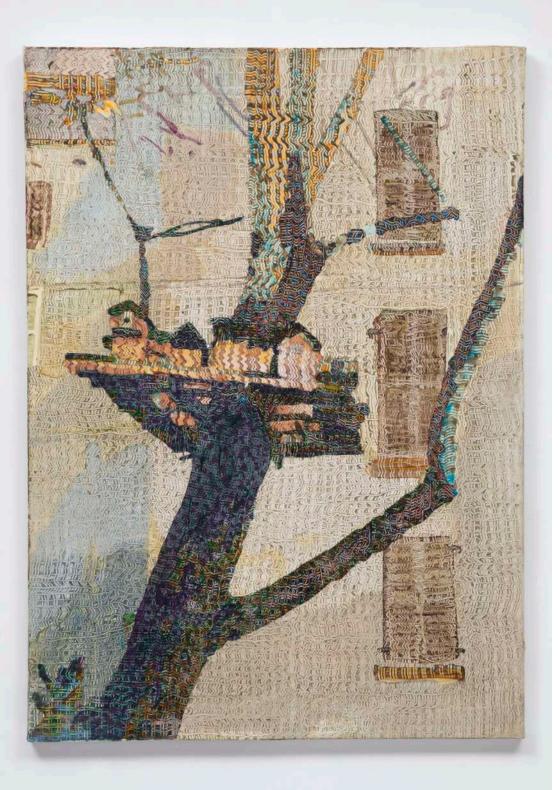
Winter Southcoast Sunrise, 2024 Acrylic on linen 78 3/4 x 63 in 200 x 160 cm (GHO24.012)



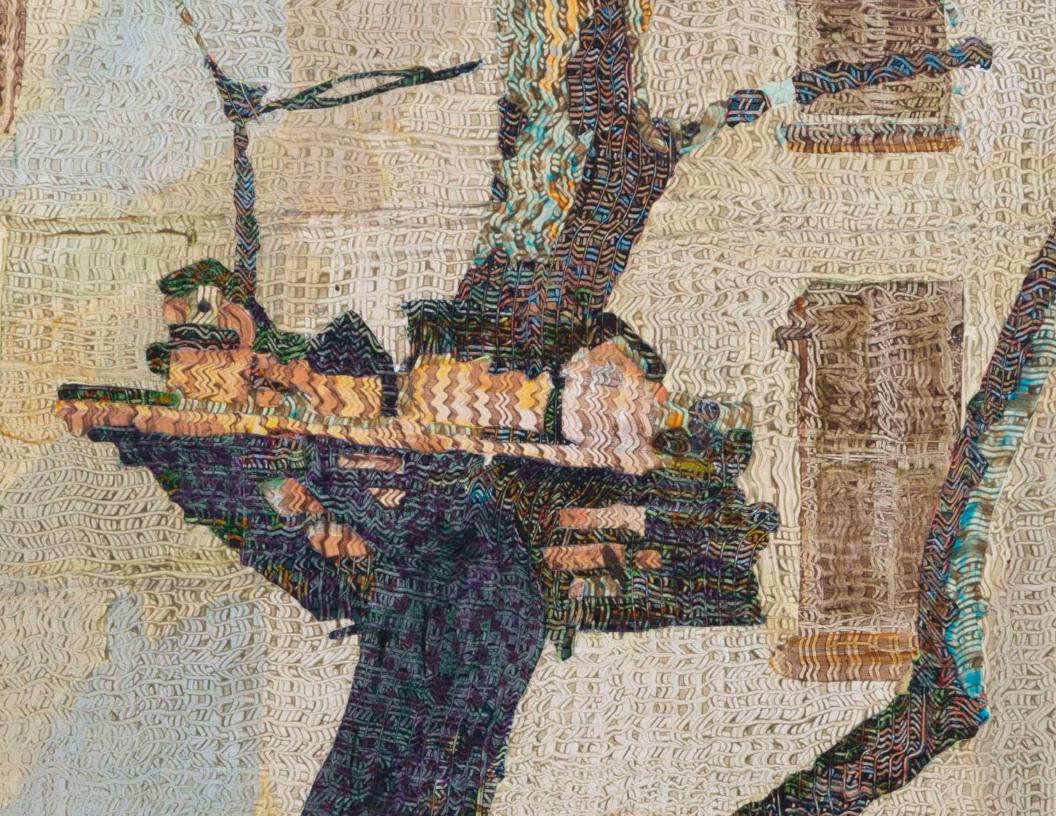


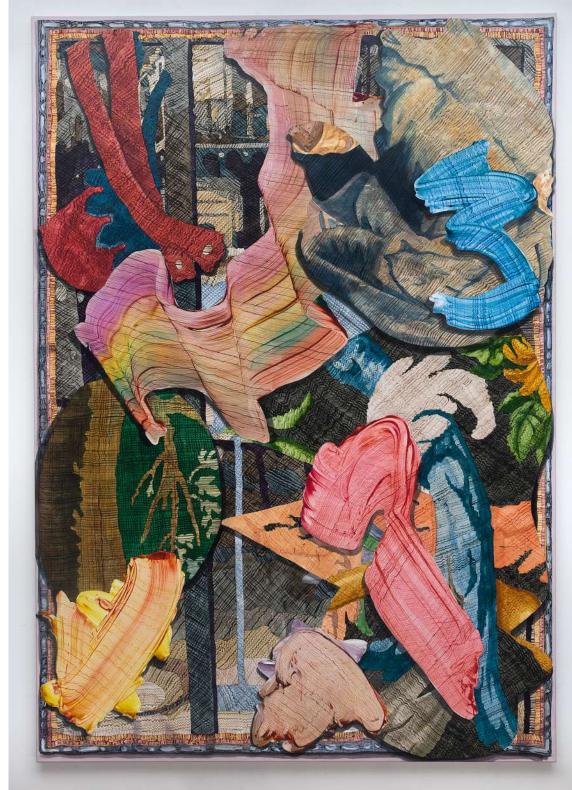


Clare 2, 2024 Acrylic on linen 72 1/2 x 39 3/8 in 70 x 100 cm



Morning Walk, 2023 Acrylic on linen 27 1/2 x 19 3/4 in 70 x 50 cm





Mannequin, 2022 Acrylic on linen 90 1/2 x 63 in 230 x 160 cm



SELECTED EXHIBITIONS AND PROJECTS

ECHO

2025 NINO MIER GALLERY BRUSSELS, BE

STRATA

2025 NINO MIER GALLERY NEW YORK, NY, US

AFTERLIGHT

2025 ANNE LAURE BUFFARD PARIS. FR

AND THEN TOGETHER

2025 SULLIVAN+STRUMPF SYDNEY. AU

TERRA

2023 L' ANCIEN THEATRE BEAUNE, FR

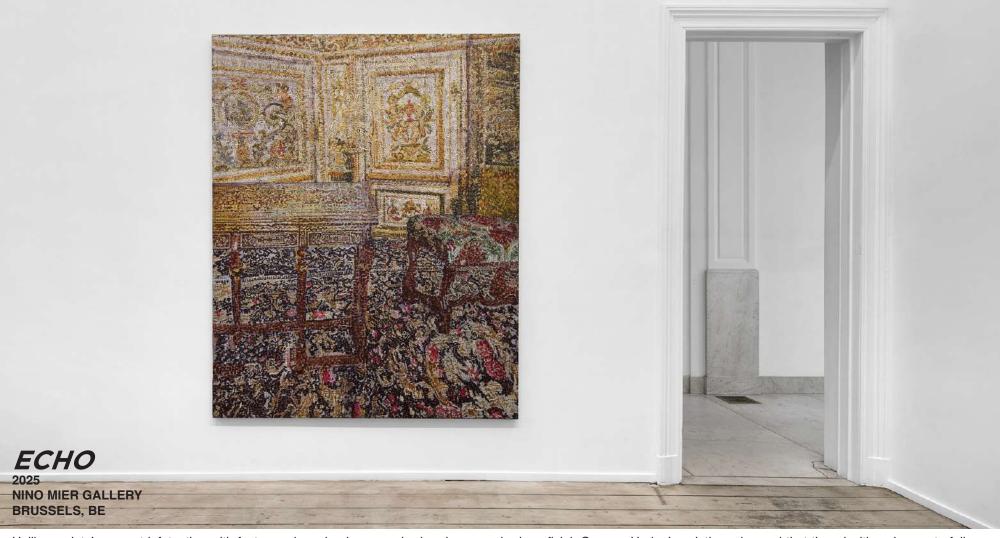
THROUGH SURFACE

2023 SULLIVAN+STRUMPF MELBOURNE, AU

FIGURES, LIGHTS, AND LANDSCAPES

2022 SULLIVAN+STRUMPF SYDNEY, AU

NINO MIER GALLERY



Unlike society's current infatuation with fast-paced moving images, slowing down can be beneficial. Gregory Hodge's paintings demand that time, inviting viewers to fully appreciate them, to take everything in, and to let the work gradually unfold. In many ways, they stand in direct contrast to the overload of short clips that dominate modern media consumption. These paintings cannot be appreciated in a fleeting glance; they require sustained looking. In doing so, Hodge compels his audience to slow down and shift their perspective. His works invite engagement on multiple levels, engaging both the surface and the image. Hypnotic patterns draw viewers in and spark curiosity about his painting process when seen up close. From a distance, these patterns coalesce into tranquil, poetic scenes.

