

Sophie Kuijken

February 12 — March 28, 2026

91 Rue du Faubourg Saint-Honoré, Paris 8^e



B.L.B.A., 2025, Oil and acrylic on chipboard. 70,5 x 55 x 1,8 cm (27 3/4 x 21 5/8 x 0 11/16 in.)

Galerie Nathalie Obadia is pleased to present in Paris a solo exhibition devoted to Belgian artist Sophie Kuijken. This exhibition brings together a dozen of her recent paintings, shown at a major retrospective of her work at the Centre d'Art Contemporain de la Matmut - Daniel Havis (Saint-Pierre-de-Varengeville, France) until February 2026, tracing the history of a meticulous and eloquent artistic practice.

Drawn to ancient and modern art from a very young age, Sophie Kuijken has sought to develop a unique body of work, free from any form of imitation. After graduating from the Royal Academy of Fine Arts in Ghent (KASK), she made the radical decision to extricate herself from the art world to work hidden away in her studio for more than twenty years. This intentional retreat also involved staying away from exhibitions, specialist reviews and what was happening in the art world, with a view to preserving the autonomy and integrity of her pictorial language. Her work was revealed to the public in 2011 at a solo exhibition held at the Museum Dhondt-Dhaenens, initiated by Joost Declercq, then director of the institution, who was captivated by the virtuosity and silent power of her painting.

The works presented are a continuation of the artist's research into portraiture, reflecting her long-standing fascination with faces and gazes. 'When I was a child, browsing through art books or visiting exhibitions, it was always the portraits that delighted me the most', confides Sophie Kuijken during an interview. She continues: 'After my studies, I initially tried to pull away from this obsession with portraiture [...], it was the late 1980s and portrait painting seemed a completely outdated genre. But for me, it quickly proved to be unavoidable. [...] Details that had nothing to do with the person gradually disappeared, until only the person remained.'