**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

# FIGURATIVE ART TODAY

## An Intergenerational Exhibition

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**December 10, 2026 – January 14, 2027**

**Opening Reception:** Thursday, December 10, 6–9 PM
**Gallery Hours:** Thursdays 4–8 PM, Saturdays & Sundays 12–5 PM and by appointment
**Location:** SLA Art Space, 307 W 30th St, New York, NY 10001
**Curated by:** Sierra Merda

**Participating Artists:** Steven Assael, Margaret Bowland, Colin Dawson, Vincent Desiderio, Sarah Dixon, Lindsey Guile, Thomas LaPine, Sierra Merda, Jane Philips, Bar Plivazky, Jean-Pierre Roy, Chié Shimizu, Marcus Venegas.



Margaret Bowland, *Olympia Series -7*, oil on linen, 2011

**SLA Art Space** is pleased to present ***FIGURATIVE ART TODAY: An Intergenerational Exhibition***, a group exhibition curated by Sierra Merda, on view from December 10, 2026, through January 14, 2027, in New York City. Bringing together thirteen accomplished artists from different generations and backgrounds, the exhibition explores the extraordinary possibilities of contemporary figurative art through painting, drawing, and sculpture.

Reflecting on her motivation for organising the exhibition, curator Sierra Merda states:

> "Having lived and worked as an artist in both London and New York, I've often felt that figurative art, particularly work grounded in a profound understanding of the human body and craftsmanship developed over many years, is not given the visibility it deserves in contemporary galleries and major art events.

> Although some figurative artists have achieved significant international recognition, opportunities to encounter this kind of work in gallery exhibitions still feel surprisingly limited, even in cities surrounded by exceptional artistic talent. As Steven Assael once said to me, 'People just don't like people right now.' That observation has stayed with me. Through this exhibition, I wanted to bring together artists from different generations who share a commitment to figurative art and a search for humanistic values, yet use their skills and knowledge to create radically different worlds."

The figure has remained one of the most enduring subjects in painting and sculpture, offering artists a means of exploring identity, emotion, and our relationship with the world. While movements, techniques, and visual languages have continuously evolved, the body remains an inexhaustible source of creative exploration. The artists presented in the exhibition demonstrate a profound devotion to understanding the human form. Drawing upon their knowledge of anatomy, observation, and visual traditions, they use their technical mastery to create emotionally and psychologically complex works, giving form to deeply personal visions.

At the heart of the exhibition is a dialogue across generations, exploring how figurative traditions are inherited, challenged, and reinterpreted. Rather than presenting the development of figurative art as a linear progression from one generation to the next, the exhibition encourages a reciprocal exchange of perspectives. Viewed alongside one another, these works reveal both the diversity of individual approaches and the shared foundations that connect artists across time.

The exhibition presents the body in all its glory and contradictions: beauty and pain, vulnerability and strength, suffering and desire, the struggle of being different and the search for identity and belonging. Through paint, charcoal and clay, it explores weight and presence, softness and toughness. Bodies are transformed, exaggerated, sculpted, and reimagined, becoming vessels of physical power, sexuality, and self-invention.

Flesh dissolves into painterly gestures, muses drift through submerged, dreamlike worlds, and bodies intertwine in compositions charged with movement, heat and desire. The exhibition moves between punk subcultures, the mysticism of Japanese spiritual traditions, visions of unearthly forms and beautiful women who find themselves in the wrong places. Feminine struggles and queer melancholy coexist with tenderness, eroticism, and moments of sun-drenched intimacy. Through these contrasting approaches, the body emerges not as a fixed ideal, but as something endlessly mutable: a place of pleasure and suffering, resistance and surrender, belonging and transformation.

**EXHIBITION INFORMATION**

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**Curated by:** Sierra Merda
**Sponsor:** RIND Cheese

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