

BERNHEIM

TOM WARING

Make it Rain

BERNHEIM, London

16 April - 22 May, 2026

Bernheim, London is delighted to present Tom Waring's first solo exhibition in the UK. This new body of work explores the interplay between historical reference, structural imagination, and the constructed space of painting. Known for his meticulous yet richly layered canvases, Waring weaves together art-historical motifs and monumental forms to challenge how viewers perceive and inhabit visual space.

Make it Rain satirizes the hyperbolic rhetoric of big tech and AI as the world's cure-all, from the most fantastical visions to the simplest acts, interrogating how meaning emerges when labour and creativity are no longer exclusively human. Evoking the grandeur and detail of Gothic cathedrals through imagined, labyrinthine spaces, Waring's work, while not a literal architectural depiction, echoes ribbed vaults, soaring arches, and layered forms, creating a sense of awe and dimensionality. Within these environments, anachronistic elements disrupt expectation, introducing a playful, surreal tension that reflects a pursuit of the profound that remains just out of reach, where the act of searching itself becomes the closest encounter with meaning or honesty.

In this series, Waring juxtaposes the soaring, intricately carved architecture of highly ornate pulpits with the flowing, circular forms of Roman fountains. The rigid uprightiness of the Gothic structures contrasts with the fluid motion and classical harmony of the fountains, creating a tension between the discipline of constructed space and the natural dynamism of water, while light filters through the stone in delicate, skeletal patterns, evoking a haunting, low-grade sublime.

The motion of water pouring and falling suddenly redirects the viewer's attention to downward force. Working initially in greyscale to establish form and tonal depth, Waring then layers brightly coloured surfaces, whose interplay of light and shadow creates a synthetic balance against the harsh verticality of structural references. The works inhabit the gap between the monumental promise of architecture and the tangible experience available to the artist in each fleeting moment. Gargoyles spew coloured liquid into receiving distorted figures, who in turn jut water upward, momentarily suspending the competing streams as gravity seems to vanish, a dynamic that resonates with the work of Giorgio de Chirico, Hieronymus Bosch, and Giovanni Battista Piranesi, whose shared fascination with architectural complexity, grotesque figuration, and the destabilisation of space informs Waring's densely constructed compositions.

Across his practice, Tom Waring constructs densely layered, visually arresting worlds where architecture, myth, and the grotesque collide, resulting in a contemporary painterly vision that is at once precise, disorienting, and vividly alive. His paintings fuse historical reference with imagined space, blending soaring forms, classical motifs, and surreal figuration to challenge perception, gravity, and narrative itself. Monstrous carvings, and cascading streams of water populate labyrinthine interiors, creating a tension between structure and fluidity, order and chaos.

Born 1991, Reading, UK. Lives and works in Wales, UK. His recent solo shows include *All the Pomp of Yesterday*, Tara Downs, New York (2025); *A Robot Never Made Me Laugh* at Bernheim, Zürich (2023); *Ars Brevis* at Downs & Ross, New York (2022); and *Consistent Estimator* at Downs & Ross, New York (2022). His works are included as permanent collections in The Elizabeth Margulies Collection, and the Institute of Contemporary Art (ICA), Miami, USA.

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