

**Margot  
Samel**

*Spikes that bite*



## *Spikes that bite*

Yui Kugimiya, Wynnie Mynerva,  
Narcissister, Mary-Audrey Ramírez,  
and Sevina Tzanou

Margot Samel is pleased to present *Spikes that bite*, a group exhibition featuring artists Yui Kugimiya, Wynnie Mynerva, Narcissister, Mary-Audrey Ramírez, Sevina Tzanou, and opening on December 14, 2022. For the artists included in *Spikes that Bite*, desire is an anchor point to which the female form is constructed, negotiated, destroyed, and reclaimed. What does society expect of what is female or feminine? What does it demand it perform as? And what does it expect it to provide for its pleasure? Since the 1970's expansion of feminist and psychoanalytic modes of critical analysis brought a new language to representations of sexuality, desire has been viewed as a motivational force for the means by which subject roles in society are structured. The five artists in this exhibition challenge and expand upon this subjective turn through illustrating how desire is multiplicity in and of itself, containing locus points not only projected onto the female body, but found from within and projected back outwards as strategies of survival, appropriation, and subversion. Materiality and figuration throughout the exhibition tend to these themes through a series of evocative portrayals of pleasure and pain. As each of these artists explore the cycles of rebirth inherent to the female form through situated societies and cultural practices, fragmentation and reformation repeat in mediated celebration of both the euphoric and the grotesque.

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Installation view, *Spikes that bite*, 2022

## Sevina Tzanou

Sevina Tzanou (b. 1994, Athens, Greece) collapses bodies, space, and time in her painting process. Through an engagement with Burlesque, drama, and drag communities she explores the subjectivity of the femme; a hyperfeminine performance which celebrates and announces the queer characteristics of femininity. Through a hyper-visualization of femininity, Tzanou's work, and notions of the femme, call attention to the very constructed nature of femininity and reclaim that construction with all its glossy, frilly, rich characteristics inherent in its deployment.