Hodge's distinctive patterns stem from his deep interest in tapestries, a natural outcome of living and working in France and completing two residencies at the Cité Internationale des Arts. There, he closely studied French tapestry art and became enamored with 19th-century painters like Pierre Bonnard, Maurice Denis, and Édouard Vuillard, who explored texture and light. "While the interest in tapestries was a really important part of the research I was doing at the Cité Internationale des Arts, I feel that my new paintings are circling back to a conversation about painting itself," says Hodge. The paintings make look like tapestries, but are not bound to the rules what tapestry might look like. In a way, Hodge reminds us where the true freedom and beauty of painting lies: breaking out of existing systems, expectations and rules, to create something new.

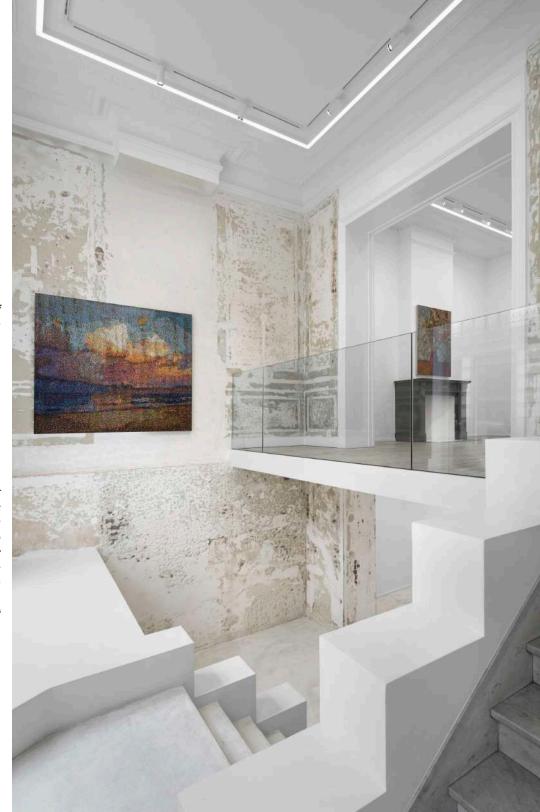
The works in *Echo* elaborate on this mimicry of tapestries. The intricacy and detail in Hodge's paintings guide the viewer's gaze, distracting from the underlying image by revealing themselves gradually, creating a compelling, prolonged viewing experience. The works invite close inspection to decipher their layers. Using specially adapted combs, brushes, and handcrafted tools, Hodge creates drag-like marks that evoke the warp and weft of woven fabrics: "*Dragging paint allows me to explore personal, intimate subject matter*." This slow, deliberate process mirrors the craftsmanship of tapestries, which were historically handwoven over months. The result is canvases with a distinctly artisanal quality, perfectly mimicking the optical qualities of tapestry art on a painted surface.

Gestural abstraction or abstract expressionism are not what Hodge aims for. For him, his work is about mimicry when it comes to the detailed patterns in his work. Up close, his canvases can feel like an abstract maze. Even when viewed from a distance, the images seem to flicker in and out of recognition. Hodge achieves this effect using translucent acrylic paint and pigmented gels, creating shifting tones and hues. Web-like structures and translucent textures distort and blur the images, lending a hazy, film-like quality. "By applying and then partially removing layers of paint, I try to create a sense of excavation, as if pulling the light forward from beneath the surface," said Hodge.

Once known for bold abstraction, Hodge now navigates a dynamic interplay between abstraction and imagery. His paintings dissolve visual fragments of daily life (interiors, flowers, patterned fabrics, landscapes, window views, or atmospheric skies) into layered, ambiguous compositions, reminiscent of the 19th-century Nabis group that bridged Impressionism and modern art. These scenes often originate from photographs of real-life moments, offering a glimpse into the artist's daily life and personal memories.

"The title of this exhibition suggests the way images in these paintings reappear like familiar but distorted memories, seen for a moment before dissolving into veils of color and abstraction, leaving only a trace behind." Hodge created this series specifically with the Brussels gallery space in mind, designing works that respond to the building's expansive yet intimate character. The way light streams into the gallery from both sides, casting warm blankets of sunlight onto the paintings, complements the central role of light in Hodge's work. "I am drawn to the way light filters through trees, reflects on water, or glows through a window. In many of these paintings, it feels as though the light is coming from behind, like a light box, a soft backlight shining through the image."

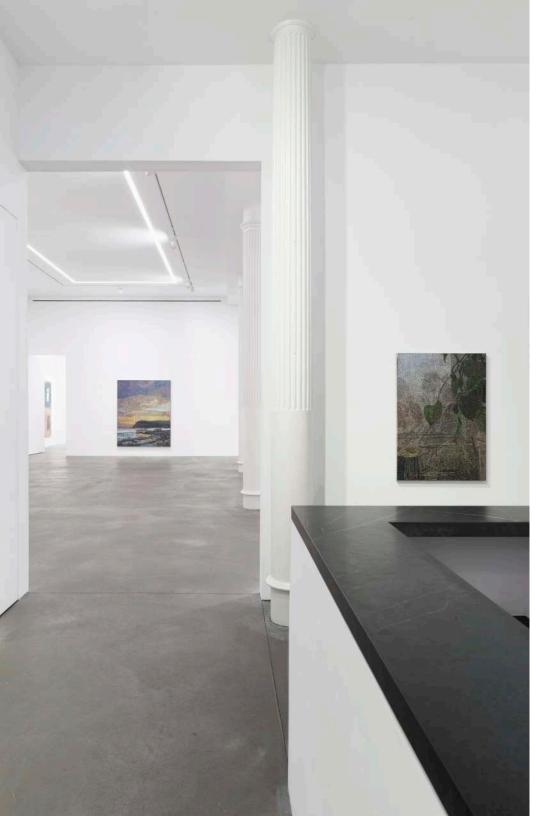
Echo further demonstrates the remarkable evolution in Gregory Hodge's practice as he continues to explore the interplay of perception, memory, and material in unexpected ways. What began as purely gestural abstraction has transformed into expressive strokes layered over figurative scenes, which have now become the scenes themselves, revealing their entirety with increasing openness. "A painting can hold a moment that feels both recognizable and elusive, suspended between clarity and abstraction."











STRATA 2025 NINO MIER GALLERY NEW YORK, NY, US

All things have a beginning.

The ensuing path builds upon that point, layer by layer, until it reaches a natural end (predetermined or otherwise). The layers built between the beginning and the end document creation, like geological strata that tell a story over time. STRATA addresses a fundamental facet of painting: layers. The first mark, or gesture, and the last mark have no hierarchy between them. Existing with equal weight and significance they bookend the creation of each work. The history of each painting traces through layers of application, at times traversing mediums, until it its journey comes to an end with a final decision. Each artist's practice represents a different journey, each destination unique.

Ana Villagomez often begins this journey with the canvas on the floor. She starts moving paint on the surface to build a ground, applying paint and washing it away with an array of tools. Layering begins when the canvas is on the wall. Meticulously applied overlays of monochrome shapes and cutouts alternately obfuscate and reveal her initial mark making. Her grounds ultimately illuminate the final piece, animating her layered interventions.

