

## Press Release

Stephen Chambers  
Recent Paintings

21 May – 4 July 2025



LONDON, April 2025 — Lyndsey Ingram is pleased to present Stephen Chambers *Recent Paintings*, the artist's inaugural exhibition at the gallery. This exhibition brings together two series of oil paintings—The *Berlin Flowers* and *Obsidian Mirrors*.

Stephen Chambers RA divides his time between London and Berlin, attributing his time in Germany to the pursuit of a life less ordinary. The *Berlin Flowers* began in 2020, during the first year of the COVID-19 pandemic, while Chambers was living in Berlin. On the first Saturday of each month, he purchased a bunch of seasonal flowers from the weekend market and placed them in different vases, often belonging to the artist's friends; *Edwina's Vase*, *Yorck's Vase Red* & *Rika's Japanese Vase*, forming the focus of the composition. During the lockdown period florists were deemed an essential service and were allowed to stay open. These paintings became a quiet ritual for Chambers, a visual calendar of the year the world stood still; marking time through blossom and seasonal shift—an understated yet poignant measure of months passed during the worldwide lockdown.

The *Obsidian Mirrors* draws on the mysterious allure of polished volcanic glass historically used by the Aztecs and figures like John Dee, the Elizabethan astrologer. These mirrors were used in many ways, including for medicinal and protective purposes and for divination, as they were believed to reveal the realms of gods and ancestors. Chambers draws on the supernatural associations with these mirrors to create a frame within a frame; they appear against vividly coloured backgrounds as mysterious floating portals.

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Both bodies of work are painted in oil with the colour and compositional clarity that defines Chambers' wider oeuvre and are extremely complex. Chambers begins by painting the flowers with intense precision, only adding the background once he is satisfied with the vase and various blooms. Though their subject matter is traditional, Chambers uses the concept of the still life as a way of capturing a strange moment in time as well as recording the poignancy of the short lifespan of a vase of flowers. There is as much attention placed on the branches, broken stems and wilting stalks as there is on flowers within the vases. It is a deliberate attempt of the artist to transpose the idea of the still life.

As Chambers notes: "I know where 'flower' paintings stand in the hierarchy of art's subject matter; beneath the sole of the boot. With that in mind, these are paintings of empowerment... a wish to add gravitas to the maligned, give individuality to the familiar, and status to the downtrodden."

In addition to these paintings, we will have a selection of Chambers' portraits, including *The Outliers*, an ongoing project focusing on people of interest to the artist who he is unlikely, or unable, to ever meet. These characters are linked only by their clarity of thought, affirmative voices, and positive contribution to their eras and surroundings.

Much like the Italian Renaissance frescoes, Chambers often constructs visual stories with a dreamlike, theatrical quality. Layered with symbolism, his paintings explore complex themes through rich storytelling and imaginative composition. His use of rich, warm, and sometimes weathered colour palettes can echo the aged patina of old plaster walls. Chambers' appreciation of ornate surfaces shares a strong kinship with Mughal miniatures and Japanese woodcuts, which were meticulously detailed and richly patterned. His use of bold outlines and graphic clarity feels very aligned with the aesthetics of woodblock printing as he elevates the everyday subject. Chambers's style is unmistakably contemporary, and the work feels like the pulling of threads from different cultural and historical traditions to build his own visual language.

*Recent Paintings* will be on view at Lyndsey Ingram from 21 May – 5 July 2025.

## About the Artist

Stephen Chambers (b. 1960) is a British artist renowned for his distinctive approach to both painting and printmaking. His work is characterised by highly imaginative imagery, and his use of colour and pattern creates a rich visual texture. The work often explores themes of the human experience, relationships, and mythological references, employing a visual language that balances abstraction with figuration.

Chambers' recent solo exhibitions include *Chapters, Six Suits of Prints*, Royal Academy, London (2024), *The Court of Redonda*, Hastings Contemporary (2020); travelling from The Heong Gallery, Cambridge (2018), and the 57th International Art Exhibition, La Biennale di Venezia, Venice (2017).

His work is held in many public collections, including the British Museum, the Royal Academy of Arts, the Victoria & Albert Museum, Arts Council of Great Britain, the Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge, and The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York.

In 2005, Chambers was elected a Royal Academician by the Royal Academy of Arts, London, and in 2014, he was awarded an Honorary Fellowship by Downing College, Cambridge. In 2019, Chambers was appointed Chair of the Exhibition Committee, Royal Academy of Arts, London.

### Image details – from left to right:

1. *Berlin Flowers (Edwina's Vase)*, 2020, Oil on linen, 70 x 80 cm (27 1/2 x 31 1/2 in)
2. *Berlin Flowers (Rhode's Vase)*, 2021, Oil on linen, 70 x 80 cm (27 1/2 x 31 1/2 in)
3. *Obsidian Mirror 6*, 2024, Oil on panel, 58 x 48 cm (22 7/8 x 18 7/8 in)
4. *Obsidian Mirror 4*, 2024, Oil on panel, 55 x 45 cm (21 5/8 x 17 3/4 in)