

# OPERA GALLERY



(L-R) Julien Rubat, *Painting 1001.96*, 2025, acrylic and paper on canvas, 62 x 52 cm | 24.4 x 20.5 in;  
Pieter Obels, *Tell me I never knew that*, 2025, corten steel on wooden base, 182 x 125 x 75 cm

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## Obels – Rubat: A Dialogue

11 SEPTEMBER – 18 OCTOBER, 2025

July 2025—Opera Gallery Madrid is proud to announce ‘**Obels – Rubat: A Dialogue**’, a two-artist exhibition that brings together the abstracted paintings of French artist Julien Rubat and the gravity-defying steel sculptures of Dutch sculptor Pieter Obels. Running from **11 September to 18 October, 2025** and featured as part of **Apertura Madrid Gallery Weekend**, the exhibition stages a encounter between two distinct visual languages—one rooted in paper and pigment, the other in industrial corten steel—linked by shared explorations around the broader themes of motion and transformation.

Concurrently, Obels’ work will also be showcased in a group show of outdoor sculptures at **Museo Lázaro Galdiano** presented as a collaboration between Arte Madrid and the museum (**11 September – 26 October**), extending his sculptural presence across the city.

Rubat’s richly textured works begin with delicate sheets of paper carefully blotted, carved, and peeled atop vibrant layers of acrylic. His layered process creates surfaces that resemble bas-relief sculptures, where paper becomes sculptural. The results evoke natural patterns—cellular structures, weathered landscapes, eroded rock. Their exact configuration is determined by a number of factors within and beyond the artist’s control.

In contrast, Obels harnesses the natural oxidation of corten steel, coaxing an industrial substance into something fluid, weightless, and alive. His works appear impossibly light, with sinuous, ribbon-like forms twisting and floating in space, paradoxically challenging the mass of their material. Obels’ sculptural practice can be seen as a meditation on balance, tension, and the illusion of movement. The exhibition also includes a selection of Obels’ works on paper, which reflect his interest in form and sculpture from a two-dimensional perspective of Obels’ works on paper, which reflect his interest in form and sculpture from a two-dimensional perspective.

“We are honoured to present the powerful works of Pieter Obels and Julien Rubat together in Madrid,” said Belén Herrera Ottino, Director of Opera Gallery Madrid. “Though their practices are vastly different, both artists share a deep reverence for their material and an experimental approach to process. Seen side by side, their works engage in an expressive conversation around lyricism and abstraction.”

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(L-R) Julien Rubat, © Studio SLB; Pieter Obels, © René van der Hulst

## About Julien Rubat

Born in Chambéry, France in 1980, Julien Rubat is a contemporary artist whose works are held in private collections across Europe, Asia, and the United States. His work has appeared in more than ten group exhibitions with Opera Gallery. In 2020, he was an artist-in-resident at Vermont Studio Center, where he was also a fellowship recipient. Rubat currently lives and works between the French Alps and Paris.

## About Pieter Obels

Born in Kruisland, Netherlands in 1968, Pieter Obels has featured prominently in solo and group exhibitions across Europe and the U.S., including The Solo Project at Art Basel and the Schweizerische Triennale der Skulptur in Switzerland. His work appears in institutions such as the Museum of Contemporary Art Los Angeles, The Morgan Library NY, as well as the Farjam Collection in Dubai and the Abu Dhabi Royal Collection. His sculptures have been displayed publicly in Gemeente Roosendaal in the Netherlands, Berkeley Square in London, Günzburg Sculpture Park in Germany and the gardens of Château de Vullierens in Switzerland. Obels currently lives and works in Tilburg, Netherlands.

## 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 Madrid is led by Belén Herrera Ottino.

## Press Contact

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Monday-Friday: 10:00 h - 20:00 h  
Saturday: 11:00 h - 20:00 h  
Sunday and holidays: Closed

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