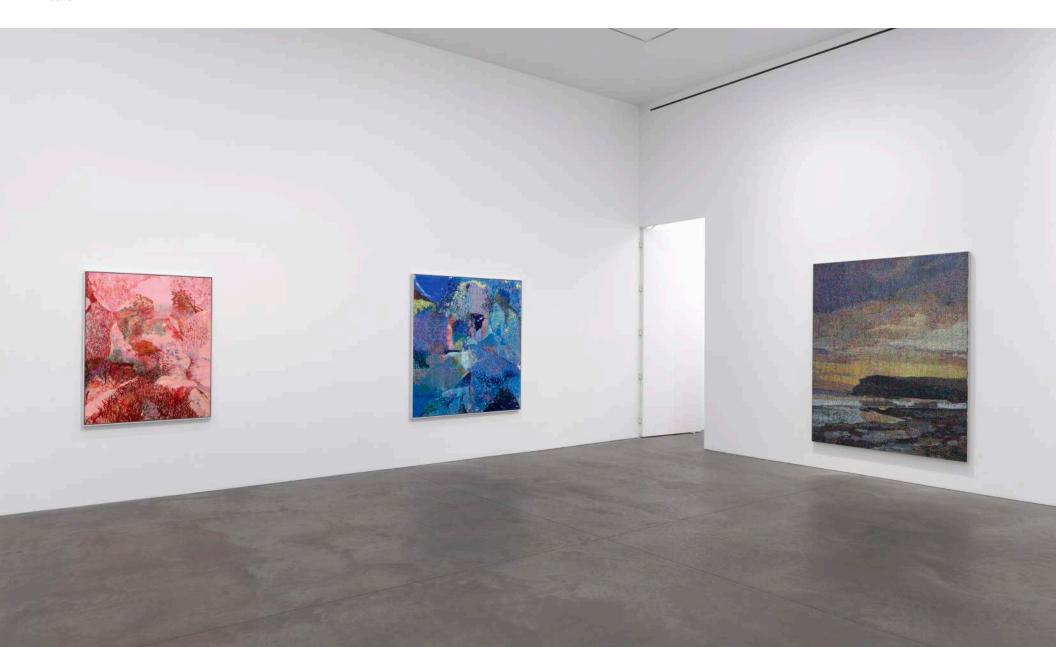
Lucienne O'Mara's paintings take a journey initiated by spontaneity. Her performative and expressionistic style of applying marks one over the other, is done wet on wet, until color, movement, and form balance and resolve. While difficult to trace the first mark, it peers through the swirling mixtures of colors held in each brushstroke. We are left to wonder what supports each gesture, as the strata of her paintings compress into bold geometric structure.

While Gregory Hodge paints seemingly-simple—yet beautifully rendered—cropped domestic scenes and serene landscapes, the actual surface of the work, when viewed up close, gives the viewer a peak into his process. Hodge begins by laying an impressionistic base image, applied with acrylic on linen. He expands on this painterly language by applying color over the base and scraping it away methodically using a toothed tool to create a rippled, textile-like effect. From afar the image is clear; up close it feels pixelated and extremely abstract. Each vibrating line comes together on the surface to reveal the image.

Connie Harrison, using oil paint and wax paste builds her luminous and abstract landscape paintings over time, mark over mark. The depth of her work, however, comes through removal. Harrison scratches into the built-up surface to peel back and reveal prior marks. Her gestures bolt to the surface to dictate their own place in the composition, while still existing in a balanced and thoughtfully executed way. Time is revealed and blades of grass become so lush they seemingly move across the layers as naturally as nature does itself.

Alexandria Tarvers layers thin glazes of oil, building the rich hues of her panels, while simultaneously creating images by wiping away to reveal the surface underneath. This process renders an evocative, emotional charge that emanates from her panels, each glowing as if illuminated by the electric light of dusk. Winding between abstract and figural mark making, her floral compositions are taken from life, derived from meditative sketches that draw from literal journeys through her city and the world at large, and translated into frenetic, sinuous paintings. She reveals and elevates the painterly and emotional material that would otherwise be concealed within.

When bringing together five painters from different geographical places—all of whom are at the early stages of their careers—there is a joy that one feels when a sense of community, comradery, and commonality organically blossoms. Endings are not always clear, but these five exhibited artists paint decisively, recording each journey with care.







AFTERLIGHT

2025 GALERIE ANNE-LAURE BUFFARD, PARIS, FR

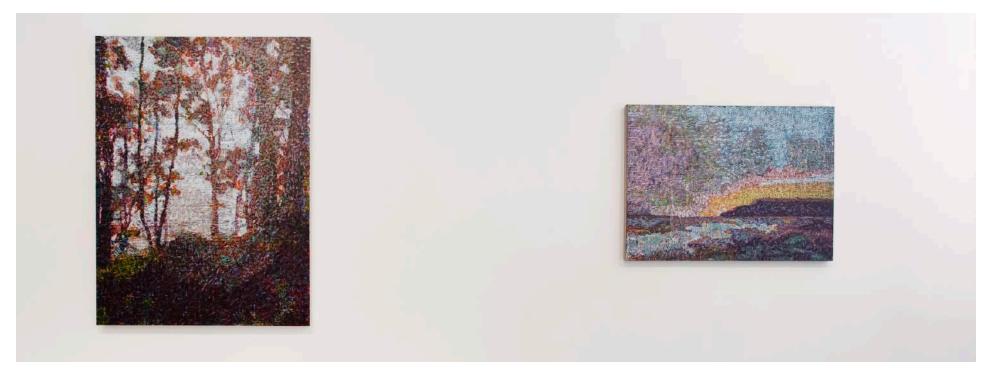


Following his notable presence at the gallery's booth during the 2025 edition of Art Paris at the Grand Palais, Galerie Anne-Laure Buffard is pleased to present Afterlight, the first solo exhibition dedicated to Australian artist Gregory Hodge at the gallery's space at 6 rue Chapon. The exhibition is part of the Paris Gallery Weekend 2025 program and will include a conversation with Amélie Adamo on Thursday, June 5 at 7 PM.

Born in 1982 in Australia, Gregory Hodge is a painter recognized across the Asia-Pacific art scene, where his work is held in major public collections, including the National Gallery of Australia and the Wollongong Art Gallery. Recently relocated to Paris, Hodge undertook a residency at the Cité internationale des arts in 2024, during which his research focused on the influence of Gobelins tapestries, as well as on the Nabis painters—Bonnard, Vuillard, and Denis—whose works are housed in the Musée d'Orsay.













TERRA

2023 L'ANCIEN THÉÂTRE BEAUNE, FR

Australian artist Gregory Hodge is among the featured artists in *TERRA*, a group exhibition of painting, sculpture, and mixed media works that opened October 21, 2023, across four historic locations in Burgundy, France. Curated by Jenn Ellis (Apsara Studio) and art historian Emie Diamond, and produced by Milena Berman of Hautes Côtes, the exhibition explores the concept of terroir—the unique sense of place rooted in the land, history, and culture of the region.

Timed to follow Paris Plus by Art Basel, *TERRA* is set among the UNESCO world heritage vineyards of Burgundy and remains open by appointment until November 25, just after the 163rd annual charity wine auction at the Hospices de Beaune, hosted this year by Sotheby's.

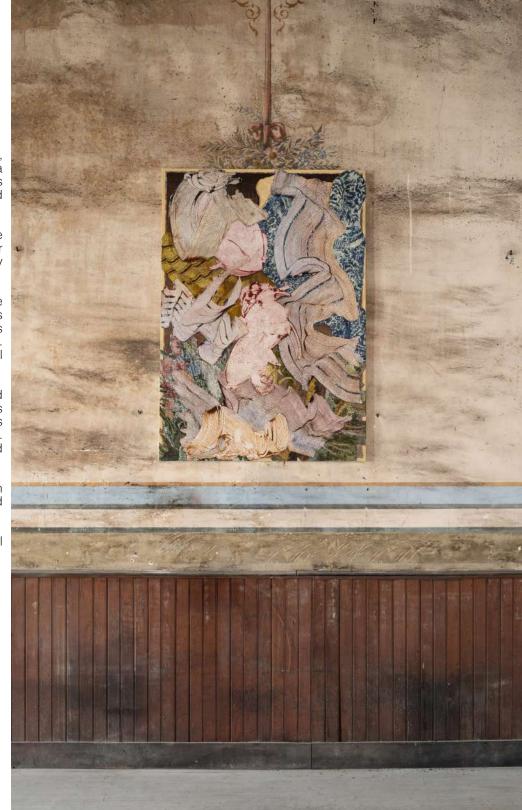
Divided into four thematic chapters, each corresponding to a unique venue, the exhibition includes work by leading and emerging international artists. Gregory Hodge's paintings are exhibited in L'Ancien Théâtre, a historic venue once built as Beaune's principal theatre, now in private ownership by the Gagey family of Maison Louis Jadot. The section, themed "Story," explores visual narratives and the evolution of cultural memory.

