Sergey Kononov
Mémoires

5 September – 10 October 2026
46 & 57, rue du Temple, 75004 Paris

Opening: Saturday, 5 September, 6 – 8pm

Sergey Kononov, *Nuit Blanche*, 2026, photo: Thomas Lannes

Galerie Max Hetzler, Paris, is pleased to present *Mémoires,* a solo exhibition of new works by **Sergey Kononov**. This is the artist's second exhibition with the gallery, and his first in the Paris space.

For the exhibition, Kononov presents a new selection of paintings. Based on photographs taken by the artist over the last five years, the works offer intimate depictions of friends and family. Translating the immediacy of the photographic medium into rich, painterly form, Kononov's compositions are meticulously rendered in oil on canvas. Slowed down and suspended in time, they capture something of the fleetingness of existence. Couples are portrayed in naked embraces, whilst lone figures recline in states of daydream. In one work, a young man poses unselfconsciously in the nude, his gaze towards the viewer. In another, a man tattoos the flesh of his lover. Encapsulating the raw vulnerability and rebellious confidence of youth, the images are flooded with familiarity and longing. Like portals through time, they stand as monuments of memory.

Kononov's paintings are built in a layered, painstaking process. In works such as *Svitlana and Slavik,* 2026, his subjects are painted against a monochrome background. Shrouded in a deep, velvety green, the couple's bodies entwine like a single organism floating through space. Distended and elongated in their togetherness, they appear lost to the world around them. In *Nuit Blanche,* 2026, Kononov experiments with a new, pared-back palette. The composition depicts two female lovers immersed in white space. Pressed up against each other, their bodies capture the fluctuating hues of bare skin, as loose strands of hair fall across their faces like a gossamer veil. As the viewer's eye adjusts, the sparse surroundings shift from seeming abstraction into crinkled bedsheets and intersecting walls. Within this structural fluidity, the artist challenges himself to explore the tonal variations that emerge in the absence of colour.

In his larger works, Kononov depicts his subjects in elaborate interior scenes. In one, a male nude stands with a cigarette in hand on a herringbone floor. The polished wooden sideboard behind him is as intricately painted as the protagonist himself. Swirling and blooming, the wood grain mirrors the supple elasticity of the figure's legs, which all but collapse into their surroundings. In another, the artist portrays his grandmother: she lies on a pink floral quilt in a red and blue patterned dress. Resting with her head on one hand, her languid pose is belied only by the vibrant clash of materials. Characterised

by the grainy aesthetic of a bygone era, Kononov's paintings are charged with a yearning for the past. They effervesce and hum, spilling into the present, even as time stands ostensibly still.

Marking a subtle shift in direction, Kononov positions portraiture at the centre of his new paintings. Here, something of his subjects' inner-selves seems to permeate through their outer-parameters, as light rebounds off the contours of their faces and bodies. The works draw on a range of art historical precedents – from Botticelli's use of light without shadow to the rhythmic brushwork of Vincent Van Gogh, Paul Gauguin's heightened colour, and the elongated figures of Egon Schiele. In defiant contrast to the socio-political turmoil of his homeland, Kononov's paintings offer contemplative moments of respite.

Sergey Kononov (b. 1994, Odesa, Ukraine) lives and works in Paris, France. The artist's work has been the subject of institutional solo exhibitions at Théâtre National de La Criée, Marseille (2020); National Art Museum of Ukraine, Kyiv (2015); and Museum of Odesa Modern Art (2014). Kononov's works are in the public collections of the FOLTA Foundation, Wroclaw; Fondazione Sandretto Re Rebaudengo, Turin; Fondation Francès, Clichy / Senlis; Lyra Art Foundation; and Museum of Odesa Modern Art.

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BERLIN

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ROT GELB BLAU STAUB
11 September – 31 October 2026
Potsdamer Straße 77–87
10785 Berlin

Grace Weaver
Parataxis
4 September – 24 October 2026
Bleibtreustraße 45
10623 Berlin

LONDON

Walton Ford
An Orbed Drop of Light
17 September – 11 November 2026
41 Dover Street
London W1S 4NS

MARFA

Rinus Van de Velde
The Dinner
24 May – 6 December 2026
1976 Antelope Hills Road
Marfa, Texas

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