

rodolphe janssen

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Alvin Ong *Another Life*

(EXHIBITION) 10.09 – 24.10.2026
(GALLERY) LIVOURNE 35

rodolphe janssen is pleased to invite you to the opening of

Another Life by Alvin Ong,

Thursday September 10, from 6 to 9 PM.

as part of **RendezVous – Brussels Art Week** (September 10–11–12–13).

About the exhibition

Another Life presents a new body of work by Alvin Ong that bears witness to the transition, and recovery from the artist's self-confessed burnout in 2025. What has emerged are beguiling layers of multiplicity and texture. Bodies thin into ethereal translucency. They blend and bleed. Individual faces can be made out, encased in their own melancholy, sometimes contorted into split, or fractured souls. Heads serve as receptacles for other tableaux. Eyes are deliberately omitted or painted over like a blindfold or reflected surface.

Screens are a recurrent motif, implicating the viewer as spectator. A recent evolution in his practice is the introduction of texts and embedded rhinestones. They draw reference to the devotional act of painting and the religious iconography he was exposed to growing up. In *Residues*, a new series on found antique blinds and signboards from Singapore, fragments of historically painted symbols, text and imagery are imaginatively reconfigured alongside lived experience, real and imagined. Painting emerges as palimpsest, but also an act of queering, in the artist's words, "they hold space not just for the body, but also for imagining: that we could have lived many lives, and many versions of ourselves."

Daryl Lim Wei Jie, a Singaporean poet, literary curator, and art critic, has written a text reflecting on Alvin Ong's work in *Another Life*.

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About the artist

Ong engages the world from various vantage points. References to sacred imagery and art history stem from the Catholic iconography he was exposed to growing up with his family in Singapore, and these are combined with his lived experiences of restlessness, boredom, desire, and intimacy.

His experiences living between Singapore and London manifests as a surreal reality. Food references and objects appear in his work as markers of identity, nostalgia, family, and cultural memory. A sense of “rootedness” or sometimes, the lack thereof, is an undercurrent in his work.

The paintings often explore the ambivalent ‘inside out’ and ‘upside out’ sentiment of being at once here and nowhere, as a queer artist navigating complex games of desire, rejection, inclusion and exclusion. It is through this gaze that the paintings become a threshold, serving as mirrors, filters and screens through which audiences are implicated as voyeur and flaneur.

He was awarded a residency in 2017 with the Royal Drawing School, as well as the 2018 Chadwell Award. His works have been exhibited at the Singapore Art Museum, Singapore; Asian Civilizations Museum, Singapore; Peranakan Museum, Singapore; Northampton Contemporary, Northampton, UK; National Portrait Gallery, London, UK, and Royal Academy of Arts, London, UK. His works are collected by the ILHAM Gallery, Malaysia, X Museum China, Sunpride Foundation, Hong Kong, the Ingram Collection, UK, and the Victoria & Albert Museum (Print Collection), London, UK.