

19.7. —
5.10.2025

ROSE
WYLLIE

FLICK
&
FLOAT

PRESS KIT

Zentrum
Paul Klee

Founded by:

Maurice E. & Martha Müller
and the heirs of Paul Klee

With the support of:

Kanton Bern
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Bürgergemeinde
Bern



Rose Wylie. Flick and Float presents the nonconformist and fascinating work of the British artist Rose Wylie (b. 1934). Her unique artistic practice has won her international recognition. In her large-format paintings, Wylie strips down figurative representations to their essentials. Expressive, direct and full of subversive humour, these works testify to her engagement with pop culture, film and art history. With more than fifty paintings and around a dozen drawings, between 19 July and 5 October 2025 the Zentrum Paul Klee is showing a retrospective of Wylie's work over the last thirty years. New works have been made for the exhibition.

An unconventional career: from reading to seeing

The ninety-year-old artist lives and works in a cottage not far from London. Wylie received her artistic training at Folkestone and Dover School of Art, Goldsmiths College and the Royal College of Art in London. While raising her three children, she put her artistic career on pause, and, alongside her family life, spent a lot of time reading books. It was not until the late 1990s that seeing took over from reading again, as Wylie explained on a visit to her studio in March 2024. She started devoting herself intensively to painting again, and finally achieved international recognition with her unique work and major solo exhibitions, at Tate Britain in London and elsewhere. The Zentrum Paul Klee is devoting a major retrospective to Wylie featuring over fifty paintings and around a dozen drawings. The artist has painted eight works specially for the exhibition, which are being shown to a museum-going public for the first time in the Zentrum Paul Klee.

Inspiration from pop culture, film and art history

Wylie's large-format works, made in the studio on the first floor of her cottage, reflect a deep understanding of pop culture, film and art history. She often works with a subversive humour that also connects her to Paul Klee. Stripped down to its essentials, and with a highly expressive lightness of touch, her artistic language references an aesthetic of 'bad painting' and post pop. On closer examination, Wylie's works prove to be sharply observed and subtly polished meditations on the nature of humanity.

For Wylie, the process by which a painting is made often begins with a visual stimulus. No limits are placed on her inspiration. As indicated by the title of the exhibition, *Flick and Float* – the artist's own suggestion – in her working process Wylie 'flicks' through a flood of images until a motif attracts her attention. The motif might be a newspaper photograph on her studio floor, a scene from a film, an everyday situation from her life, an artwork or a picture that she found while surfing the internet. What the motifs share, however, is always a special detail that does not match the norm – 'Toujours la difference!' is a phrase of which Wylie is particularly fond. So for example, in *Singing Life Model* (press picture 03), Wylie shows a photographic model posing with a strangely opened mouth, while *Yellow Strip* (press picture 04) shows the football star Ronaldinho with his characteristically thin pony tail, which whips in time with his every movement on the pitch.

Painting from memory

Wylie usually begins by capturing her visual impressions in drawings. The drawings in the exhibition provide an insight into her creative process. Wylie does not return to the reference material, but with a few strokes reduces the picture in her memory to what she sees as essential. Speaking of her 'Film Notes', for example, she explains:

'When I do film paintings, I usually work from memory [...] – I do not go back to the film or to film stills to check... It's the original visual excitement I want to work with.'

Rose Wylie, on the letter 'F' in the A-Z of the catalogue *Rose Wylie. Flick and Float*

Wylie then reworks the drawing until the composition and central details are consistent. If lines have to be corrected, Wylie does not erase them, but sticks a new piece of paper over them, which sometimes makes the sketches look like collages. This process of discovery is also repeated on the big canvases in Wylie's studio. Where necessary, Wylie scrapes the oil paint off again and adds whole new parts of canvases. This genesis provides the second part of the exhibition title, because Wylie describes the process by which her works are created as 'floating'.

Compositional investigations with picture and writing

Wylie develops pictorial compositions that go beyond traditional perspectival representation. In her multi-panel works, for example, she juxtaposes apparently disparate images, giving rise to visual rhymes and resonances. One example is the two-part work *Bagdad Cafe (Film Notes)* (press picture 05): while in the left half of the painting Wylie reworks visual stimuli from the film of the same name, in the right half she shows scenes from her everyday life – including a flower from her garden, her own mouth when eating and a coffee stain.

