

## Press Release — For Immediate Release

18 June – 10 August 2025

### **dumb ritual**

#### **HENRY WARD**

##### **Vivienne Roberts Projects**

The Bindery, 53 Hatton Garden, London EC1N 8HN

Vivienne Roberts Projects is pleased to present **dumb ritual**, a solo exhibition of paintings by **Henry Ward**, taking place from **18 June to 10 August 2025** at The Bindery, 53 Hatton Garden, London.

Thinking aloud is a process where it's unclear where thought is leading. It's an attempt to work something out, without knowing what the conclusion will be. Painting shares this quality. It is a language that reveals itself through action - beyond planning, beyond intellect.

Painting is also physical. It engages the senses. Materials react with each other in ways that generate feeling and sensation. Colour evokes mood, and its tones and juxtapositions create movement and change.

The mutable self with its failures and small triumphs tries again and again to begin, in a kind of dumb ritual, hoping that something new will surface beyond conscious control.

From his studio in Woolwich, Henry Ward embraces this uncertainty. Quoting Duchamp, he says he aspires to be "as stupid as a painter". "I investigate the formal qualities of paint; thick and thin; opaque and translucent; the gestural and the graphic, bringing different languages together in a single composition."

Ward's paintings suggest biomorphic forms -abstract, yet not unfamiliar. These conjure imaginary beings that resist full recognition. The mind may reach for meaning, for the comfort of naming, but Ward is not concerned with whether we 'see' something. In works such as *Clavel* and *Lean*, legs or flippers appear. These are creatures of an undefined world - actors in formation, animated by humour and pathos. "I realised there was something about the distinct forms that was working, and it's something I've been picking up on in the work since. Forms that are almost like characters. Like they've got personalities, perhaps a little anamorphic, a bit comic."

There is a warmth in these paintings. They beckon and hold your gaze. Over time they become familiar, like new friends offering more each time you return to them.

#### **Exhibition Details**

- **Private View:** Tuesday 17 June, 6–8 pm (RSVP)
- **Dates:** 18 June – 10 August 2025

- **Venue:** Vivienne Roberts Projects, The Bindery, 53 Hatton Garden, London EC1N 8HN
- **Opening Hours:** Tuesday–Saturday, 11 am–6 pm (or by appointment)

## Press & Sales Enquiries

Vivienne Roberts

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High-resolution images and interviews with the artist available on request.

## Notes to Editors

- **Henry Ward** London-based painter, educator and writer, (b.1971) is interested in line, shape, form and colour relationships. The major body of work presented in this show and in his recent monograph 'Bethany' was created during and following a residency at the Josef and Anni Albers Foundation in Bethany, Connecticut in 2023, and another residency in Morvan, Burgundy in summer 2024. The publication features a foreword by Fritz Horstman from the Albers Foundation, an in-conversation with American abstract painter Amy Sillman, an essay by British writer and curator Jonathan Watkins, and an interview with London-based writer and curator Jenni Lomax.
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- Henry Ward lives and works in London. He studied at Winchester School of Art, Goldsmiths College and Middlesex University. Ward has exhibited nationally and internationally and has been included in the Trinity Buoy Wharf Drawing Prize in 2018, 2019 and 2022; the Wells Contemporary in 2020 and 2024; the BEEP Biannual in 2020 and 2022 and the inaugural Football Art Prize in 2022. Ward was included in "A Generous Space" at Hastings Contemporary and "A Generous Space 2" at the New Art Gallery, Walsall. He has paintings in the Soho House collection. In 2023 he was artist in residence at The Albers Foundation in Connecticut, USA. Alongside his painting Ward is a respected educator, having taught and lectured internationally, and is widely published.
- Recent solo exhibitions include *Bethany* (2025) *Engine Room* (2024) and *Medusa & Other Stories* (2024).

## About Vivienne Roberts Projects:

A common thread runs through the art exhibited with Vivienne Roberts Projects: poetic imagery - something these artists seem to share with Paul Klee, whose influence was extensive on modern XXth century painters and continues today. It is art that is timeless, poetic and personal, characterised by a strong line, whimsical and impish humour, a dialogue with nature, organic or biomorphic imagery, sensitivity to colour gradation, a meditative quality, and a developed independence from realism.

Dedicated to showcasing groundbreaking contemporary art, Vivienne Roberts Projects fosters artistic dialogue, connecting diverse audiences with transformative experiences.