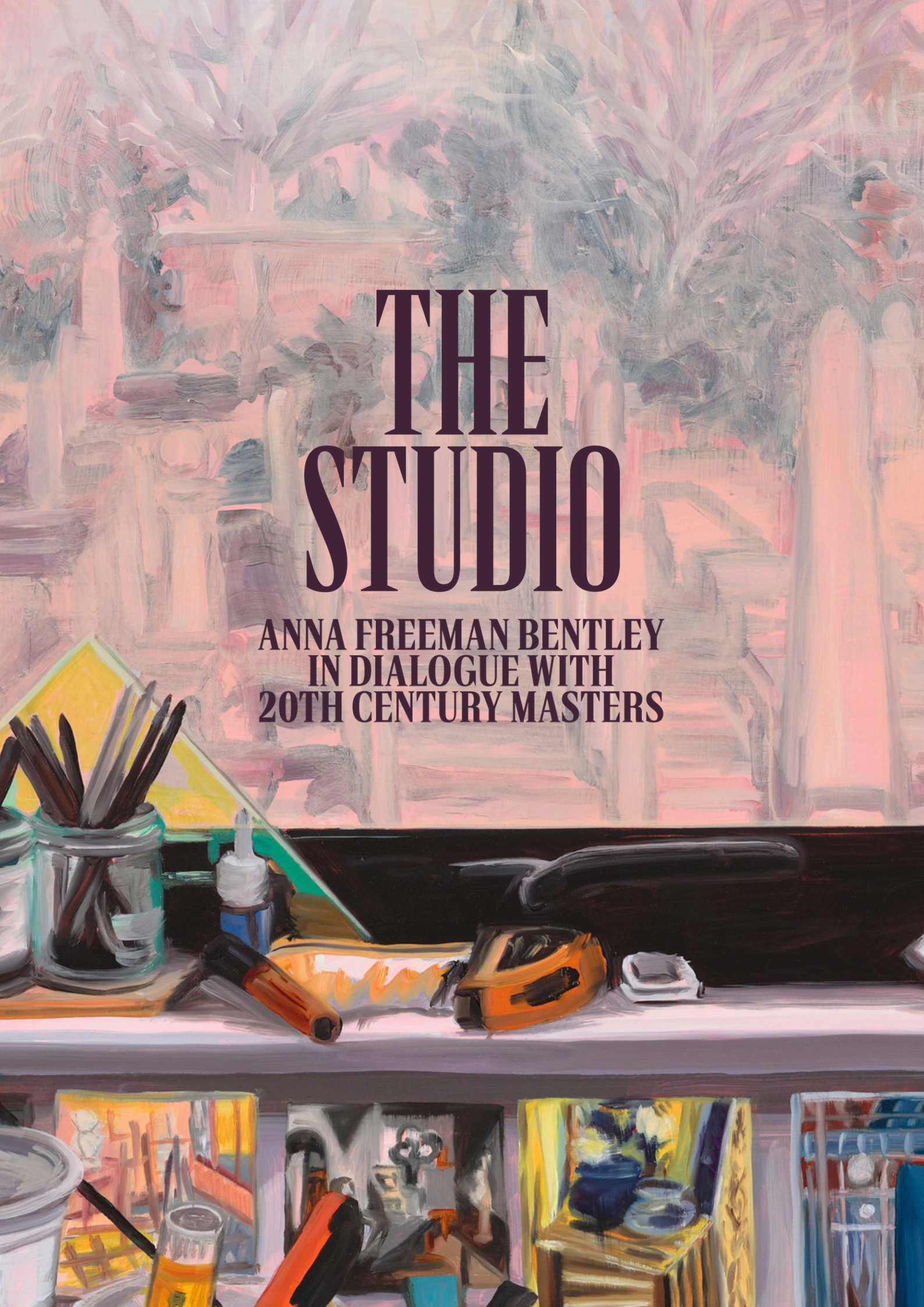
