

Raw Materials: George Rouy

Dreaming big with the British artist whose surreal canvases capture the ecstasies of embodiment



The softly snaking bodies of London-based artist George Rouy’s paintings took their inspiration from the seductively fluid figures of people dancing on Ecstasy. “There’s this nihilistic feel to the whole thing,” explains the Camberwell-educated painter. “It’s quite primal... but also quite aggressive.” The large canvases Rouy is known for reflect the tight, graded layers produced in Photoshop, albeit laid down by his own hands and brushes after carefully—and sometimes not so carefully—grinding and preparing his paints.

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The raw, painterly materials used by Rouy—of rugged brushes and cheap paints—are transformed into hazy, dream-like canvases that have an otherworldly appearance; akin to spirit paintings, or foggy imaginations of what aliens may look like. Documenting all of this is filmmaker Lorenzo Cisi, who returns to our new Raw Materials series—where we profile leading creators through the physical objects and experiences that are vital to their practice.

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