

# THE ART NEWSPAPER

## Royal Academy president to show new compositions in US

Christopher Le Brun's latest paintings respond, in part, to music



Christopher Le Brun, *Composer* (2016) (Courtesy the artist)

The British painter and president of the Royal Academy (RA) Christopher Le Brun is presenting a two-part show of new pictures in the US next year. The exhibition, titled *Christopher Le Brun: Composer*, takes place at the Albertz Benda gallery in New York (2 March-15 April 2017) and at the Gallery at Windsor in Vero Beach, Florida (25 February-27 April 2017).

One of the themes explored through the 28 paintings on view (12 in New York, 16 in Florida) is music and its relationship to his paintings. In 2015, the composer Richard Birchall wrote a

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work directly in response to a picture by Le Brun, which spurred the idea. "Having had that experience, I remembered how important music is to me," Le Brun says.

The other inspiration was the painter's recent discovery of a watercolour he did at age 17 that is "almost a premonition of a painting I've just done, which will be in the exhibition in New York," he says. The earlier work is a response to an opera by Debussy. "What was reassuring about finding it was to see the depth of what music has meant to my paintings" even earlier in his career, he says.

For Le Brun, quiet, contemplative and close looking is the experience he hopes to foster in the audiences. "I'd like them to think there's still an enormous amount to still be discovered in painting," he says. "There is still a lot to do, and it's still fresh."