

GALERIE NATHALIE OBADIA

PARIS - BRUXELLES

Romana Londi

VEIN! VAIN! VANE!

April 7 — May 23, 2026

3, rue du Cloître Saint Merri, Paris 4^e



It Could Have Gone On Forever, 2026
Oil and spray paint on canvas, 100 x 80 cm
©Romana Londi
Courtesy of the artist and Galerie Nathalie Obadia, Paris/Brussels.

Galerie Nathalie Obadia is pleased to present *VEIN! VAIN! VANE!*, Romana Londi's first solo exhibition in the gallery's Paris space. Bringing together seven new paintings, this presentation explores the contemporary condition of the body, subjected as it is to the rhythm of a world dominated by ever-sophisticated technologies, frenetic flows of information and the seductive circulation of images.

A graduate from Central Saint Martins (London), Romana Londi has developed over many years a pictorial practice that interrogates the language of painting, its imagery and processes. Her works constitute an investigation of the contemporary potentialities of the medium: renewing the materiality and representation of the body as dynamic entity.

While a continuation of the artist's ongoing practice, these seven new paintings introduce a network of new tensions in her oeuvre. The body is neither stable nor constrained. It is stretched in wide brushstrokes and dissolved in forms that are sometimes round, sometimes angular and sharp; incessantly reconfigured, a response to the forces that overwhelm it. At first sight, the chromatic palette envelops the viewer in a field of soft tonalities, evoking the explorations of colour and organic sensuality specific to American abstraction, such as in the work of Helen Frankenthaler or Georgia O'Keefe. However, underneath this apparent sensuality, the layers of paint conceal a violence that cuts through the body, dislocating it towards total abstraction. The canvas is transformed into an instable space where the softness of the colours dialogue with a dulled tension — almost tectonic — which emanating from within the inside of the paint itself. Underneath the strata, forms are stretched until breaking point, as though revealing the flesh of the world and its attendant tensions.

The title of the exhibition, *VEIN! VAIN! VANE!*, functions as a pun composed of three homophones. *Vein* refers to the body and its internal circulation; *vain* summons vanity and seduction; *vane*, as in weather vane, evokes a direction, recording the movement of invisible forces. Through this linguistic word play, the exhibition interrogates the becoming of the body in the twenty-first century: its trajectory, vulnerability and value, as bestowed upon it in the contemporary era.

The effects of modernity on our existence have been long-term concerns for Romana Londi. After her series *Jetlag* (2018), where she explored desynchronisation as a symptom of our age, this new body of work focuses on transition and excess. Going beyond the simple idea of dematerialisation, Londi instead considers what follows: accumulation, destabilisation and saturation. The exhibition evokes the legendary banquet of *Elagabalus*, as chronicled in the *Historia Augusta*¹, where the Roman emperor's guests were buried under a cascade of rose petals. What might first appear as an exuberant gesture of beauty, turns into suffocation by excess. In the paintings of Londi, a similar tension occurs, colour dissolving as much as it reveals; surfaces unfolding, thickening, until they collapse, somewhere between attraction and disintegration.

Under the influence of algorithms and the continuous flow of images, the body becomes both target and instrument of seduction. As the scientist, Kate Crawford, has observed in her book *Atlas of AI*, the systems that organise contemporary perception are impalpable, changing our behaviour in silence. Vanity has also shifted its nature: it is no longer only about appearance, but an attraction to symbols and images whose origin escape us. The bodies represented in this ensemble of works are traversed by these force fields where attraction, displacement and diversion are interlaced, under the effects of overwhelming influence. This fragility echoes the conception of subjectivity in the work of Donna Haraway: a subjectivity that is porous and fluid², where the frontiers between human, technology, and ecology remain unstable and constantly redefined.

As both a response and a form of resistance, Londi binds herself to materiality, to the texture of pigment and the slow unfolding of forms across the canvas. Her paintings become spaces where these invisible forces clash: the body dissolves, veins stretch, colours bleed, revealing a world where direction, desire and identity are unendingly recomposed.

In this way, *VEINI VAINI VANE!* appears as a meditation on the contemporary condition of the body which, exposed to the winds of technological systems, tries to find its direction—in vain.

— Marie Chappaz, Editorial Writer

¹The episode of *The Roses of Elagabalus* refers to an anecdote retold in the *Historia Augusta* where the Roman emperor Elagabalus had a profusion of rose petals poured onto his guests during a banquet that was so abundant that some of his guests died from suffocation. (See the painting *The Roses of Heliogabalus*, 1888, Lawrence Alma-Tadema.)

²Donna Haraway, *A Cyborg Manifesto: Science, Technology, and Socialist-Feminism in the Late Twentieth Century*, in *Simians, Cyborgs and Women: The Reinvention of Nature*, New York: Routledge, 1991

Born in 1985 in Rome (Italy), Romana Londi lives and works in Rome (Italy).

Romana Londi holds a dual degree from the University of East London (2008–2009) in Fine Art and Art Theory, following a BA in Fine Art from Central Saint Martins, University of the Arts London (2005–2008). She previously studied Political Science at La Sapienza University in Rome (2003–2005). Her works are now included in numerous private collections in Europe and the United States.

The artist's work has been the subject of solo exhibitions at Galerie Nathalie Obadia (Brussels, 2024), Spiaggia Libera (Paris, 2023), VO Curations (London, 2018), Whitechapel Gallery (London, 2017), Cell Project Space (London, 2015), and Kenny Schachter / ROVE (London, 2013).

Her work has been widely presented in international group exhibitions, including at the Irish Museum of Modern Art (Dublin, 2020), Palazzo Bollani (Venice, 2022), Fundación Casa Wabi (Oaxaca, 2021), as part of Berlin Gallery Weekend (Berlin, 2019), the Elgiz Museum (Istanbul, 2019), Galleria Rhinoceros (Rome, 2024), at Artissima with Spiaggia Libera (Turin, 2024), and at Spiaggia Libera (Paris, 2023). Between 2025 and 2026, Romana Londi continues to develop her practice between Frome (Somerset, United Kingdom), Rome (Italy), and the United States. During this period, she participates in *Through Every Glitch and Eruption* with the Hyphae Collaborative Network (Alabama, 2025) and PRIMAVERA SILENZIOSA at Spazio Supernova (Rome, 2025), before being invited to group exhibitions at the Akademie der Künste (Berlin, 2026) and Villa Massimo (Rome, 2026).

She has been awarded several residencies and distinctions, including a grant from the Irish Arts Council (2021), the Casa Wabi residency (Oaxaca, 2019), as well as residencies at VO Curations (London) and Hooper Projects (Los Angeles, 2015).

Paris Saint-Honoré

Rosson Crow
La Rupture
April 9 – May 30, 2026

Paris Cloître Saint-Merri

Shirley Jaffe
January 30 – April 25, 2026

Jérôme Zonder
May 21 – August 1, 2026

Paris Cloître Saint-Merri - Espace II

Hoda Kashiha
The Tale of a Pot's Voyage That Longed to Become Human
January 30 – March 28, 2026

Romana Londi
VEINI VAINI VANE!
April 7 – May 23, 2026

Brussels

Shirley Jaffe
March 26 – May 23, 2026

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