

Pilar Corrias

Press Release

Pierre Knop
Fireflies Under Fever Sky
4 April–10 May 2025

Pilar Corrias
51 Conduit Street
London W1S 2YT



Pierre Knop, *Cornwall Summer, 2025*. Courtesy the artist and Pilar Corrias, London

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Pilar Corrias is pleased to present *Fireflies Under Fever Sky*, a solo exhibition of new paintings by Pierre Knop. For his first solo show with the gallery, Knop plunges the viewer into kaleidoscopic landscapes – lush forests, imposing mountain ranges, chocolate-box village scenes and dramatic seascapes – that unsettle as much as they seduce.

Knop's approach begins with personal archives: intimate fragments of photographs, art history and fleeting visual memory become the foundation for expansive, surreal vistas that stretch the limits of imagination. Referencing a diverse range of artists, from Nicolas Poussin or Caspar David Friedrich to Pierre Bonnard, as well as contemporary photography, Knop extends the tradition of European landscape painting. For Knop, the historical weight of the genre offers a unique playground in which many modes of painting, such as Surrealism or the colour fields of Abstract Expressionism, can be tested alongside contemporary notions of the natural world.

The artist uniquely deploys colour and material (oil paint, pastel, ink and pencil) to alienate the familiar, to confound what we think we know. Using a feverish colour palette, a current of electricity runs through Knop's bucolic scenes. The forest canopy, cast in indigo blue, stretches out across scarlet-red skies; plantlife glows unnaturally amid the undergrowth. The hallucinatory effect is similar to that of the after-image, the visual sensation that continues after a brief exposure to an intensely bright stimulus. Furthermore, the proliferation of techniques – impasto meets delicate linework and leaky pools of colour – amplifies the sense of polyphony, tuning into what the artist describes as the vital hum beneath the surface of all living beings.

In Knop's worlds, the landscape is less an idyll than it is a stage for an impending event. The suns and moons that preside over his skies like portents allude to a foreboding undercurrent of hidden disturbances, waiting in the near distance. Nonetheless, in several

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compositions small human figures pause in a moment of reflection, savouring their escape from the rat race and the chaos of urban life. In *Fireflies Under Fever Sky* a finely-tuned affective register is at work, where the serene and the menacing, the jarring and the soft, sit side by side. The rampant vegetation that grows in these lands stands as much for nature's bounty as it does the tangle of emotional and psychological states that subjectivity requires us to find our way through.

Pierre Knop was born in 1982 in Nancy, France, and raised in Germany. He graduated from Kunstakademie Düsseldorf in 2013, and now lives and works in Cologne, Germany.

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