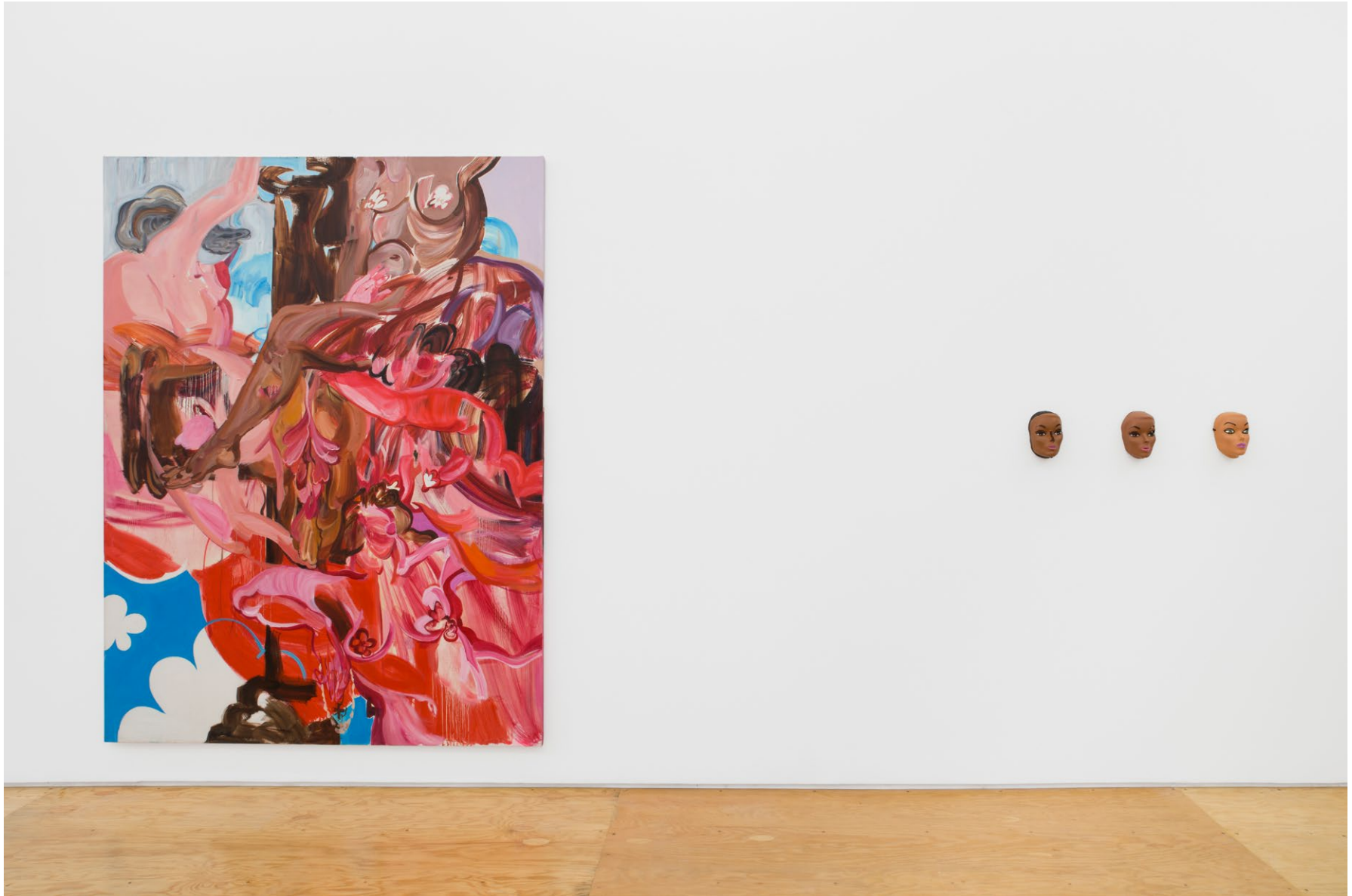
Sevina Tzanou is based in Bonn, Germany. She studied at Meisterschüler Yesim Akdeniz, Kunstakademie Düsseldorf, Germany, and HFBK Hamburg. Group exhibitions include: *Genius Loci X*, SETAREH X, Düsseldorf; *Anonyme Zeichner*, Galerie im Körnerpark, Berlin; *Pilé*, PoleLand, Düsseldorf; *Klasse Katharina Grosse*, Kunsthau Lemgo, Lemgo; *Goldenshower*, Reinraum, Düsseldorf; Akademie [Arbeitstitel], Kunsthalle Düsseldorf; *Kunst in der Schmiede*, Rösrath; *TRASH/HSART*, Frappant Gallery Hamburg; *Dampfboot-Wartezimmer*, Lombardsbrücke, Hamburg. She has a solo show, *Parties I am not invited to*, at Robert Grunenberg, Berlin until December 23, 2022.

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Sevina Tzanou  
*Melancholy Serenade*, 2022  
Oil and mixed media on canvas  
78 3/4 x 59 in | 200 x 150 cm

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Detail, Sevina Tzanou, *Melancholy Serenade*, 2022