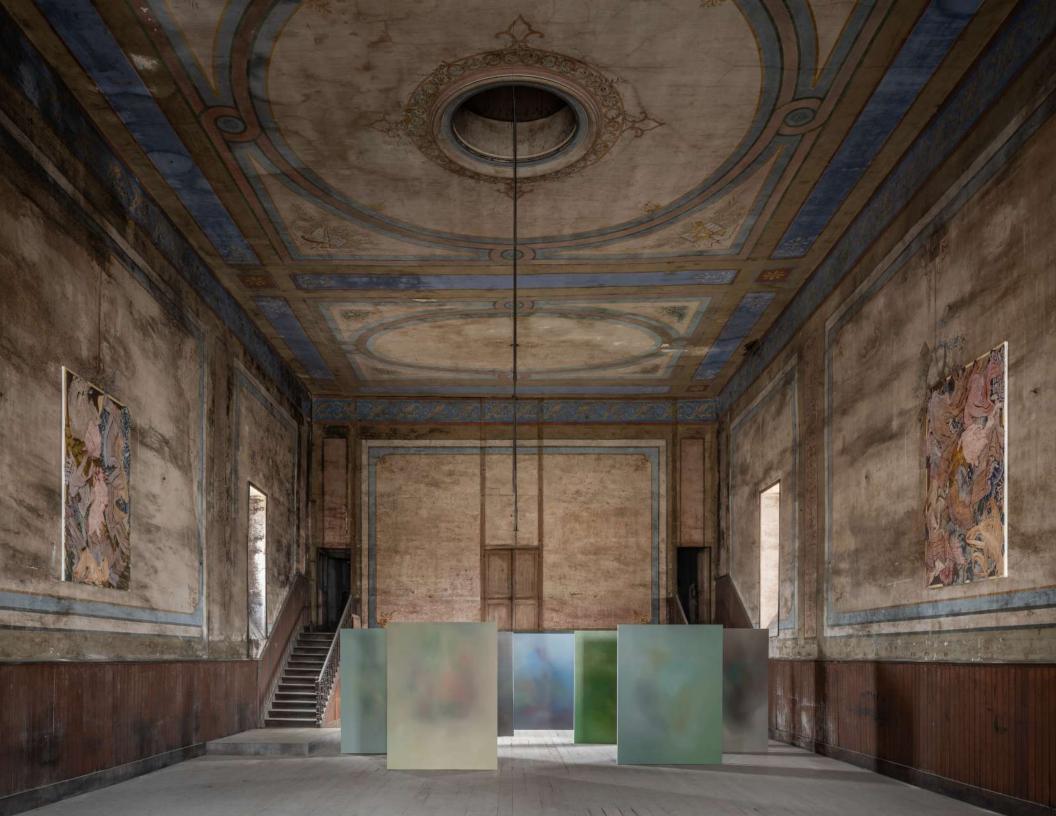
On the upper floor of the Théâtre, Hodge's layered, intricate paintings are presented in conversation with an immersive installation by Italian artist Chiara Capellini. Hodge's work, known for its delicate use of pattern and texture, reflects on the layered histories of fabric, trade, and gesture—blending classical motifs with contemporary abstraction. The pairing invites viewers into a contemplative space where movement, memory, and material intersect.

Other exhibition highlights include a major new installation by Singaporean artist Dawn Ng at the 15th-century Couvent des Jacobins, and works by Li Tao, Ittah Yoda, and Roméo Mivekannin across the various sites.

TERRA is a celebration of artistic dialogue and place, deeply embedded in the historical and cultural landscape of Burgundy.

Text by Jenn Ellis





THROUGH SURFACE

2023 SULLIVAN+STRUMPF MELBOURNE, AU

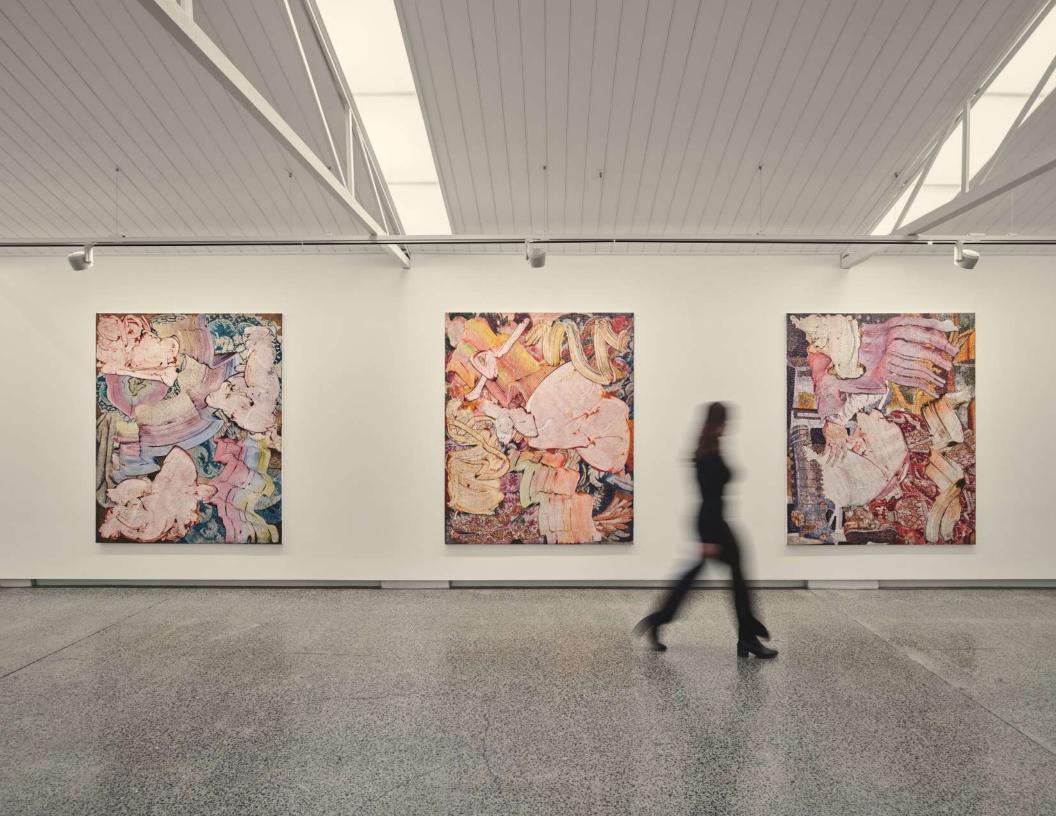


Known for his illusionary abstracts, he uses complex and systematic technical processes such as trompe-l'oeil, cast shadows and manipulating paints' translucent and opaque qualities. His paintings playfully mimic the physical fragility and provisional nature of his source material. His paintings blur the boundaries between two and three-dimensionality and playfully explore the space between image and reality, representation and abstraction.

In this new body of work 'Through Surface' it is hard to ignore the influence Paris life has had on him, since moving there in 2019. Colour, landscape, and visual sensibility all reflect the mode, maturity, and romanticism of French masters such as Monet, Degas, Caillebotte and Delacroix. His approach to brushwork continues his explorations into the visual language of tapestry – relying on contrast to 'mix' together brushstrokes like threads of cotton.

Following his establishment of a studio in Paris, the impact of the French landscape is readily felt in the textures, colours and motifs of Hodge's new works. Sentiment and symbolism find themselves blissfully entangled in the warp and weft of Hodge's gestural works, executed with a confidence the artist has spent his career building.

An embrace of colour, Through Surface fills the gallery space with ribbonous movement, textural gestures, and vignettes that come alive with symbolism and sentiment.











Topographies of Painting by Jo Higgins Collage, Gesture, Surface, Autobiography, Frame

Part of the joy of Gregory Hodge's paintings is there's no one way to read them. It's like visual orienteering; with a topographic map of symbols and gestures and hints of interiors that layer like a 'choose your own adventure' on the history and art of painting.

So, what can you see? In the Window, at the back of the Light Shop, through the Green House? Can you See The Wind? Where will you begin? Because for Hodge, every painting starts at the collage.

Collage

From digital files marked 'painted gestures' 'fabric' or 'photographs' Hodge constructs his paintings through a long-standing process of layering, cutting and arranging these flattened textural and architectural elements into compositions in search of a subject.

But, as these collaged negotiations navigate their art historical references and autobiographical points of departures and problem-solve how to render these surfaces and source materials in paint, the loops and riddles and concealed layers of these negotiations become the subject.

