

GREENE NAFTALI

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Sophie von Hellermann *After a Dream*

April 30 – June 20, 2026
Ground Floor

Greene Naftali is pleased to announce the gallery's eighth solo exhibition with Sophie von Hellermann, which explores creative relationships through that most charged of dyads: the couple. *After a Dream* features pairs of figures drawn from literature, art history, the artist's own acquaintance, and pure wishful thinking—creating narrative chimeras that broach various forms of alignment and reciprocity.

"No topics are more serious than others for von Hellermann," curator Anne Pontegnie has written: "there is only contamination and simultaneous construction of the individual and the collective, reality and fiction." Here a buoyant Gauguin cavorts with van Gogh in a field of sunflowers, while a Brontë heroine reaches in vain across the moors. Von Hellermann herself strolls on the beach with J. M. W. Turner, their hands clasping a single paintbrush. These latest works reclaim the clichés of a flagrant Romanticism: bravura sunsets and distant horizons, the pathos of time's passing. Von Hellermann often returns to that period's blaze and mist and liberated sensation, channeling a painterly tradition in which "the outer world is a reflection of the inner world."

These scenes of mutual absorption are rendered in her signature whorls of thinned paint on raw canvas, a fluid, elemental technique that suits her subject's emotional tides—the desire to merge with another while also retaining one's individual shape. Several paintings channel that urge for communion into solo or group pursuits: a pianist is shown in ecstatic thrall to outside forces, a figure all but merges with a fearsome avatar of the natural world, and an idyllic woodland seminar likens the transfer of knowledge to other raptures. Von Hellermann's swiftness of touch reflects the fleeting nature of these longed-for, apex states, heeding art historian-turned-novelist Anita Brookner's notion of "a Romantic [as] one who believes it is better to travel hopefully than to arrive."

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Sophie von Hellermann lives and works in London and Margate, UK. Solo and two-person institutional exhibitions of her work have been held at Kunsthalle Wien, Vienna (2025–26); Sixi Museum, Nanjing (2025–26); Turner Contemporary, Margate (2021–23); Kunstverein Hannover (2017); Firstsite, Colchester, UK (2013); and Le Consortium, Dijon (2010). Key group exhibitions include Brücke-Museum, Berlin (2024); Hall Art Foundation at Kunstmuseum Schloss Derneburg, Holle, Germany (2024); Milwaukee Art Museum (2023); Hayward Gallery, London (2021); Greene Nafali, New York (2021, 2015); X Museum, Beijing (2020); Bonner Kunstverein, Bonn (2016); Gallery Met, Metropolitan Opera, New York (2014); Cranford Collection, Fundación Banco Santander, Madrid (2013); and Tate Britain, London (2011). Von Hellermann's work is in the permanent collections of the Los Angeles County Museum of Art and The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, among others. She is a founding member of the London and Düsseldorf-based artists' collective hobbypopMUSEUM, active since 1998.