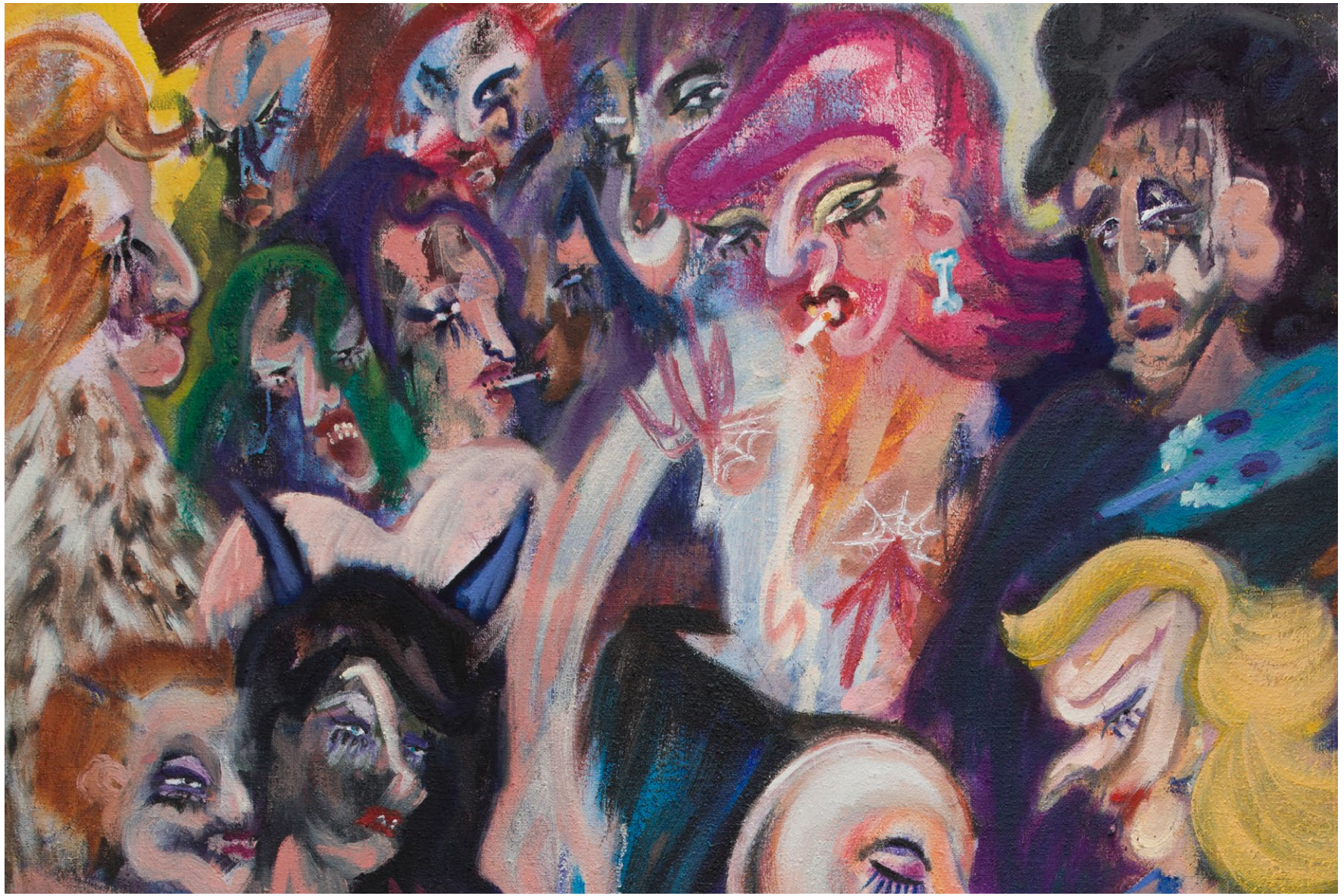
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Sevina Tzanou  
*Freeze Frame, Screen Kiss, 2022*  
Oil and mixed media on canvas  
74 3/4 x 66 7/8 in | 190 x 170 cm



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Detail, Sevina Tzanou, *Freeze Frame, Screen Kiss*, 2022

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Installation view, *Spikes that bite*, 2022

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Sevina Tzanou  
*Beauty Queen*, 2022  
Oil on canvas  
27 1/2 x 13 3/4 in | 70 x 35 cm