'I spell often phonetically – I paint how things look and I spell how things sound.'

Rose Wylie, in an interview with Fabienne Eggelhöfer during a visit to her studio in January 2025

Wylie also includes writing as part of the composition of her works. What is central here is not so much the content of what is written as the form and arrangement of the letters on the picture surface. She places the writing deliberately to perfect her compositions. The process of writing is more important than the correct way of writing. For this reason Wylie often writes words as she hears them, spelled incorrectly. Her writing style can be experienced in the A-Z section of the exhibition catalogue. In reflections on 26 ideas, Wylie provides a deeper insight into her intellectual world.

Opening

The opening of the exhibition will take place on

Friday, 18 July 2025 from 18:00.

Admission to the exhibition is free on this evening.

Curator

Fabienne Eggelhöfer

Curatorial assistant

Josephine Rechberg

With the support of

Kanton Bern, Bundesamt für Kultur (BAK), Burgergemeinde Bern,
Stanley Thomas Johnson-Stiftung

Media preview

We cordially invite you to the media preview with curator Dr Fabienne Eggelhöfer on **Thursday, 17 July 2025 at 10:00 at the Zentrum Paul Klee.**

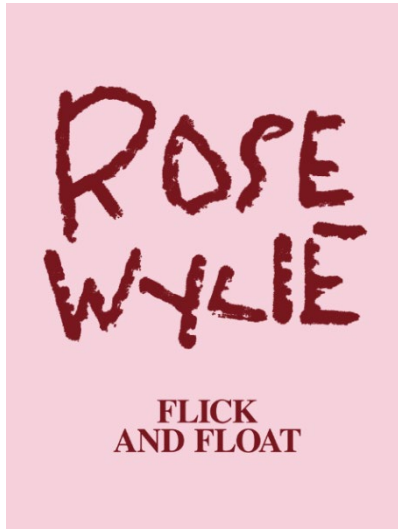
Please register via press@zpk.org.

**20 years of the Zentrum Paul Klee!**

The Zentrum Paul Klee and the Creaviva are celebrating their 20th anniversary in 2025. We look back and into the future and celebrate together with our visitors and neighbours, with founders, sponsors and supporters, event customers and experts, music aficionados, art and literature lovers, companions and a programme full of highlights.

Find out more: zpk.org/20.

All visitors born in 2005 can visit the exhibitions free of charge all year round.



Catalogue

Rose Wylie. Flick and Float

Published by Fabienne Eggelhöfer and Nina Zimmer

With an A-Z by Rose Wylie, photographs by Juergen Teller, as well as a foreword by Nina Zimmer, Director of the Kunstmuseum Bern – Zentrum Paul Klee, and an introduction by Fabienne Eggelhöfer, Chief Curator at the Zentrum Paul Klee.

Language: English

ISBN 978-3-86442-464-9

136 pages

2025: Snoeck Verlag

On sale at the museum shop for CHF 29

Film: Studio Visit with Rose Wylie

On the occasion of the exhibition curator Fabienne Eggelhöfer visited Rose Wylie in her studio in January 2025. In the film, Wylie explains what she draws upon as source material for her paintings and offers insight into her creative process. The film can be accessed from Friday, 18 July 2025 on YouTube.

youtube.com/ZentrumPaulKlee

Digital Guide

There is a freely accessible Digital Guide to accompany the exhibition. It can be accessed from Thursday, 17 July 2025 via QR code or guide.zpk.org/en/rose-wylie.



Accompanying programme in English

Guided tours in English

Sunday, 7 September 2025, 15:00

Family Offers

Open Studio at Creaviva

Tuesday–Friday 14:00 / 16:00 | Saturday–Sunday 12:00 / 14:00 / 16:00

Creative one-hour workshop on a variety of themes linked to the exhibition *Rose Wylie. Flick and Float*. For children from 4 years, teenagers, adults and the whole family

You can find out more about guided tours, workshops and other offers on

zpk.org/en/ausstellung/rose-wylie or zpk.org/en/creaviva

Biography

Rose Wylie was born in 1934 in Hythe, in Kent in England. She lived with her family in India until the age of five. Her return to England coincided with the outbreak of the Second World War, which Rose Wylie experienced as a child.