These are paintings aboutpainting; its practice and its history.

In assembling his compositions, Hodge takes the modernist precedent of cutting up things that don't necessarily belong together and layers in references to everything from trompe l'oeil still lifes to baroque ceiling painting, Pop Art, Abstraction and 17th century tapestries. The result: paintings that are utterly contemporary.

Reinforcing these intellectual as well as visual collisions is Hodge's use of shadows and sharp edges. Forms and shapes appear to hover and stack, alluding to things unseen and unsettled.

That they are rendered in a singular painted surface feels constantly astonishing. There's an abrupt dismount from the giddiness of those large gestural swirls and marks when you remember they are in fact painstakingly, laboriously recreated.

In the topography of Hodge's paintings; these gestures are the foremost layer.

Gesture

There's a wonderful tension in the movements of Hodge's recurring gestural motifs. They seem to bear witness to some dynamic flourish but their rendering has been rehearsed in much the same way a dancer's body knows a movement, or a surfer's a wave.

So it's perhaps not surprising if you feel yourself wanting to trace the gesture with your body, or feel it moving through you with the sensation of a memory. Hodge himself has even felt them standing in for bodies; has thought of them as an action or emotion. But this is not their primary function.

In paintings that seem to grapple with wanting to be representational - a glimpse of a Winter House here; the stand of a Mannequin there - these gestures are designed to disrupt any coherent reading of the symbols and surfaces, and to bring these densely packed paintings back to the subject of painting. Don't be distracted by them; look beyond them to the surfaces they set out to obscure.

Surface

While they seem set furthest back from the surface, Hodge's backgrounds are in fact the final layer added to his paintings; a filling in and filling out of any remnant voids once the gestures and painted collagehave been set in place. In this latest body of work, it is Hodge's interest in the surface of textiles, and tapestries in particular, that comes into focus.

In wanting to generate paintings that resemble woven surfaces, Hodge eschews a slick, pop finish for a deliberately handmade quality. While painted, not stitched, the labour of this mark-making is still evident, with specially handmade tools and brushes helping to render the warp and weft of the tapestries in paint.

Hodge uses highly pigmented, highly translucent acrylics and gels to create his paintings and the ways he deploys them on his surfaces, able to mimic everything from oil painted trompe l'oeil techniques to woven 17th century textiles, demonstrates his very contemporary understanding of these very contemporary materials.

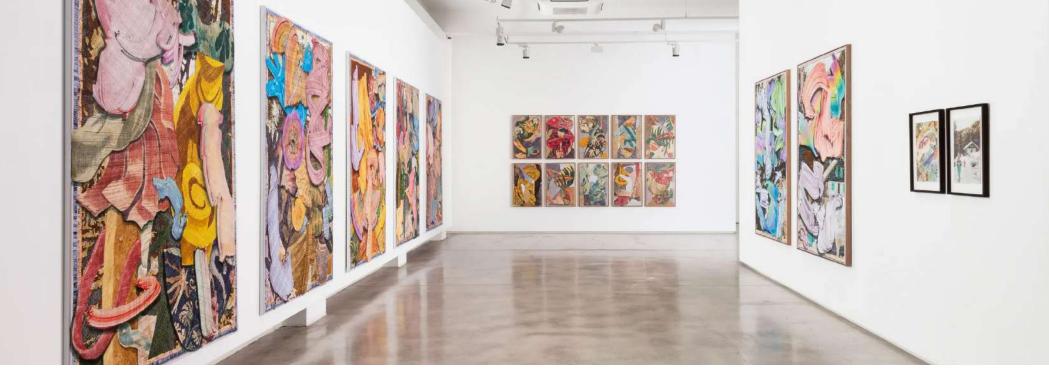
In some ways, these visual and art historical loops and leaps mirror the reflexive nature of Hodge's tapestry source material. Tapestry designs are based on images taken from paintings and in re-interpreting and returning the tapestried painting back to the canvas, with their textures intact, Hodge adds another layer to the experience of seeing a painting and wanting to understand how it is made, never mind wanting to touch it ...











Autobiography

If you could touch the painting's surface; could peel away the layers, buried in there you might find the autobiographical fragments that set the direction for Hodge's construction of his images.

For the first time, untitled but intact pencil and marker drawings that might have once operated as preparatory sketches, have been included in this finished body of work. Based on photographs of Hodge's surrounding landscapes or things in his environment, fragments of some of these drawings can be discovered in other, larger-scale paintings.

Hodge's choice of source images is intuitive but can be understood as a response to different experiences and places with the people in his life. We don't need to know there might be an obscured portrait of Hodge's family deep in the layers of the painting we're looking at - just that this is part of his new approach to generating representational imagery. This imagery though, ultimately resists being descriptive - it's not for Hodge to tell you what you can see - and through its fragmenting instead offers an abstract understanding of the processes of image making.

Frame

So how do you set your course through the experience of looking at Hodge's paintings? They are complicated to look at and complicated to make and there is no one way to unravel them. But even as they threaten to tip over the edge of the canvas, Hodge's framing devices at least offer to contain the experience.

These frames, represented here as the fringed edges of tapestries, are a compositional device but they also reflect Hodge's interest in, and consideration of, the ways that textiles hang from the wall; how they fall and the shadows they cast as a consequence. This trompe l'oeil device creates an illusion of depth but where the painted collaged elements and gestures overreach, this also propels them forward in space.

This is no staying put here.

Navigating topographies

However you decide to navigate the terrains of Hodge's paintings, any one of these recurring markers can help guide your way. For Hodge, these new directions in his paintings feel like the start of something both daunting and exciting and as these material and intellectual nuances continue to be articulated, the question is: where do they take you?



SELECTED PRESS

GREGORY HODGE LOOKS BEYOND THE SURFACE

FEBRUARY 2025 BY SALLY GEARON

SULLIVAN+STRUMPF MAGAZINE

SEPTEMBER 2023 BY TONY CURRAN

ARTISTIC INFLUENCE

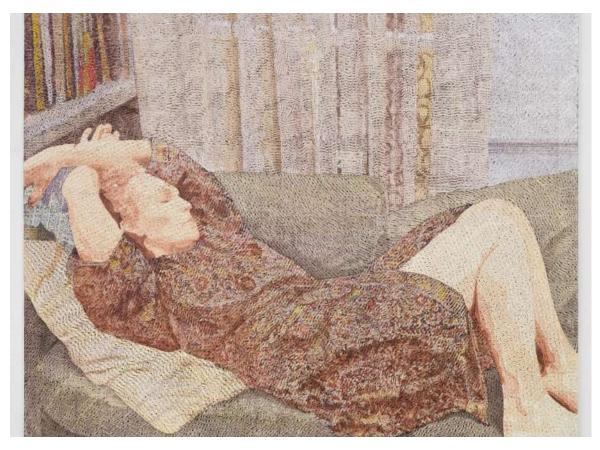
SEPTEMBER 2023 BY ANGELICA XIDIAS



FEBRUARY 2025

Gregory Hodge looks beyond the surface

By Sally Gearon



Gregory Hodge, Evening, 2024, acrylic on linen, 160 x 230cm

I get the sense from Gregory Hodge's latest series of paintings that they have been waiting to emerge for some time. The artist was once synonymous with bold abstraction, his signature gestural strokes exhibiting in galleries across the country and featuring on the cover of Amber Creswell Bell's Australian Abstract (published by Thames and Hudson Australia in 2023). But in his latest show at Sullivan+Strumpf in Sydney, Hodge describes how, "For the first time in a long time, it's a show that isn't about abstraction. For the first time there's been a real progression in the work. They're much more related to imagery and figurative painting, representational painting."

The scenes are often personal: interiors of his home in France, featuring stacked bookshelves and potted plants, glimpses into family life. In Evening (2024), Hodge's wife, fellow Australian artist Clare Thackway, reclines serenely, eyes closed, possibly sleeping. Cubby (2024) takes place in a wooded area, children building a fortress from sticks. "They allude to a loose narrative," he says. "They don't necessarily have any personal reading, but

they're loosely bound to a personal allegory."

The feeling I get of slow emergence has been built through his work over the last few years. What were once pieces of pure gestural abstraction became expressive strokes laid over figurative scenescapes that were hidden behind, which became the scenes themselves, finally revealed to us in their entirety.

"Abstraction acted almost like an interruption of the narrative," he says. "It was like a duality of things happening at once on the surface. And these feel much more laid bare. The images are much more open."