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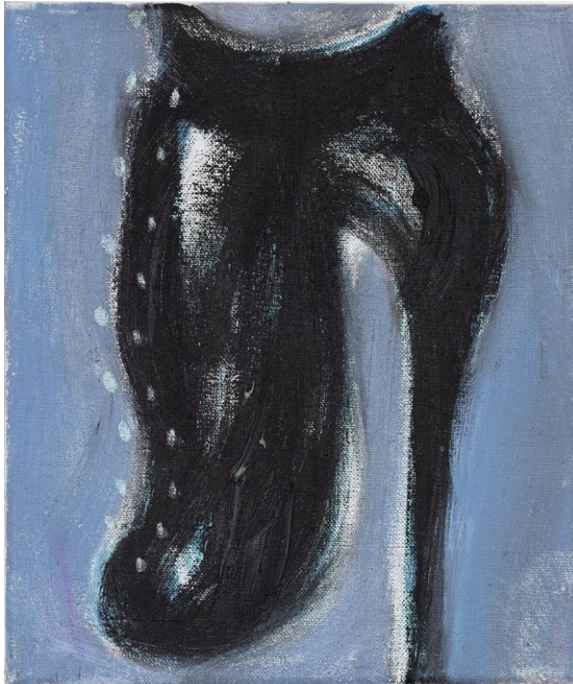
Installation view, *Spikes that bite*, 2022

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Sevina Tzanou  
*Shoe VII*, 2021  
Oil on canvas  
47 1/4 x 15 3/4 in | 120 x 40 cm

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Sevina Tzanou  
*Shoe II*, 2021  
Oil on canvas  
9 7/8 x 11 3/4 in | 25 x 30 cm



Sevina Tzanou  
*Shoe III*, 2021  
Oil on canvas  
9 7/8 x 11 3/4 in | 25 x 30 cm

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Sevina Tzanou  
*Shoe IV*, 2021  
Oil on canvas  
17 3/4 x 17 3/4 in | 45 x 45 cm



Sevina Tzanou  
*Shoe VI*, 2021  
Oil on canvas  
39 3/8 x 19 3/4 in | 100 x 50 cm

## Narcissister

Narcissister (b. 1971, New York, US) focuses on race, gender, and sexuality through a constant renegotiation of the self, and its inherent performative nature within contemporary society against heteronormative structures of surveillance and policing. Drawing from the myth of Narcissus, selfpossession becomes a strategy where humor is deployed to turn a lens back on the ways contemporary society rewards a specific kind of female narcissism. Appropriating methods of self-presentation through combining her professional experience as a dancer and the methodologies of Black radical feminism, her constant performative persona amplifies the ways in which those assigned sexuality and racial deviant from “the norm” have always had to reinvent what was expected of them in order to survive. For *Spikes that bite*, three masks and a series of collages translate the legendary performance artist’s work into an archive of those constant negotiations, mapping a history of collage invented through Black femininity.

Narcissister is a Brooklyn-based artist and performer. Wearing mask and merkin, she works at the intersection of contemporary dance, visual art, and activism. She actively integrates her prior experience as a professional dancer and commercial artist with her art practice in a range of media including live performance, collage, sculpture, video, film, and experimental music. She has presented work worldwide at festivals, nightclubs, museums, and galleries. Her art video “Vaseline” won Best Use of a Sex Toy at The Good Vibrations Erotic Film Festival. In 2013 she received a Bessie Award nomination for the theatrical performance of “Organ Player” and in 2015 she received Creative Capital and United States Artists Awards. Interested in troubling the popular entertainment and experimental art divide, she appeared on America’s Got Talent in 2011. Her first feature film “Narcissister Organ Player” premiered at Sundance Film Festival in 2018; the European premiere was at the Locarno International Film Festival. Also in 2018 she had a solo exhibition at Participant Inc. gallery in New York. She is a Sundance Theatre Lab 2018 Fellow for the development of a new evening length performance commissioned by the Soho Rep in New York. She was nominated for the ArtPace Residency in San Antonio, Texas in Summer 2019 and her activist short art film “Narcissister Breast Work” premiered at Sundance 2020.