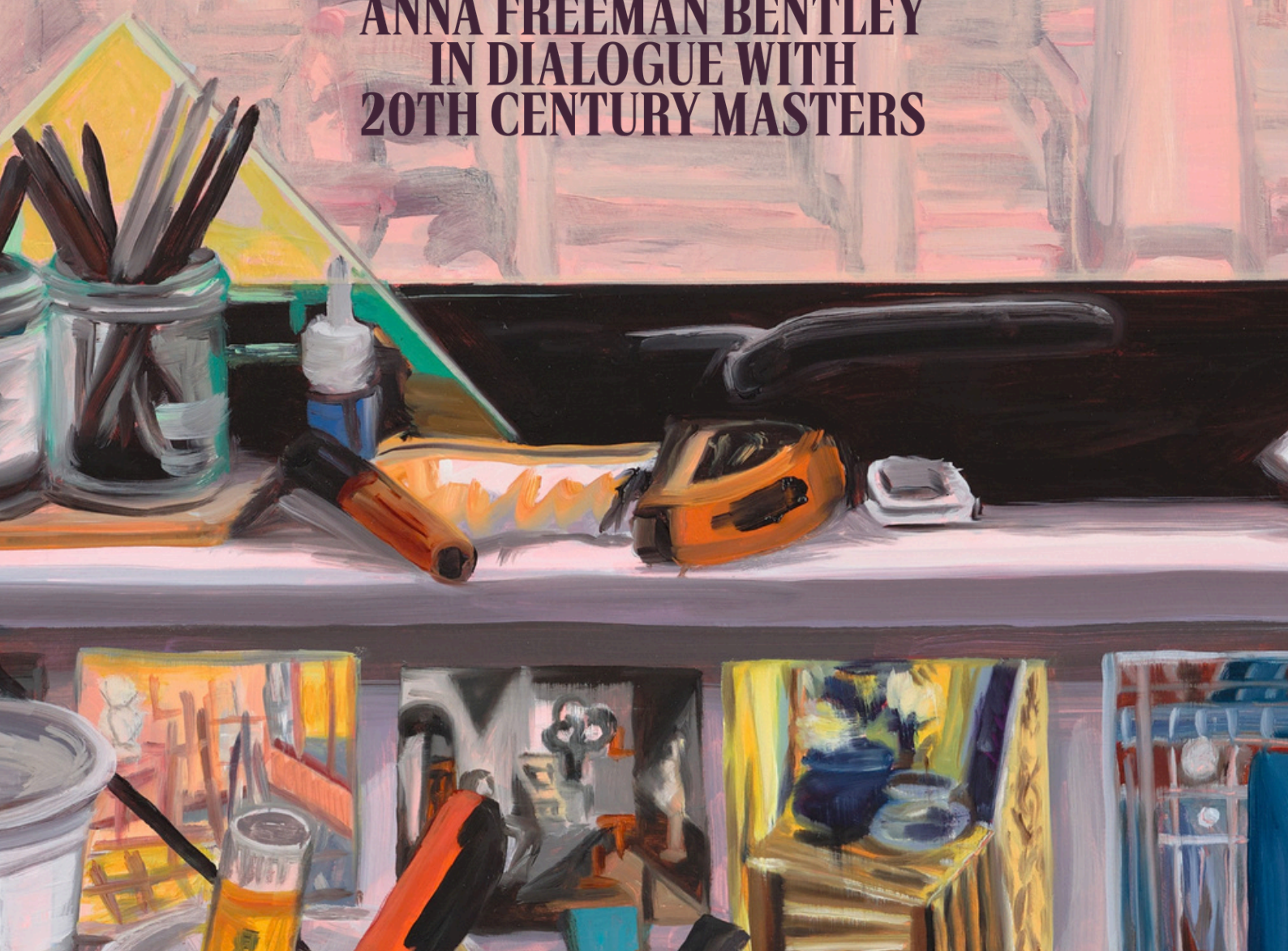