Beginning in 1952 she studied painting at Folkestone and Dover School of Art. From 1956 she continued her training at Goldsmiths College in London with a view to teaching. It was here that she met her husband, the artist Roy Oxlade. When their first child was born she put her artistic career on pause and concentrated on the family. In the 1970s she taught painting at Sittingbourne College of Further Education. From 1979 she resumed her artistic activity by studying for a Masters at the Royal College of Art in London.

She began to submit her works for exhibitions with an open application procedure, which was how she came to be selected by Neo Rauch for *EAST International* at Norwich University of the Arts in 2004. In 2010 her works were shown in the exhibition *Women to Watch* at the National Museum of Women in the Arts in Washington, which led the feminist Germaine Greer to describe her as the 'hottest new artist' in an article in *The Guardian*. In 2013 she had her first institutional solo exhibition at Tate Britain in London, and won the renowned John Moores Painting Prize the following year. She was also appointed a Senior Royal Academician of the Royal Academy in London. Further exhibitions followed, including shows at the Serpentine Gallery in London (2017), in the Centro de Arte Contemporáneo in Málaga (2017), Aspen Art Museum in Colorado (2020), Hangaram Art Museum in Seoul (2021) and the Stedelijk Museum voor Actuele Kunst (S.M.A.K.) in Ghent (2022) to name only a few. Next year her works will be shown at the Royal Academy in London.

Press images

Download press images:

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01

Rose Wylie

Red Twink and Ivy, 2002

Oil on canvas

183 × 504 cm, three parts

Courtesy the artist and David Zwirner

Photo: Soon-Hak Kwon

© Rose Wylie

Photograph courtesy of Jari Lager



02

Rose Wylie

RW Party Clothes (Rose Wylie), 2016

Oil on canvas

183 × 167 cm

Mr Luke Oxlade & Mrs Louisa Oxlade

Photo: Soon-Hak Kwon

© Rose Wylie

Courtesy the artist

Photograph courtesy of Jari Lager



03

Rose Wylie

Singing Life Model, 2017

Oil on canvas

169 × 182 cm

Karen and Mark Smith

© Rose Wylie

Courtesy the artist and David Zwirner

Photo: Anna Arca



04

Rose Wylie

Yellow Strip, 2006

Oil on canvas

183 × 777 cm, five parts

© Rose Wylie

Courtesy the artist and David Zwirner

Photo: Jack Hems



05

Rose Wylie

Bagdad Cafe (Film Notes), 2015

Oil on canvas

182 × 372 cm, two parts

Courtesy of the British Council Collection

Photo: Soon-Hak Kwon

© Rose Wylie

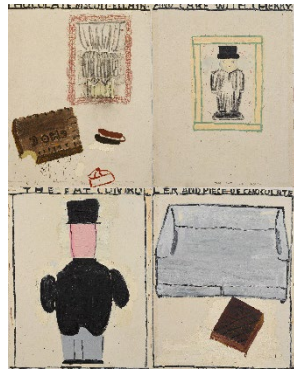
Courtesy the artist

Photograph courtesy of Jari Lager

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06

Rose Wylie

The Fat Controller, 2006

Oil on canvas

366 × 248 cm, four parts

Courtesy the artist and David Zwirner

Photo: Soon-Hak Kwon

© Rose Wylie

Photograph courtesy of Jari Lager



07

Rose Wylie

Cuban Scene, 2016

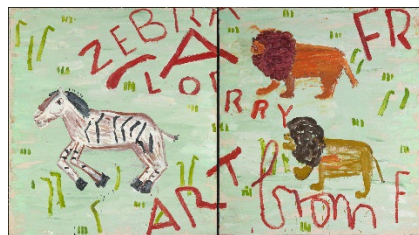
Oil and graphite on canvas

180 × 334 cm, two parts

The David and Indr  Roberts Collection

© Rose Wylie

Courtesy the artist and David Zwirner



08

Rose Wylie

Lorry Art, 2010

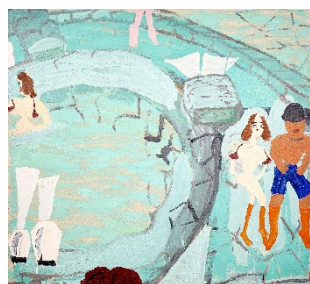
Oil in canvas

185 × 334 cm, two parts

Tate, Presented by the Trustees of the Chantrey Bequest 2013

Photo: Tate

© Rose Wylie



09

Rose Wylie

Manor, 2004

Oil on canvas

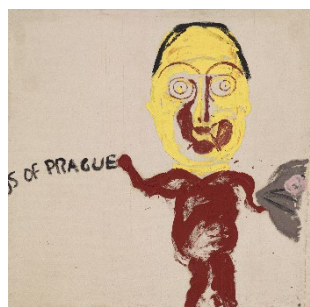
183 × 188 cm

Courtesy the artist and David Zwirner

Photo: Soon-Hak Kwon

© Rose Wylie

Photograph courtesy of Jari Lager



10

Rose Wylie

Jesus of Prague, 1989

Oil on canvas

184 × 183 cm

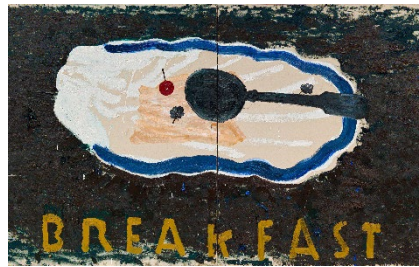
© Rose Wylie

Courtesy the artist and David Zwirner

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11

Rose Wylie

Breakfast, 2020

Oil on canvas

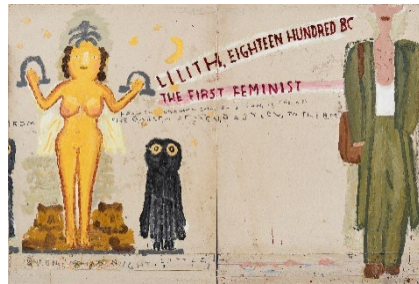
183 × 307 cm, two parts

Private Collection, United Kingdom

© Rose Wylie

Courtesy the artist and David Zwirner

Photo: Jack Hems



12

Rose Wylie

Lilith and Gucci Boy, 2024

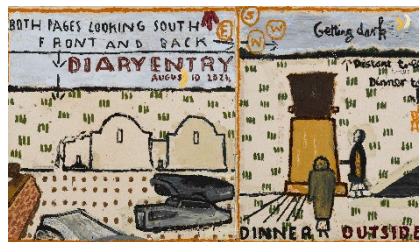
Oil on canvas

207 × 306 cm, two parts

© Rose Wylie

Courtesy the artist and David Zwirner

Photo: Jack Hems



13

Rose Wylie

Dinner Outside, 2024

Oil on canvas

183 × 328 cm, two parts

© Rose Wylie

Courtesy the artist and David Zwirner

Photo: Jack Hems



14

Rose Wylie in her studio, June 2023

Photo: Will Grundy

© Rose Wylie

Courtesy the artist and David Zwirner

Current and upcoming exhibitions at the Zentrum Paul Klee

Anni Albers. Constructing Textiles

7.11.2025–22.2.2026

Kosmos Klee. The Collection

Fokus: Cover Star Klee

7.6.–14.9.2025

Fokus: Gego (Gertrud Goldschmidt)

20.9.2025–18.1.2026

Opening hours

Tuesday–Sunday

10:00–27:00

Monday closed

Contact

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Accreditation for media representatives



Admission to all exhibitions at the Zentrum Paul Klee is free for media representatives with a valid press card.

Please fill in the digital accreditation form which you can either access via zpk.org/en/ueber-uns/medien/akkreditierung or by screening the QR-Code before your visit.



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