

Lévy Gorvy Dayan



Ithell Colquhoun. *Song of Songs*, 1933. Oil on canvas, 30 × 24½ inches (76.2 × 62.3 cm)

LÉVY GORVY DAYAN PRESENTS EXHIBITION EXPLORING THEMES OF MAGIC, MYSTICISM, AND THE OCCULT IN ART

Enchanted Alchemies: Magic, Mysticism, and the Occult in Art

October 1 – December 21, 2024

Lévy Gorvy Dayan

Empress Club, 35 Dover Street, London

LONDON—On October 1, 2024, Lévy Gorvy Dayan opens *Enchanted Alchemies*, an exhibition exploring themes of magic, mysticism, and the occult in art. The exhibition places historical figures such as Gertrude Abercrombie, Eileen Agar, Leonora Carrington, Elda Cerrato, Ithell Colquhoun, Leonor Fini, and Monica Sjöö in dialogue with contemporary practitioners, including Francesco Clemente, Chitra Ganesh, Alejandro Jodorowsky, Bharti Kher, Linder, and Goshka Macuga. Featuring over 50 works by 27 artists

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Ithell Colquhoun. *Alcove II*, 1948. Oil on board, 9 × 13½ inches (22.9 × 34.3 cm)

spanning painting, sculpture, ceramic, watercolor, and collage—some newly created—*Enchanted Alchemies* brings together a range of expressive approaches to magic and mystical thinking. The exhibition display will evolve through two phases to reflect the transformative and alchemical themes of the artists' works.

One hundred years ago, André Breton wrote his first *Manifesto of Surrealism*. Notions of magic, alchemy, and the occult would, as his ideas matured, become a central part of the Surrealist movement. This realm of esoteric interests has been given renewed attention in the 21st century. *Enchanted Alchemies* continues this conversation, navigating the ethereal realms of Surrealism and its enduring legacy through three thematic chapters: “Occultism and Dreams,” “Magic and Mysticism,” and “Alchemy: Enchantment and Transformations.” Each chapter examines how artists over the past century have engaged with age-old occult practices, casting them as forces capable of significantly shaping—and reshaping—personal, cultural, and creative narratives.

The work of British Surrealist Ithell Colquhoun, for example, urges us to consider magic beyond notions of ritual and spellcasting. Rather, she sought to convey an all-encompassing, dynamic force that powerfully permeated every aspect of reality. Works like *Alcove II* (1948) demonstrate how she used Surrealist automatic techniques—in this instance, decalcomania—as a means of channeling deeper, subconscious truths. Colquhoun's automatism resulted in what she called “mantic stains,” possessing alchemical powers of creation and divination.

Like many women connected to the Surrealist movement, Colquhoun was frequently overlooked in her

Lévy Gorvy Dayan



Leonora Carrington. *The Lovers*, 1987. Oil on canvas, 29½ × 40½ inches (75 × 102.9 cm)

lifetime. Her practice is currently undergoing a long overdue reappraisal, showing her to be a pioneering voice alongside her contemporaries Leonora Carrington and Leonor Fini. In *Enchanted Alchemies*, their insights are juxtaposed with the works of other women artists who are establishing new pathways for formulating relationships between art-making and occult influences. Bharti Kher's *Alchemy Drawings* (2019), for example, crafts a language of magic through the use of circles and mark-making, wherein tensions between materiality and spirituality resonate a profound sense of transformation. Chitra Ganesh's work immerses us in a dynamic interplay of figures and magical symbols, weaving together mythologies and narrative traditions in a manner that defies linear constraints.

The exhibition will unveil completely new works by Linder and Ganesh, as well as by Claire Lehmann, Pascale Montandon-Jodorowsky, and Georg Wilson. In addition, significant pieces by Stacey Gillian Abe, Caroline Bachmann, Jaider Esbell, Bracha L. Ettinger, Julia Isídrez, Victor Man, pascALEjandro, Rachel Rose, Lucy Stein, Francis Upritchard, and Aleksandra Waliszewska are included.

Also present in *Enchanted Alchemies* are works by Alejandro Jodorowsky, a singular artist whose practice spans much of the epoch that the exhibition is considering. A renowned filmmaker, visual artist, and comic book writer, he worked with Carrington during the latter's mature career and continues a practice that engages with magical concepts today. His practice is rooted in a distinct Surrealist-inflected mysticism, wherein the physical and metaphysical, reality and fantasy, occult iconographies and ancient mythologies overlap and intermingle.