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# Margot Samel



Narcissister

*Untitled London Collage, (Red Nails), (After Francisco de Goya, portrait of Ferdinand VII, ca. 1814-1815), 2022*

Found art catalogues and porn magazines, rubber cement

14 1/2 x 11 1/2 in | 36.8 x 29.2 cm

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Narcissister  
*Untitled London Collages, (Paul Cezanne, Portrait of Alfred Hauge 1899), 2022*  
Found art catalogues and porn magazines, rubber cement  
13 1/2 x 11 1/2 in | 34.3 x 29.2 cm



Narcissister  
*Untitled London Collages, (After Michael W. Monroe, Low-back Side Chair, 1995), 2022*  
Found art catalogues and porn magazines, rubber cement  
14 1/2 x 11 1/2 in | 36.8 x 29.2 cm

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*Installation view, Narcissister, unframed collages*

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**Garry Knox Bennett**

(below) *Boston Kneehole Desk*, 1989, Honduras rosewood, maple, aluminum, brick, Fountain head, and antique bronze, 79.4 x 127.6 x 61 cm (31 1/4 x 50 1/4 x 24 in.). Gift of Anne and Ronald Abramson, the James Renwick Alliance and museum purchase through the Smithsonian Institution Collections Acquisition Program

**Jere Osgood**

(opposite) *Cylinder-Front Desk*, 1989, Australian lacewood, Honduras rosewood, pearwood, and mahogany plywood, 116.5 x 109.9 x 73.7 cm (45 7/8 x 43 1/4 x 29 in.). Gift of the James Renwick Alliance and museum purchase through the Smithsonian Institution Collections Acquisition Program



Narcissister

*Untitled London Collages, (After Garry Knox Bennett, Boston Kneehole, 1989), 2022*

Found art catalogues and porn magazines, rubber cement  
11 x 8 1/2 in | 27.9 x 21.6 cm

Narcissister

*Untitled London Collages, (After Paul Cezanne, The Artist's Wife in an Armchair, c. 1867), 2022*

Found art catalogues and porn magazines, rubber cement  
10 x 9 in | 25.4 x 22.9 cm

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Narcissister  
*Untitled London Collages, (After Paul Cezanne, Large Bathers 1898-1905, 2022*  
Found art catalogues and porn magazines, rubber cement  
10 x 11 in | 25.4 x 27.9 cm



Narcissister  
*Untitled London Collages, (After Leochares, The Demeter of Cnidus, c. 350 BC), 2022*  
Found art catalogues and porn magazines, rubber cement  
10 x 9 in | 25.4 x 22.9 cm

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Narcissister

*Untitled Study for a Storm King Sculpture (After David Smith Three Ovals Soar, 1960), 2022*

