



Anna Ruth

Close Quarters

April 10 – May 23, 2026
Keizersgracht 241, Amsterdam (NL)

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Detail | Anna Ruth, *Two*, 2025

GRIMM is pleased to announce *Close Quarters*, a solo exhibition of new work by Anna Ruth, on view at the Amsterdam gallery from April 10 to May 23, 2026. This will be the artist's first solo exhibition with the gallery.

In *Close Quarters*, Ruth explores the relationship between materiality and the human condition, mapping the duality of the emotional landscape we inhabit. Drawn to the senses and her own emotional psyche, Ruth's paintings present an undefined space, haunted by the spectral presence of ghost-like figures, insects and animals. Somewhere between concealment and revelation, Ruth returns to the body and nature as a site for conceptual reflection.

The title of the exhibition, *Close Quarters*, suggests both the home and physical closeness – two ideas that shape the emotional subjects featured in Ruth's new works. Traditionally, "quarters" refers to living spaces within a house, designated for servants or guests. In *Close Quarters*, Ruth instead invites us to explore the metaphorical quarters of her world, where reality, dreams and sensations collide. Through delicate veils of paint, Ruth's creatures appear as earthy, whimsical visions, half suspended between fantasy and reality.

In one painting, a three winged swan spreads its feathers, gracefully dominating the foreground, its long calligraphic wings extended upwards whilst the soft, bent necks of other swans linger faintly below. The necks and bodies of the swans dance across the canvas like a haunting celebration of sensuality and spirit. Ruth's process mirrors this lyrical state, using thin washes of acrylic to create an illuminating surface where layers of pale fresco greens, muted browns and off-whites blend. In their ethereal forms, the swans come to represent duality, a marriage between fragility and force, devotion and entrapment, beauty and aggression.

Ruth's work continues to examine the dual nature that underpins her subjects. In one work, the faces of two figures appear close, slightly touching, captured in an intimate moment as one whispers into the ear of the other. Steeped in hues of desirous red, the figures meld together, their soft profiles suggestive of an emotional and tender moment. A small bouquet of flowers conceals half of one face, hinting at the mystery of romantic expectation, intimacy and love. The luminous, sleep-like expression of the figures could also be read as a melancholic dream, a memory or vision captured from Ruth's emotional psyche.

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For more information, interviews, and royalty-free image requests, please contact our Amsterdam office:
press@grimmgallery.com +31 (0)20 675 2465

Keizersgracht 241
1016EA Amsterdam
The Netherlands

43a Duke Street, St James's
London SWY1 6DD
United Kingdom

54 White Street
New York 10013
United States

Tel +31 (0)20 675 2465
info@grimmgallery.com
www.grimmgallery.com

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In another work, a face is depicted with eyes almost closed, the head resting gently on a hand as a glowing snail shell casts a soft light. The shell becomes reminiscent of many of the natural forms that populate Ruth's imagery, butterflies, insects and fragile creatures rendered in precise detail, many of these creatures woven from Ruth's childhood memories of growing up in rural Czech Republic. The mysterious creatures and figures that populate Ruth's paintings become psychological touchstones in her work; they channel her interest in how painting can shape our interpretation of meaning, and yet at the same time, plunge us into a world of emotion multitudes.

Alongside the paintings, a mirror sculpture assembled from a traditional horse collar—known in Czech as a *chomout*—takes the form of a dressing table. Sourced from farmers in the Czech Republic, the object reflects Ruth's personal and cultural connection to the landscape; it also operates as a symbolic gesture referencing folk wedding rituals. In Czech wedding celebrations, a horse collar is often humorously placed around the groom's neck after the ceremony, signifying that he is now "harnessed"

to marriage and the responsibilities of shared life. The repurposing of the *chomout*, a familiar agricultural object, into a vanity object such as a mirror brings together ideas of labour, partnership, and devotion; fusing domestic ritual with rural craft. Drawn to the impossibility of capturing a direct reflection, Ruth gently distorts the mirrored surfaces, further highlighting the uncertainty of otherwise stable cultural rituals of union and partnership, in addition to the role of the mirror and its reflection of multiple truths.

Across Ruth's work, figures, animals and objects inhabit an ever-shifting terrain where emotional states blur the boundaries between memory, myth and lived experience. For Ruth, painting and installation serve as instruments for reflection; within these 'close quarters', the self is not fixed but continually reconstructed. Here, her evocative vision of intimacy, transformation and the merging of opposites draws us into an illuminated, atmospheric world where dream and reality are intangible and possibilities endless.



Anna Ruth in her studio, Prague (CZ) | Photo by Ondrej Rychnavsky, 2024

About the artist

Anna Ruth (b. 1994, Mělník, CZ) lives and works in Prague (CZ). She graduated from the Academy of Fine Arts in Prague (CZ) in 2022.

Selected exhibitions include *Handed Unhanded*, Brooke Bennington, London (UK); *Fading Moon, Rising Light*, STEINHAUSER Gallery, Bratislava (SK); *Innesto 1*, Fertile & The Address Gallery, Brescia (IT); *Black Bile and Sunflowers*, The Address Gallery, Brescia (IT); *Spinning Shadows, Weaving Light*, BOLD Gallery, Prague (CZ).

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