

PIPPY HOULDSWORTH GALLERY

KV DUONG

Where Wound Becomes Water

30 January – 14 March 2026

Private View | Thursday 29 January 2026 | 6-8 pm

Pippy Houldsworth Gallery is pleased to present *Where Wound Becomes Water*, London based artist KV Duong's first solo exhibition with the gallery. KV Duong (b.1980, Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam) is an ethnically Chinese artist with a transnational background - born in Vietnam, raised in Canada, and now living and working in the UK. In *Where Wound Becomes Water*, Duong presents paintings on latex set within an installation inspired by the homes of Vietnamese immigrant families living in London social housing in the 1980's.

In works that consider notions of home, family, and heritage, Duong reenacts the diasporic home of a Vietnamese-British household. He transforms the gallery wall into a domestic hallway, an imagining of alternative British upbringing, had his family emigrated from Vietnam to London in 1987, and not Toronto. Hung against wallpaper and mass-produced dado boards, Duong presents intimate individual family portraits on latex in found vintage frames. Their red backgrounds reference the communist flag colours of Vietnam and China, while the glowing, corporeal surfaces evoke traditional Vietnamese lacquer painting. Likewise, in large-scale diptychs *Family Portrait* (2025) and *Family Assembly* (2025), the artist fragments, multiplies, prints, and paints images of his extended family from 1986, their final year together in Vietnam. The blurred multiplicity of their faces alludes to the flawed universal portrayal of the ESEA (East and South East Asia) community within Western culture. A small furniture set, made with latex and found items, lends a child-like tenderness to this scene of anemoia - the nostalgia for a time and place never experienced. As Duong sources second-hand objects, he engages with borrowed pasts, a blending of personal memory with collective experience. He considers the significance of home within the contradictory politics of diasporic belonging.

Shifting from the wistful to the visceral, *Where Wound Becomes Water*, the exhibition's namesake, takes the form of a five-panel painting of a bomb pond in rural Vietnam. Duong's *Bomb Pond* series depicts the present-day ponds that have formed in the thousands of bomb craters left by the Vietnam War, as nearly three million tons of explosives were dropped by U.S. forces between 1964 and 1973. Painted here in fiery hues against the natural yellow of his fleshy latex surface, Duong depicts scarred land, a nation's topography shaped by violence. Duong draws upon Cambodian photographer Vandy Rattana's 2009 *Bomb Ponds* series, images of seemingly tranquil ponds amidst rice paddies and forests, eerie scenes that conceal their devastating history. Duong's polyptych demands solemnity and contemplation, weighty plaques for the millions of lives destroyed by conflict, and a recognition of the resilience of his birthplace and its people.

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In *Where Wound Becomes Water* and throughout his practice, Duong paints on latex, a medium that begins as a liquid poured onto a wooden board, before it is dried, painted, stretched, and reinforced on the reserve with a resin-fibreglass composite, referencing the artist's background in structural engineering. As a material, latex carries fetishistic and sensual associations, particularly in relation to queer identity politics, evoking desire, fantasy, and intimacy. Yet it also connects to the rubber industry, recalling the exploitative plantations that operated during French colonial rule in Vietnam from 1887 until 1954. Motifs of doors and portals recur, spaces of access and exclusion, reflecting both LGBTQ+ and postcolonial narratives. As Duong highlights his medium's complexities in bubbles, ripples, and impressions, he prompts us to pause and consider the history of his place of birth, of the legacies of violence, injustice and forced relocation that cloud our understanding of home.

KV Duong (b. 1980, Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam) lives and works in London. He received his MA in Painting from the Royal College of Art, London, in 2024. In 2025 he was included in *An Uncommon Thread* at Hauser & Wirth, Somerset, and took part in a residency with Vietnam Art Collection, Hanoi. In 2026 he will have his first solo exhibition with Pippy Houldsworth Gallery. Recent solo exhibitions include *Between This Body and the World*, Harlesden High Street, London (2024) and *Too Foreign for Home, Too Foreign for Here*, Migration Museum, London (2022). Group exhibitions include Cardion Arts, London (2025); ai Gallery, London (2025); Hypha Studios, London (2024); Chilli Art Projects, London (2024); Guts Gallery, London (2024); Migration Museum, London (2024); Bomb Factory, London (2023); Museum of The Home, London (2022); and Kingsgate Project Space (2022), amongst others. In 2024, Duong received the Liquitex Award for Acrylic through the Cass Art Prize and was also awarded the Vice Chancellor's Achievement Scholarship at the Royal College of Art, London. These followed the artist's earlier awards: Arts Council England National Lottery Project Grant in 2023 and Jerwood Arts New Work Fund in 2022.