THE STUDIO

ANNA FREEMAN BENTLEY
IN DIALOGUE WITH
20TH CENTURY MASTERS



THE STUDIO

14 OCT–11 DEC

Nahmad Projects is pleased to present *The Studio*, a series of new paintings by Anna Freeman Bentley (b. 1982) in dialogue with twentieth-century masters.

The artist's studio has long been more than a place of work. It is a theatre of the self, a space where the act of looking turns inward, where the world is examined and reimaged. This exhibition takes that concept as its premise, spanning an entire century, tracing the studio as a living subject; from Picasso's home-studio of the 1950's to Anna Freeman Bentley's East London studio of today.

It was a single painting that set this conversation in motion: Pablo Picasso's *L'atelier* (The Studio), painted in 1956 at La Californie, his ornate villa above Cannes. For Picasso, the studio was a self-portrait in itself, a working environment he returns to obsessively throughout his life, not as a documentary record but as a Cubist dissection of presence and absence. Exhibited alongside it are further landmark interiors and still lifes by Georges Braque, Giorgio de Chirico, Raoul Dufy and Henri Matisse, each staking a different claim on what the artist's workspace can hold. For all the myth of the solitary genius, these were never truly solitary figures: their studios were bound together by a passage of looking and exchange, from artists, friends, collectors and dealers. Together they establish this sacred space as one of modern painting's richest and most searching subjects, for to paint a room is to paint a mind.

Having spent time studying the historic works gathered here, Anna Freeman Bentley responds to them directly, from a position both historically informed and pressingly personal. Her practice explores the emotive and psychological charge of architecture; the way rooms hold aspiration, memory, class and longing. The blank canvases, windows and staircases converse directly with the works around them: with Matisse's door flung open onto the sea, de Chirico's shuttered room invaded by rock and tree, and the bare canvas waiting at the heart of Picasso's studio. Freeman Bentley's paintings of her own studio, and of the studios of fellow painters, all women, ask quietly but insistently what it has meant, and continues to mean, to claim this space as an artist.

Where Picasso called the studio his 'second skin', Freeman Bentley turns that intimacy outward, into a community. It is this spirit of exchange, as much as the subject of the studio itself, that she inherits and renews: where her predecessors looked to one another as brothers-in-arms, she turns to a fellowship of women, painting not only her own studio but theirs also.

The result is a hundred-year conversation about the studio, brought into the present through the eyes of a living female painter. Proof that this is not a closed history but a living one, still being written today.

Nahmad Projects, 2 Cork Street, London, W1S 3LB

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About the artist:

Anna Freeman Bentley (b. 1982, London, UK) received her BA from Chelsea College of Art and Design in 2004 and her MA from the Royal College of Art in London in 2010. In 2019 she participated in the artist residency at Palazzo Monti, Brescia and in 2012 the Artist in Restaurant residency at Michelin-starred restaurant Pied a Terre in London. Her work was included in the Prague Biennale 5 2011 and Bloomberg New Contemporaries 2009. Selected exhibitions include: Lehmann Maupin, London, UK; Canopy Collections, London, UK; Anat Ebgi, LA, USA; Monica De Cardenas, Zuoz, CH; Massimo de Carlo Piece Unique, Paris, FR; Grimm Gallery, Amsterdam, NL; Lyndsey Ingram, London, UK; Frestonian Gallery, London, UK; Space K, Seoul, KR; and DENK Gallery, Los Angeles, CA. Her works are included in the Tia Collection, Santa Fe; Museum X, Beijing; Hotel Crillon, Paris; Hogan Lovells, London; Ahmanson Collection, Irvine; and Montecito Contemporary Art Collection, California. A recent catalogue titled *Complete Reality* with essays by Jennifer Higgie and Kathryn Lloyd and an interview with Elisabetta Fabrizi was published in January 2025 by Anomie Publishing.

Freeman Bentley lives and works in London, UK.

About the gallery:

Nahmad Projects is a modern and contemporary art gallery. It upholds a commitment to developing exhibitions that enhance our perspectives on art of the twentieth and twenty-first century. Projects are concept-driven, ranging from showcasing contemporary art, opening new dialogues on modern masterpieces, and provoking new conversations on artists rarely exhibited together.

For all enquiries please contact: info@nahmadprojects.com