Found art catalogues and porn magazines, rubber cement

11 x 10 in | 27.9 x 25.4 cm

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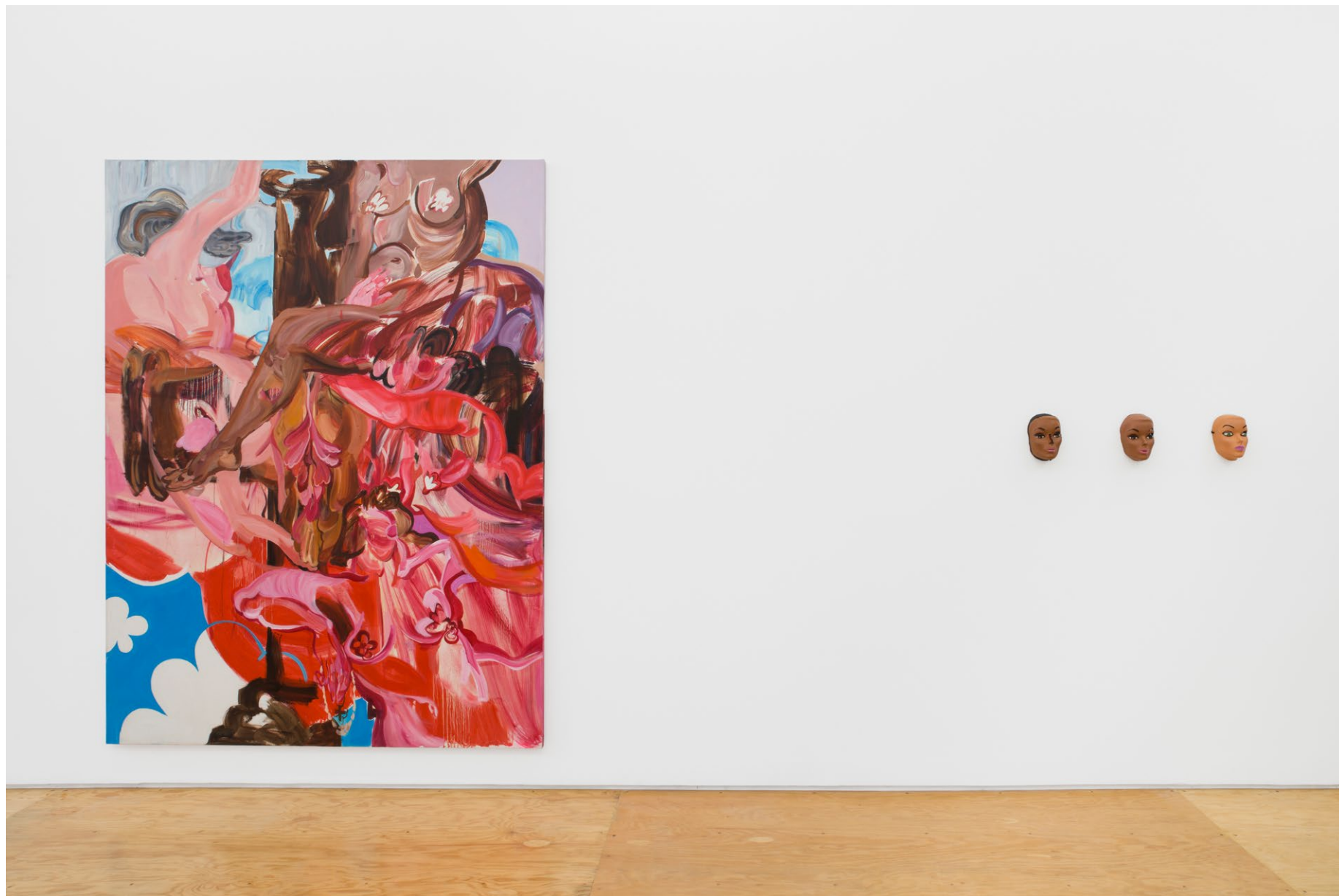


Narcissister

*Narcissister performance mask, (After Verna Doran/  
PlastiPersonalities c. 1965), 2007-2022*

Repurposed wig form, gaffer tape, velcro, hot glue, elastic  
8 x 5 x 5 in \ 20.3 x 12.7 x 12.7 cm (each)

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Installation view, *Spikes that bite*, 2022



## Wynnie Mynerva

Wynnie Mynerva (b. 1993, Lima, Peru)'s oil paintings queer not only the figuration of sexual imagery but the very performative act of looking as a sexual act of liberation. Through a reappropriation of form and expression, her canvases bridge abstraction to trace movements of desire, studying fetish imagery as an expansive space into the psychically unknown.

Wynnie Mynerva lives and works in Lima, Peru. Mynerva studied art history at the Universidad Nacional Mayor de San Marcos and, afterwards, Fine Arts (Painting) at the Escuela Nacional Superior Autónoma de Bellas Artes del Peru. She has participated in residences in Fountainhead (Miami), Uberbau (Sao Paulo) and AMIL (Lima). Her recent solo exhibitions include: *El Jardín de las Delicias*, Museo Amano, 2020; *Sex Machine*, Ginsberg, Lima, 2019; *The Other Sex*, Sala Euroidiomas Miraflores, 2019. Group exhibitions include: *Desire Tube Cultural Hall*, Milan; Paper Beers London, London; *TRANS11.603*, Studio Warszawa Gallery, Poland; *Processes*, PUCP Cultural Center, Peru; *Our Own Room*, curated by Inés Artola; *Menstrual delay / immediate solution*, La Revoltosa Cultural Center, Peru.

