

OPERA GALLERY



Thomas Dillon, *Hawkeye*, 2025, Acrylic, ink and dye on canvas,
203.2 x 228.6 cm | 80 x 90 in

DUBAI

Thomas Dillon The Raw and the Cooked

OCTOBER 23 – NOVEMBER 17, 2025

September 2025—Opera Gallery Dubai is pleased to present ‘The Raw and the Cooked’, the first solo exhibition in the city by Philadelphia-based artist Thomas Dillon, running from October 23 to November 17. The show unveils a new series of large-scale works that fuse figuration and abstraction in striking compositions.

Borrowing its title from Claude Lévi-Strauss’s seminal text *The Raw and the Cooked* (1964), the exhibition reflects the anthropologist’s exploration of myths shaped by oppositions such as raw/cooked and nature/culture. Dillon translates this duality into painting, embracing tension rather than resolution. His canvases oscillate between immediacy and construction with kaleidoscopic layers of surfaces. The works feel spontaneous and unfiltered, yet simultaneously rooted in suggestion and form.

Each piece moves through different stages of realization: some raw and direct, others fragmented. The result is not a fixed composition but a living surface, defined by absence, instability, and the ever-present possibility of form.

“Painting can no longer compete with photography, video, or algorithms in speed or clarity,” says Dillon. “Its survival depends on being large, physical, unresolved, and immediate – something to be confronted directly, like a bear in the forest.” By invoking Lévi-Strauss, Dillon positions painting itself as not just a tool for closure, but as a system of relations through which meaning continually emerges.

“We’re thrilled to host Thomas Dillon’s first solo exhibition in the Middle East,” says Sylvain Gaillard, Director of Opera Gallery Dubai. “For audiences in Dubai, *The Raw and the Cooked* is an invitation to witness an artist at a pivotal moment, presenting a body of work that is both deeply personal and conceptually expansive.” In an age of digital efficiency and instantaneous information, Dillon’s practice reaffirms the enduring power of ambiguity.

OPERA GALLERY



About Thomas Dillon

Thomas Dillon (b. 1986) is a Philadelphia-based painter whose work explores painting as a site of tension, transformation, and myth. Born in Staten Island, New York, his self-taught painting practice developed from earlier creative pursuits in music and writing. His paintings have been exhibited at Opera Gallery in Madrid in May 2025 in the solo show 'Body Work'. His practice foregrounds painting's capacity to resist the speed and clarity of digital media, asserting instead its physical, unresolved, and immediate presence.

About Opera Gallery

Founded in Singapore in 1994, Opera Gallery has forged a network of galleries worldwide with locations in London, Paris, New York, Geneva, Madrid and Dubai, establishing itself as one of the leading forces within the international art market.

Headed by Gilles Dyan, Chairman and Founder, Opera Gallery specialises in modern, post-war, and contemporary art. In addition, the gallery represents international emerging artists such as Andy Denzler, Pieter Obels and Gustavo Nazareno, alongside internationally recognised names such as Ron Arad, Manolo Valdés and Anselm Reyle.

For more than 30 years, Opera Gallery's mission has been to showcase the dynamic, innovative, and diverse expressions of modern and contemporary art through its ambitious yearly exhibition programming and collaborations with private collections and leading public institutions. Opera Gallery in Dubai is led by Sylvain Gaillard.

Press Contact

Marion Kerboul | marion@copia-group.com | +971 55 153 4289

Opera Gallery Dubai

Gate Village Building 3

DIFC Po Box 506737

dubai@operagallery.com

T +971 (0)4 323 0909

Sun - Wed: 10 am - 10 pm

Thu: 10 am - Midnight

Fri: 2 pm - 9 pm

Sat: 11 am - 9 pm

operagallery.com