

albertz benda

CHRISTOPHER LE BRUN: WORKS ON PAPER

APRIL 9 – MAY 16, 2026

ALBERTZ BENDA, NEW YORK, NY



Study for St Erth 2, 2, 2022, Acrylic on paper
41 1/8 x 29 3/4 inches, 104.5 x 75.5 cm



Portrait of the Artist © Christopher Le Brun Courtesy of the
Artist and albertz benda. Photo: Maureen M. Evans

New York, NY | albertz benda is pleased to present *Works on Paper*, Christopher Le Brun's fifth solo exhibition with the gallery, on view from April 9 to May 16, 2026. It will be the first exhibition in the US to focus solely on his paintings on paper, revealing the generative exchange between drawing, printmaking, and painting – all three processes essential to Le Brun's practice.

Le Brun belongs to an illustrious lineage of painter-draftsmen for whom paper is a medium of creative renewal, where the artist's intention is intimately revealed and the exchange between thought and mark most immediate.

Charged with lyrical intensity, the works on view pair the freedom that paper has always afforded Le Brun with the full richness of his painting. For Le Brun, paper is not a neutral base, it is a found object of sorts. Most of these paintings begin with a trial proof - an initial print pulled from a woodblock or etching plate - which he then layers with oil paint. "I like the paper itself much too much to throw away all those promising beginnings and near misses...heavy paper is very robust and can easily support the unlimited further work and thinking time that making a lasting work of art may require."

Le Brun's larger canvases call for the viewer to move through the composition: painting as a heightened physical and emotional encounter. The works on paper operate differently; scaled to the human body, they carry the intimacy of their making into the act of viewing. The contained scale does not preclude complexity or subtlety: shifts of color and richness of surface texture reveal themselves slowly.

Recurring motifs run throughout *Works on Paper*. An enduring image in Le Brun's early practice, the sphere is at once a compositional and symbolic presence. It reappears here transformed by abstraction yet grounded in direct observation. Since relocating to Somerset in 2022, Le Brun's attunement to the natural world has deepened through immersion. The grid, meanwhile, operates as a mark that has become central to his work over the past decade, in these works drawn directly onto the surface with a paint tube.

With *Works on Paper*, we are offered a cipher into Le Brun's oeuvre - not through preparatory drawings or studies, but through paintings on paper, each a layered record of accumulation and revelation.

"Many things that I most value from all periods happen to have been made on paper, simply because that was to hand, and with little thought at the time of what to do with them or what they were for. Paradoxically, in the long run, that may have preserved an element of truth."



Moon Rising 6, 2025, Oil on paper
41 3/8 x 29 7/8 inches, 105 x 76 cm

ABOUT CHRISTOPHER LE BRUN

Christopher Le Brun is one of the leading British painters of his generation, celebrated internationally since the 1980s, making both figurative and abstract work in painting, sculpture and print. He was an instrumental public figure in his role as President of the Royal Academy of Arts in London from 2011 to 2019. He was awarded a Knighthood for services to the Arts in the 2021 New Year Honours.

Le Brun employs a mastery of touch and colour alongside a profound understanding of art history and a wide range of visual, musical and literary sources. He has remained consistent in adhering to what he feels to be the essential poetry and pleasure of painting for its own sake, led by intuition and visual imagination and resistant to external justification.

His interest in the formal possibilities of painting has led recently to the development of modular compositions from single pieces through to large and highly complex canvases, triptychs and monumental multipart paintings, extending the limits of abstract pictorial composition.

A heightened awareness of the physicality of the painting process with its dramatic tension between revealing and covering, has been a central feature of his work that unites all its phases whether abstract or figurative.

Born in Portsmouth in 1951, Christopher Le Brun trained at the Slade and Chelsea Schools of Art, London. In his early career, he was a double prizewinner at the John Moores exhibitions (1978, 1980), also showing in the Venice Biennale (1980) and the ground-breaking exhibition 'Zeitgeist' (1982) at the Martin-Gropius Bau, Berlin. His recent solo exhibitions have been at Almine Rech, Paris, France (2025); Albertz Benda, New York, NY, USA (2024); Royal Academy of Arts, London, UK (2024); Albertz Benda, Los Angeles, USA (2023); Red Brick Art Museum, Beijing, China (2021); Albertz Benda, New York,

USA (2020); Southampton Art Gallery, Southampton, UK (2018); Wolfson College, Cambridge, UK (2018). Le Brun served as a trustee of Tate from 1990–1995; The National Gallery from 1996–2003; the Dulwich Picture Gallery from 2000–2005; and as a founding trustee of the Royal Drawing School from 2003–2016. He was a trustee of the National Portrait Gallery between 2012–19. He was elected the first Professor of Drawing of the Royal Academy, London in 2000, where he also served as President from 2011–2019, the 26th since Sir Joshua Reynolds and the youngest since Lord Leighton in 1878.

His work is in many major museum collections including Museum of Fine Art, Houston, USA; Tate Gallery, London, UK; Museum of Modern Art, New York, USA; British Museum, London, UK; Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney, Australia; Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, USA; Victoria & Albert Museum, London, UK; Scottish National Gallery of Modern Art, Edinburgh, Scotland; The Whitworth, Manchester, UK; Red Brick Art Museum, Beijing, China, and Yale Center for British Art, New Haven, USA. Le Brun's public sculptures include 'Union (horse with two discs)' at the Museum of London; 'City Wing' on the site of the former stock exchange at Threadneedle Street; and 'The Monument to Victor Hugo' on the quayside in St Helier, Jersey.

ABOUT ALBERTZ BENDA

Founded in 2015, albertz benda is a contemporary art gallery with an international program exploring material and textuality as well as cultural and social dialogues. Our Chelsea space is host to rotating exhibitions with an emphasis on solo presentations of emerging artists, new research into historical figures, and thematic group exhibitions. In 2021, the gallery expanded to a second location in Los Angeles. Featuring an evolving identity separate from our New York program, the LA space is realized within the context of a domestic setting, advancing new connections between visual arts, craft, and design.

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