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Elda Cerrato. *Despolarización mutua de dos entes (6 Comunicaciones del Ser Beta)*. Etapa previa from the series *Entes Extraños. Epopeya del Ser Beta*, 1970–71. Acrylic on canvas, 17¹⁵/₁₆ × 14 inches (45.5 × 35.5 cm)

Enchanted Alchemies offers a lens through which to view art as a reflection of humanity's quest for meaning, understanding, and transcendence. With an interdisciplinary approach, it delves into seismic sociological shifts that have reshaped notions of spirituality, gender, and identity, prompting a re-evaluation of our understanding of the occult. Through their engagement with various forms of magic, the artists on display explore new possibilities, envision alternative futures, and actively seek to effect change.

The exhibition is organized by Victoria Gelfand-Magalhaes (Senior Partner, Lévy Gorvy Dayan) in collaboration with artists and writers. Accompanying the exhibition will be a new essay by Rachel Thomas (Chief Curator, Hayward Gallery).

On October 6, Thomas will lead a panel discussion to examine the subjects of magic, alchemy, and occultism as articulated by the artists on display, a conversation that will span historical and contemporary narratives. The panel will feature Louisa Buck (writer, broadcaster, and contemporary art correspondent for *The Art Newspaper*), Linder (visual artist), and Irenosen Okojie (short story writer and novelist).

Lévy Gorvy Dayan



Chitra Ganesh. *Breathing Water and Air*, 2024. Acrylic, ink, chalk, embroidery, faux fur, ceramic, and glass on paper, 67 × 51½ inches (170.2 × 130.8 cm)



Linder. *Mantic Stain 8 (Sphere of Venus)*, 2014. Enamel on magazine page, 11¹¹/₁₆ × 8⁷/₁₆ inches (29.7 × 21.5 cm)

WORKS BY

Stacey Gillian Abe
Gertrude Abercrombie
Eileen Agar
Caroline Bachmann
Leonora Carrington
Elda Cerrato
Francesco Clemente

Ithell Colquhoun
Jaider Esbell
Bracha L. Ettinger
Leonor Fini
Chitra Ganesh
Julia Isídrez
Alejandro Jodorowsky

Bharti Kher
Claire Lehmann
Linder
Goshka Macuga
Victor Man
Pascale Montandon-
Jodorowsky

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Rachel Rose
Monica Sjöo
Lucy Stein
Francis Upritchard
Aleksandra Waliszewska
Georg Wilson



Stacey Gillian Abe. *The Moonlight, the Swamp*, 2023. Acrylic on canvas, 59¹/₁₆ × 51¹/₁₆ inches (150 × 130 cm)

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ABOUT LÉVY GORVY DAYAN

Lévy Gorvy Dayan exists to be a trusted and supportive home to artists, estates, and the creative conversation. Helmed by Dominique Lévy, Brett Gorvy, and Amalia Dayan, the gallery aims to use its platform and programming to enhance and extend the reach of artists, and to strengthen their legacies. Lévy Gorvy Dayan strives to use its expertise and influence to make all aspects of art accessible—and to connect artists, museums, institutions, and collectors. Through a tailored approach, the gallery strives to offer out-standing service to our collaborative partners and clients. Founded in art historical study, and informed by the contemporary moment, our exhibitions and publications endeavor to contribute to artists' practices and connoisseurship. In addition to an international presence in Geneva, Hong Kong, Milan, Paris, Seoul, Shanghai, Singapore, and Taiwan, Lévy Gorvy Dayan's spaces in New York and London serve as destinations for engagement, discovery, and inspiration for artists, the public, and clients—embracing the possibility and power of transformation through art.

In London, Lévy Gorvy Dayan is located at 35 Dover Street, historically home to the exclusive Empress Club, one of the first women-only members' clubs in London. Inaugurated in 1897 by Queen Victoria, the club boasted notable members, from Princess Bamba Duleep Singh and her daughters to important promoters for women's equal rights and suffrage such as Lady Leila Treacher. The women coming through the club's doors sought modern luxuries and a space to share general and political interests. Its elegant parties attracted luminaries from wide and far, including Frank Sinatra, Ava Gardner, and Orson Welles in 1951. Lévy Gorvy Dayan is located on the 1st floor—in the Empress Club's former grand ballroom and library—and on the ground floor.



Artist's illustration of the Empress Club, c. 1900–01

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