Hodge agrees that the change has been happening, gradually, for some time. "I haven't shown a body of work this big that's all figurative before, but it hasn't been a huge leap, it's been a slow progression," he says. "And I do see this relationship between abstraction and representational painting in my practice staying bound. I don't see it as one or the other. It's something that I feel I can move across fluidly and happily."

What remains present, even heightened, is the textural quality that has long permeated much of his work. Hodge has been building textures in paint to varying degrees for some time, but his recent focus has been on creating the essence of fabric. Living and working in France and two residencies at the Cité Internationale des Arts has contributed to an interest in French tapestries and 19th-century painters interested in texture and light, such as Pierre Bonnard and Édouard Vuillard.



But the process of creating paintings that evoke tapestries is, Hodge maintains, a purely painterly fixation. "While the interest in tapestries was a really important part of the research I was doing here, I feel like the new paintings are circling back into a conversation about painting." It was an effort in problem solving—starting with bright bases and layering translucent paint with specially adapted tools and brushes to create a woven effect. "Even though they look like tapestries, they're not bound to the rules of what a tapestry might look like. I love that about painting, that you can work out systems and rules and then break those rules to make these new things."

There are still glimpses of abstraction, references to what came before. Bloom II (2024) is a scene of floral abundance. It could be plucked from a flower market or florist exterior, baskets and pots on the ground suggesting a root in representation. But scattered throughout are the familiar sweeps of paint, those expressive gestures again. Once they would have dominated over the scene, masking most of the backdrop, but here they simply nestle between marigolds and fall lightly from roses, retreating slightly but not abandoned.

It has the slight reminiscence of earlier forays into collage, which Hodge acknowledges, "is a really important link with the abstract paintings and what I'm doing now." Abstraction can often be something projected onto art when the viewer doesn't perceive what the artist might. Hodge describes always feeling his abstract paintings to be "bound to something concrete, whether that be a physical collage that I would make first, or a digital collage. And so there was a kind of mimicry or a sense of illusions. They were always referencing some sense of reality."

It takes time to fully appreciate a painting. To evaluate a scene, match the signifiers, find everything that has been built in, and then perhaps build in your own motifs. "You don't get everything from one time, you don't see it all at once," Hodge says. "They're the antithesis of a fast-paced moving image. What I love about painting is that it's about slowing an audience down."

Gregory Hodge And Then Together Sullivan+Strumpf (Sydney/Eora) 27 February—29 March

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sullivan+strumpf

SEPTEMBER 2013

GREGORY HODGE: Through Surface

By Tony Curran



Gregory Hodge, Collapse, 2023, acrylic on linen, 200 x 160cm

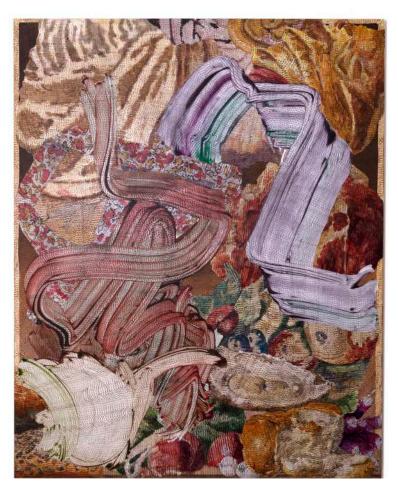
It's impossible to ignore the influence that Paris has had on Gregory Hodge's work, since he moved there in 2019. Each development in his visual language comes from how paint acts as a metaphor for the world around him. Through his practice we can see how timeless painting can be, while still being verymuch of its time and of its place.

Gregory Hodge is a master of "mimicking surfaces in paint". Throughout his oeuvre, he's explored strategies of trompe *l'oeil* – tricking viewers into believing they're looking at taped-together collages gestural relief paintings and more recently tapestries.

Hodge's practice is rooted in artisanal practices that reach back to antiquity. Ancient Greek artisans mimicked masonry, landscapes and objects to make estates feel grander and livelier, developing systems for convincingly imitating marble, metal, cornices and windows. These faux-finish practices have been applied in decorative-arts but overlooked by contemporary, post-internet, post-conceptual painting practices. This clears the ground for Hodge to revisit historical approaches using contemporary materials, processes and sensibilitie

The development of Hodge's oeuvre sees an expanding repertoire of different types of "surfaces" that complement the dynamic swirls of colour that have become signature to his paintings. As early as 2010, Hodge was mimicking the translucency of layered tracing paper, masking tape, paper folding, patterned fabric and lighting gels. By 2012 the surfaces of gestural paint strokes. From 2014, concrete textures emerged as a ground for still life paintings of textural assemblages, later to re-emerge as faux-marble frames in paintings such as his *Another Matter*(2017).

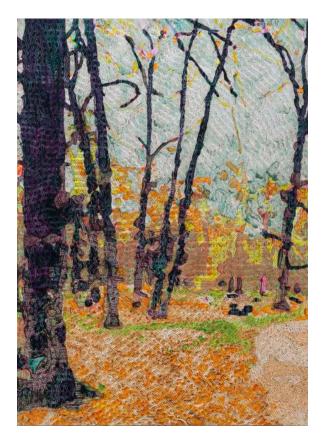
Whenever Hodge hones in on a material to mimic, he invents a succinct way of describing it, so he can efficiently execute multiple textures and their contrasting elements. The slickness of his ribbonous gestures take us on a rainbow slip-n-slide, while the softness of his more recent faux-tapestries comforts after the adventure and re-grounds the viewer between fragments of the artist's interior and exterior world. The result of the artist's brevity are a tableaux of rich visual experiences, where the viewer is held by the tension between being deceived and observing the mechanics of the deception. It's within this balancing act that Hodge's surfaces remind us that when we look at a painting, we look at it with our whole body.



Gregory Hodge, $Room\ II$, 2023, acrylic on linen, 200 x 160 cm







Study for a Vincennes Tapestry II, 2023 acrylic on linen 70 x 50 cm

What has characterised the artist's work to date is a charisma powered by sprezzatura.

The gestural marks feel quick and nonchalant, but, as the artist has discussed in interviews, his process comprises great care and consideration – databases of gestures, rehearsed mark- making and the carefully crafted masking techniques that build the pictorial space.

In his latest bodies of work, Hodge has paired back his bold gestural marks to allow the more figurative qualities of the paintings to come into focus. By combing streaks of acrylic across the painting, a simulated gauze merges the background elements into the image and fuses them to the tapestry-like space that we see come to the fore in *Through Surface*.

Through this veiled effect, Hodge has produced a new scale of his gestural forms. The marks move to the same frequency of the brush but are expanded – where the brush-marks were figures, the veil is ground. Made from customized squeegees, the gauze forms an all-over field of optical energy making the marks feel massive yet buoyed by their overall finery and translucency. This is Hodge's pictorial language expanding like a fractal, where elemental forms are symmetrical to the broader, macro movements.

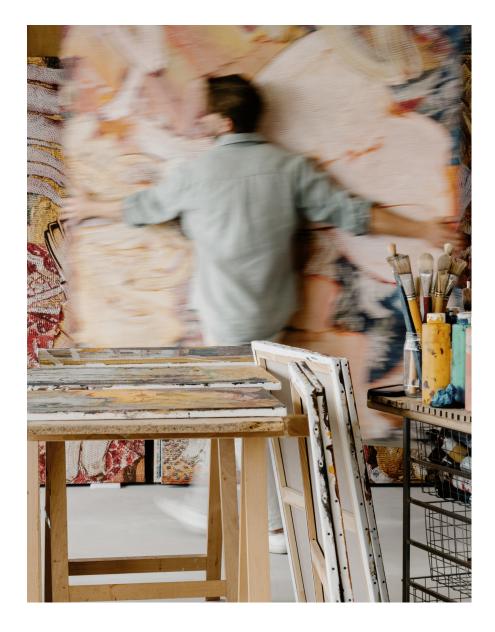
There are new textures appearing too. The chromatic black line-work combed over the composition is so optically charged that information below has to be abbreviated even further. The colours underneath are more intense, so that when combined with the dark lines over the top, the surfaces glimmer like stained-glass windows.Look through the warp and weft of paintings such as *Landscape 1* (2023). The trees are described by polka-dotted marks that are too large to be pointillist or pixel but appear like magazine ben-day dots that interact with the gauze, producing moiré interference patterns.

