

**Roger Holtom**  
**Preludio**  
**Finding the Mu(sic)**  
**13<sup>th</sup> May – 8<sup>th</sup> July 2022**



Francesca Fiumano and Andrés Clase are delighted to present a solo exhibition of a new body of work by British artist Roger Holtom from the 13<sup>th</sup> May until the 8<sup>th</sup> July 2022. This is the artist's fifth solo exhibition in collaboration with Francesca Fiumano.

From his glorious studio in the hills above San Remo, Italy, Holtom enjoys the time and space to create works that reflect a deep connection with his musical past. Having spent many years as a professional cellist, music is ingrained in his psyche, and whilst his painting practice appears to be spontaneous and improvised there is a structural coherence to his work that provides the foundation for each painting.

Following the example of the preeminent Spanish/Portuguese cellist Pablo Casals (1876-1973) Holtom plays one of Johann Sebastian Bach's Suites for cello each day. The fluency he has established as an artist is thus enriched and informed by the architectural purity of Bach, resulting in a most rare capacity of interchangeability between the disciplines of painting and playing music.

The physicality of the artist is always very much present in Holtom's work. Whether he is throwing paint at the canvas, distressing the surface or applying a wash, he paints with his

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whole body. This almost performative element of his practice, whilst private and conducted alone in his studio, is evident in the energy and power each painting radiates. In his groundbreaking 1952 article for ARTnow Harold Rosenberg coined the term 'Action Painters', referring to artist such as Franz Kline, Willem de Kooning, Jackson Pollock and Arshile Gorky. Holtom's instinctive and dynamic practice can be seen as comparable to this group, although the way that he marries this with a considered, structured and almost ritualistic technique locates him very much in the present.

Holtom's work invites the viewer to enter his world and his space, encouraging us to see and feel the core of his essence as an artist. He is constantly experimenting with new techniques and materials, creating works that push beyond the boundary of the picture plane, with a broad variety of textures that is rare and striking.

Asked to explain the subtitle of this exhibition, 'Finding the Mu(sic)' Holtom states:

"How are we to name that mysterious quality which defines a great work of art?

Lets call it 'Mu'(sic).

And how might one invoke the elusive 'Mu'?

Given that I am also a skilled 'cellist, I thought I might try standing on the shoulders of the universally revered Johann Sebastian Bach.

Painting freely in response to the experience of studying and performing the cello Suites, I am providing a visual commentary which could shed new light on the nature of the 'Mu' which they embody.

And who knows. Maybe I'll end up composing a Suite of my own!

So, first (just like Herr Bach...)

'Preludio'."

Roger Holtom, March 2022

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## Notes:

Exhibition Dates: 13<sup>th</sup> May – 8<sup>th</sup> July 2022

Artist in conversation: Saturday 14<sup>th</sup> May 2022, 2-4pm

## Location

Fiumano Clase,

40-41 Pall Mall

1<sup>st</sup> Floor

London

SW1Y 5JG

[www.fiumanoclase.com](http://www.fiumanoclase.com)

Opening hours:

Tuesday – Friday 11am – 6pm

Saturday – 12 noon – 4pm

All other times by appointment

## About Fiumano Clase:

Five years after its formation the gallery has relocated to new premises on Pall Mall in central London.

The central ethos of Fiumano Clase is to work collaboratively with artists, giving them the time, space and opportunity to develop their artistic practice unhindered by commercial pressures. The gallery works with a number of artists internationally, embracing a range of different practices from painting and sculpture, to photography, installation, video and performance art.

Prior to the formation of Fiumano Clase in 2017, Francesca Fiumano was the owner Fiumano Fine Art and Andrés Clase was the owner of Orion Contemporary.

## About Roger Holtom

Roger Holtom is a British artist currently based in Italy. Having worked for years as a professional cellist, performing with musicians from some of the world's most prestigious orchestras, the physicality of the artist is always present in Holtom's work. His painting practice could be described as performative and has clearly been influenced by his training as a cellist.

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Holtom's work has been exhibited internationally and is in numerous private collections across the globe, including London, Hong Kong, Singapore, New York and Berlin. He has been working with gallerist Francesca Fiumano for almost 15 years and continues to evolve and innovate both stylistically and conceptually.