

Juan Uslé: *En la pared del mar*

5 December 2025–7 February 2026

Press Release

Frith Street Gallery is delighted to present an exhibition of new paintings by Juan Uslé. It follows the artist's major solo exhibition at Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofia, Madrid.

Highly mindful of tonality, Juan Uslé explores colour but strives not for intense chromatic effect, rather the gradations at times echo the Spanish countryside where he grew up. The vibrations of certain light and shade are also constant elements, creating a momentary resonance, like sunlight falling through venetian blinds or a distant horizon. The paintings on show have been made in response to Spain's northern coast and the title *En la pared del mar* translates as *On the sea wall*.

Uslé's nuanced works evoke intriguing atmospheres or environments. His paintings have no narrative impulse, instead they are an attempt to capture time – moments past and present are condensed within a single luminous image created from swathes or narrow bands of oil paint. The canvases in this exhibition, which range from the intimate to the very large, have evolved in different ways, each emerging with a very distinct character.

These rhythmic abstractions grow from the line which is sometimes applied at speed and with spontaneity or evolves slowly and deliberately as the brush is moved by hand at each heartbeat across the canvas. The artist prepares the paint in his studio in daylight, but the paintings themselves are often created at night when the ambient silence allows him to listen to his body. The vertical marks could be read as intervals between the pulse; they make it visible and remind us of the importance of our own sensory and experiential capacity.

The paintings exploit the nature of opposites: past and present, organic and geometric forms, randomness and order and the simultaneous physicality of paint and its ability to disappear into something ethereal. This subtle and sophisticated body of work reflects on the possibilities of painting itself.

Juan Uslé (b. 1954, Santander, Spain) lives and works between Saro (Cantabria) Spain, and New York, USA. His work has been widely exhibited internationally, recent solo exhibitions include: *Breathing Bay*, Palacete Del Embarcadero, Santander, Spain (2025); *De Luz y Sangre*, Sala Verónicas, Murcia, Spain (2023); *Eye and Landscape*, Bombas Gens Centre d'Art, Valencia, Spain (2021); and *Dark Light*, Kunstmuseum Bonn, Bonn, Germany (2014), travelling to Centro Galego de Arte Contemporánea (CGAC) (2014)

Uslé's retrospective *Ese barco en la montaña* opens at Museo Nacional de Arte Reina Sofia, Madrid, Spain on 26 November 2025 and runs until 20 April 2026.