It's impossible to ignore the influence that Paris has had on Hodge's practice since he moved there in 2019. Particularly with respect to colour. In 1839, French engineer Michel-Eugène Chevreul was the first to write about "The Law of Simultaneous Colour Contrast" 4, which inspired a radical shift in painting that we now know as French impressionism. Hodge's approach to colour and his abbreviated descriptions of objects (in paintings like Morning Walk, 2023) feel like an homage to Monet, Manet, Degas, Caillebotte and Delacroix.

The radial shimmers in *Landscape 1*, (2023) shape light in a similar way to Van Gogh's Starry Night (1889) or Sonia Delaunay Electric Prisms (1913) – both artists who, like Hodge, migrated to Paris and let the city enchant their studios.

The approach to bright adjacent and threaded colour used by Hodge also plays into the visual language of tapestry, which relies on simultaneous colour contrast to "mix" the limited coloured threads available. This colour logic combined with tapestry's abbreviated approach to imagery adds further weight to the artist's attentiveness to surface. Like the tapestry, Hodge employs imagery constructed like a cartoon: shapes of flat colour articulatethe picture while the lustre of the fabric fills both aesthetic and informational gaps.

Each development in Hodge's visual language comes from how paint acts as a metaphor for the world around him. Techniques applied from a studio in 21st century Paris perform differently than they do in the Illawarra in New South Wales, and Canberra where Hodge had previously made his home. This is a testament to painting's ongoing relevance, and Hodge's commitment to the form – a commitment that resists devolving into obedience. Instead, through Hodge's practice, we can see how timeless painting can be, while remaining attuned to its time and place. When the world is undergoing and recovering from social upheaval from multiple directions, the adaptability of Hodge's visual language indicates that we're likely to see our own changing world reflected back to us as we look back in years to come.



ARTISTIC INFLUENCE

SEPTEMBER 2023

Celebrated Australian painter Gregory Hodge hones his skills of abstraction while embracing life in Paris



When in Paris

Australian artist Gregory Hodge's upcoming exhibition, Through Surface, at Sullivan+Strumpf Melbourne, features new works heavily influenced by his French experiences.

"It's staying," Australian artist Gregory Hodge says adamantly over a video call from his home in Paris's 4th arrondissement as he flips his camera's view so that an enormous artwork fills the screen. "It's a new work," he continues, the intricate and illusionary creation coming into sight. "It's all the things that I've been trying to do with painting in the past couple of years." Hodge's tone is fervent as he explains the significance of the piece that dominates his dining room wall with its sheer size. "I only made it last year, but I feel like it's a real marker of this time for me. It won't go into any of the shows that are coming up," he adds. "But a lot of the work I feel is anchored off this one painting."

The work he's referencing is a showcase of paintings he rendered over a six-month period for an upcoming solo exhibition Sullivan+Strumpf is presenting in its new Melbourne space next month. "I'm going to come to Australia because I really want to see the gallery and follow the work," says Hodge of the collection that will also be previewed at Sydney Contemporary art fair from September 7–10.

The pieces on display reveal a natural progression from those he recently presented in Paris in June at Le Pavé d'Orsay. "You can identify a shift since I've been living here. [My art is] still very much embedded in the language of my previous work, but there's definitely an influence of the city." Hodge grew up in Canberra and studied at the Australian National University's (ANU) School of Art & Design where he completed honours in painting in 2005, later returning to gain his doctorate in the same subject in 2016.

"The whole art school experience was really important for me; it placed me in a space where I met people who were interested in making art full-time," he recalls. "That was the first time I'd ever met people like that."Hodge later taught painting, drawing and design at the ANU's School of Art & Design, as well as at the University of Wollongong. It's this same sense of community that the artist finds in his new home in the French capital. Hodge relocated with his wife, accomplished painter Clare Thackway, and their two young children in 2019 after travelling to the city as the recipient of the Art Gallery of NSW's Cité Internationale des Arts, Paris residency program. "It's a magnet for people in creative industries," he says fondly of Paris. "There are lots of creative people in our circle. We feel like that's a really lovely part of our journey here." While the family calls central Paris home, Hodge works out of a studio in Pantin, a small industrial suburb located on the city limits. He shares this space with his wife, along with a number of other artists. "Most of my days are spent in the studio," he says, adding that he tries not to work on weekends. "I really enjoy the separation between where we live and where we work."

Hodge's surroundings have played a vital role in his progression as an artist. From his proximity to some of the most illustrious cultural institutions in the world, to his bicycle commute by Canal Saint-Martin to the studio, passing Parc de la Villette and the Philharmonie de Paris along the way, his presence in Paris has provoked what he describes as a far more personal approach to his art.





Gregory Hodge, Collapse, 2023, acrylic on linen, 200 x 160cm

"Where the work was once a little self-reflexive, I now feel the way I'm incorporating imagery is coming from my own experiences," he says. This year he's also undertaking a studio residency at the Cité Internationale des Arts à Paris Montmartre campus.

"At the moment, my work is strongly influenced by the research I'm doing on 16th- and 17th-century tapestries that are made here in France," he says. For Hodge, this particular project has inspired a more nuanced approach to illusion, and via these works, he examines the connection between representation and abstraction while blurring the lines between the two dimensional and the three dimensional. This month he is collaborating with Galerie May for Paris Design Week, showing new paintings alongside tapestries and furniture.

"There's a gestural mark that anchors a lot of my work," Hodge says of the motif that often resembles a swatch of fabric, a body, or an element of the environment. "I think about it as a mark that stands in for something else. It's both a painterly gesture but also a metaphor. It's made to look like it's just appeared but to generate those marks there's a lot of preparation, so I have to be fairly sure about what I'm doing before I start."

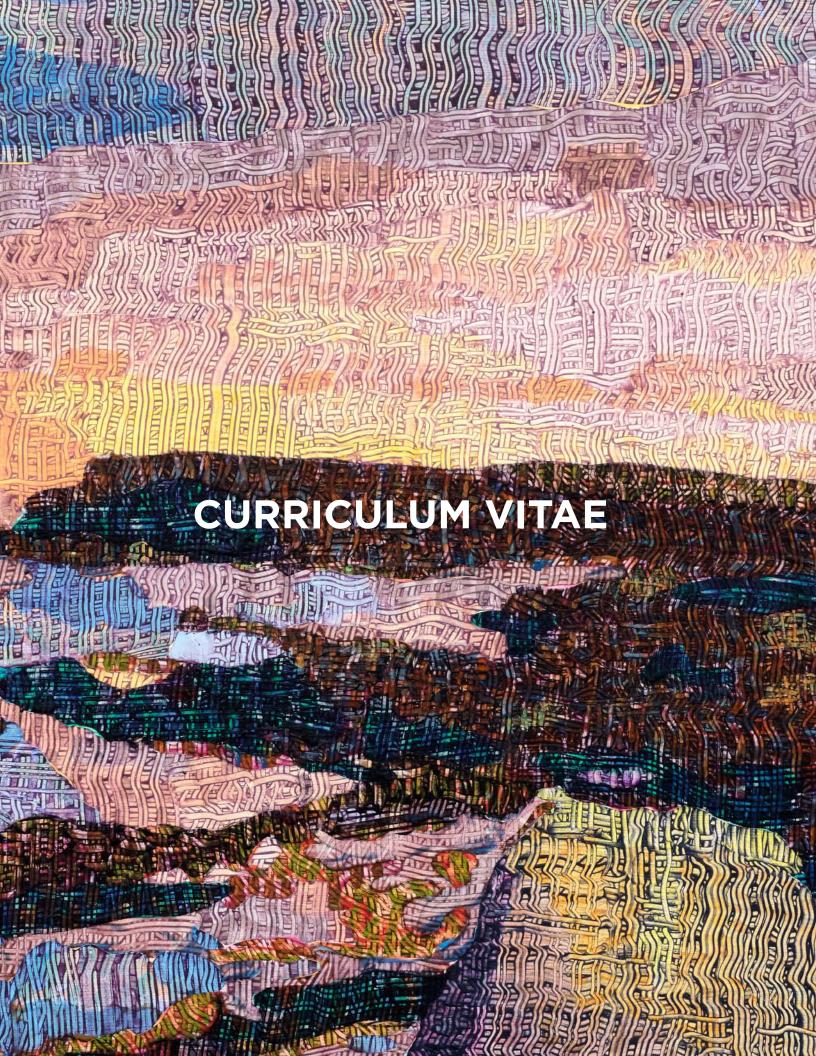
This preparation involves the creation of intricate collages. This was once a laborious practice for Hodge that required the production of miniature works, but for these collages he now engages the use of Photoshop.

"It's really important to have a sense of where I am with the work," Hodge says of his acrylic on canvas creations. "There are definitely decisions that are made on the surface and in the act of actually painting, but during the process of constructing them, I know where they're going."

Hodge credits much of his success to his schooling at ANU and his stints teaching at Australian institutions. "I was by no means driven early on," he recalls. "I was interested in art, but I didn't know any artists or what being an artist looked like. So what helped me was finding a community of other artists."

It's for this reason he cites the purchase of one of his pieces by the National Gallery of Australia in 2018 as a career highlight. "I used to spend a lot of time there as a kid," he says of the Canberra institution, "so I'm really proud that there's a work in that collection of mine." His first international residency in Rome in 2015 also holds significance. As for the paintings he values most, the crowning jewel being the work mounted on the wall behind his dining table, Hodge keeps these close to home. "I try to keep a couple of paintings a year," he remarks. While some lie in storage in Australia, others have been loaned out to family members. "I can't hold them all myself," Hodge says earnestly as he glances over his shoulder at his favourite piece.

Gregory Hodge, Through Surface, is at Sullivan+Strumpf Melbourne October 12, 2023.



GREGORY HODGE

b. 1982, Gadigal/Sydney, AU Lives and works in Paris, FR

EDUCATION

2016	PHD Doctor of Philosophy, Fine Arts, Australian National University Canberra School of Art,
	Canberra, AU

2005 BFA, Australian National University Canberra School of Art, Canberra, AU

SOLO EXHIBITIONS

2025	Echo, Nino Mier Gallery, Brussels, BE Drape and Weave, Galerie Pavé d'Orsay, Paris, FR Afterlight, Galerie Anne-Laure Buffard, Paris, FR And Then Together, Sullivan+Strumpf, Sydney, AU
2023	Through Surface, Sullivan+Strumpf, Melbourne, AU

New Paintings, Le Pavé d'Orsay, Paris, FR

2026 *tbc*, Nino Mier Gallery, New York, NY, US (forthcoming)

- 2022 Figures, Lights and Landscapes, Sullivan+Strumpf, Sydney, AU
- 2020 Every Day, Sullivan+Strumpf, Sydney, AU
- 2019 Fictions, Sullivan+Strumpf, Sydney, AU
- 2017 Signs, Sullivan+Strumpf, Sydney, AU Spectator and the Pit, Sullivan+Strumpf, Singapore, SG
- 2016 Paintings, Bus Projects, Melbourne, AU
- 2015 Collages, Sullivan+Strumpf, Syndey, AU
 A Fabled Gesture, Canberra Contemporary Art Space, Canberra, AU
- 2014 Unfolding, Sullivan+Strumpf, Sydney, AU
- 2013 *Slide,* Sullivan+Strumpf, Sydney, AU *Introduction (with Clare Thackway)*, Firstdraft, Sydney, AU
- 2012 Monsoon Crossing, TCB Art Inc, Melbourne, AU
- 2011 Universe, Blindside Gallery, Melbourne, AU
- 2010 Spinning Tops, Firstdraft, Sydney, AU City Dwellers, Scheffer Gallery, Sydney, AU
- 2006 A Place for Gravity, M16 Artspace, Canberra, AU

GROUP EXHIBITIONS

2025	STRATA, Nino Mier Gallery, New York, US Canberra Art Biennale, Canberra Museum, Canberra, AU Threads, Sullivan+Strumpf, Marina Bay Sands, Singapore, SG Free Form, Sullivan+Strumpf, Melbourne, AU
2024	The Water Understands, Manly Art Gallery & Museum, Sydney, AU
2023	TERRA, curated by Jenn Ellis, L'Ancien Théâtre, Beaune, FR New Paintings, Paris Design Week, Galerie May, Paris, FR LUMA, curated by Jenn Ellis, Silbury + East, London, UK
2022	Annual Group Show, Sullivan+Strumpf, Sydney, AU
2019	Brisbane Brief, Festival House, Brisbane, AU Rememberane, The American Club, Singapore, SG Annual Group Show, Sullivan+Strumpf, Sydney, AU Sydney Contemporary: Installation Contemporary, Carriageworks Sydney, Sydney, AU Sydney Contemporary, Sullivan+Strumpf, Carriageworks, Sydney, Sydney, AU
2018	Annual Group Show, Sullivan+Strumpf, Sydney, AU
2017	Sydney Contemporary, Sullivan+Strumpf, Carriageworks, Sydney, AU Art Stage Singapore, Sullivan+Strumpf, Marina Bay Sands, Singapore, CH
2016	Tricking the eye – contemporary trompe l'oeil, Geelong Gallery, Victoria, AU Annual Group Show, Sullivan+Strumpf, Sydney, AU Art Stage Jakarta, Sullivan+Strumpf, Sheraton Grand Jakarta Gandaria City Hotel, Jakarta, ID
2015	Right Here, Right Now, Penrith Regional Gallery, New South Wales, AU Fine Arts March Mostra, British School at Rome, Rome, IT Ten Year Anniversary Group Show, Sullivan+Strumpf, Sydney, AU
2014	Mind the Gap, Casula Powerhouse Arts Centre, New South Wales, AU SSFA14, Sulli van+Strumpf, Sydney, AU
2013	Art on Paper Prize, Hazelhurst Regional Gallery & Arts Centre, New South Wales, AU Rumble, Wellington St Projects, Sydney, AU SSFA13, Sullivan+Strumpf, Sydney, AU
2012	Model Citizens, New Acton Arts Festival, Canberra, AU You Give Good Colour, Sophie Gannon Gallery, Melbourne, AU Clean Living, Contemporary Art Space Tasmania, Hobart, AU Word of Mouth, Canberra Museum and Gallery, Canberra, AU

2011 Introduction, Basso, Berlin, DE

You're Welcome, Melbourne Art Rooms, Melbourne, AU Things we Denote to Keep, Sawtooth ARI, Launceston, AU 2010 ANCA Art Space & ANU School of Art, Canberra, AU Positive/Negative, Artereal Gallery, Sydney, AU Audible Surface, M16 Art Space, Canberra, AU Partly Cloudy, ANU School of Art Gallery, Canberra, AU 2009 Space Spaces, S.P.A.C.E Gallery, Launceston, AU 2007 Picture This, ANU Painting Alumni Show VCA, Melbourne, AU 2005 Australian National University Canberra School of Art Graduating Exhibition, Canberra, AU You Can't Do That on Television, Front Gallery, Canberra, AU Common Ground, SOA Foyer Gallery, Canberra, AU 2004 Tabula Rasa, Milton & Ulladulla Contemporary Arts Festival, New South Wales, AU Common Ground, Gunnedah Regional Gallery, Gunnedah, AU 2000 Sub-Urban, National Gallery of Australia, Canberra, AU **AWARDS AND PRIZES** Finalist, Arthur Guy Memorial Prize, Bendigo Art Gallery, Victoria, AU Finalist, The Wynne Prize, Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney, AU Finalist, The King's School Art Prize, Sydney, AU 2022 Finalist, Fishers Ghost Art Prize, Campbeltown Arts Centre, Campbelltown, New South Wales, ΑIJ 2019 Finalist, Arthur Guy Memorial Prize, Bendigo Art Gallery, Victoria, AU 2018 Finalist, Geelong Art Prize, Victoria, AU Finalist, Sir John Sulman Prize, Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney, AU 2017 Finalist, Sir John Sulman Prize, Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney, AU 2014 Finalist, Fishers Ghost Art Prize, Campbeltown Arts Centre, Campbelltown Arts Centre, New South Wales, AU RESIDENCIES 2024 Cité Internationale des arts, Paris, FR 2019 Cité Internationale des Arts, Paris, FR

The Kids are Alright, Paper Mill Gallery, Sydney, AU

PUBLIC COLLECTIONS

2014 Australia Council Residency, The British School, Rome, IT

2011 Studio Residency Basso-Berlin, Berlin, DE

ACT Chief Ministers Collection, Canberra, AU Artbank, Sydney, AU Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney, AU Murray Darling Basin Commission, Canberra, AU National Gallery of Australia, Canberra, AU Thrivent Art Collection, Minneapolis, MN, US Wollongong Art Gallery, New South Wales, AU

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 Mark Bayly, "Word of Mouth.", Catalogue Essay, Canberra Museum and Gallery
- 2011 Mark Bayly, "Universe.", Blindside Editions, Blindside Gallery Priscilla Borne. "Talking Through Arts." 2Ser107.3FM
- Cash Brown, "Positive/Negative, Exhibition Essay.", Artereal Gallery
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