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Wynnie Mynerva  
*The incarnation of my sex*, 2021  
Oil and canvas  
74 3/4 x 98 3/8 in | 190 x 250 cm

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Detail, Wynnie Mynerva, *The incarnation of my sex*, 2021

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Wynnie Mynerva  
*Untitled, 2022*  
Oil on canvas  
98 3/8 x 78 3/4 in | 250 x 200 cm

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Detail, Wynnie Mynerva, *Untitled*, 2022

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Installation view, *Spikes that bite*, 2022

## Mary-Audrey Ramírez

Mary-Audrey Ramírez (b. 1990, Luxembourg) deploys the language of the uncanny in her sculptures. Both material explorations of form and perception, her latex and fabric bodies insist on the imaginary worlds they come from. They evoke bondage subculture, science fictions, cosplay, or video games to reveal the very constructed nature of female subjectivity particularly in its construction through the lens of contemporary technology.

Mary-Audrey Ramirez lives and works in Berlin, Germany. She has exhibited work at Trauma Bar Und Kino, Berlin; Kunsthalle Baden-Baden; and Dortmunder Kunstverein, among others. Recent solo shows include: *Sadness reigns*, MARTINETZ, Cologne; *BKEEPR'S GARDEN*, beacon, Munich; *They Miss Being Aware of Time*, curated by Christina Gigliotti, Polansky Gallery, Prague; *an army of rats is still an army*, Galerie Russi Klenner, Berlin. Group exhibitions include: *THE FAIREST-TEASER 04*, Venice; *Look past this*, mcg21xoxo, Matsudo, Japan; *Love and other rhythms*, Kunsthalle Exnergasse, Vienna; *Graveyard escape*, curated by Gilles Neins, CeCiL's Box, Cercle Cité, Luxembourg; *Frenemies*, Studioshow Leipzigerstr, Berlin; *STUDIO BERLIN*, Berghain, Berlin. She recently completed a six month residency at the International Studio & Curatorial Program (ISCP) in New York.

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Mary-Audrey Ramirez  
*Big Baby Valerie (less expensive, easier to manage)*, 2022  
Polyester, PVC, velvet, poly fill, heavy duty webbing strap  
21 1/2 x 26 x 9 inches | 54.61 x 66.04 x 22.86 cm

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Detail, Mary-Audrey Ramirez, *Big Baby Valerie (less expensive, easier to manage)*, 2022

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Mary-Audrey Ramirez  
*Triggered*, 2022  
Yarn on linen  
17 x 16 inches | 43.18 x 40.64 cm

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Mary-Audrey Ramirez  
*Swamp (what a fight)*, 2022  
Yarn on linen  
15 x 17 inches | 38.10 x 43.18 cm

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Mary-Audrey Ramirez  
*Nice to make your acquaintance*, 2022  
Yarn on linen  
12 x 14 inches | 30.48 x 35.56 cm

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Installation view, *Spikes that bite*, 2022

## Yui Kugimiya

Yui Kugimiya (b. 1981, Tokyo, Japan) paintings work with strategies of refiguration. Feline figures move through fields of color in hypersexualized form to examine the ways in which fantasy plays a crucial role in the quotidian experience of desire. The everyday, a long running theme in Kugimiya's practice, finds tension here with the constant demand for the climactic experience of sexuality. Rather than a submissive response to this call for constant performance, the artist's exploration of anthropomorphic characters through fetish imagery mediates this conforming demand to allow for a more liberating if not playful return of desire to the female fantastic point of view.

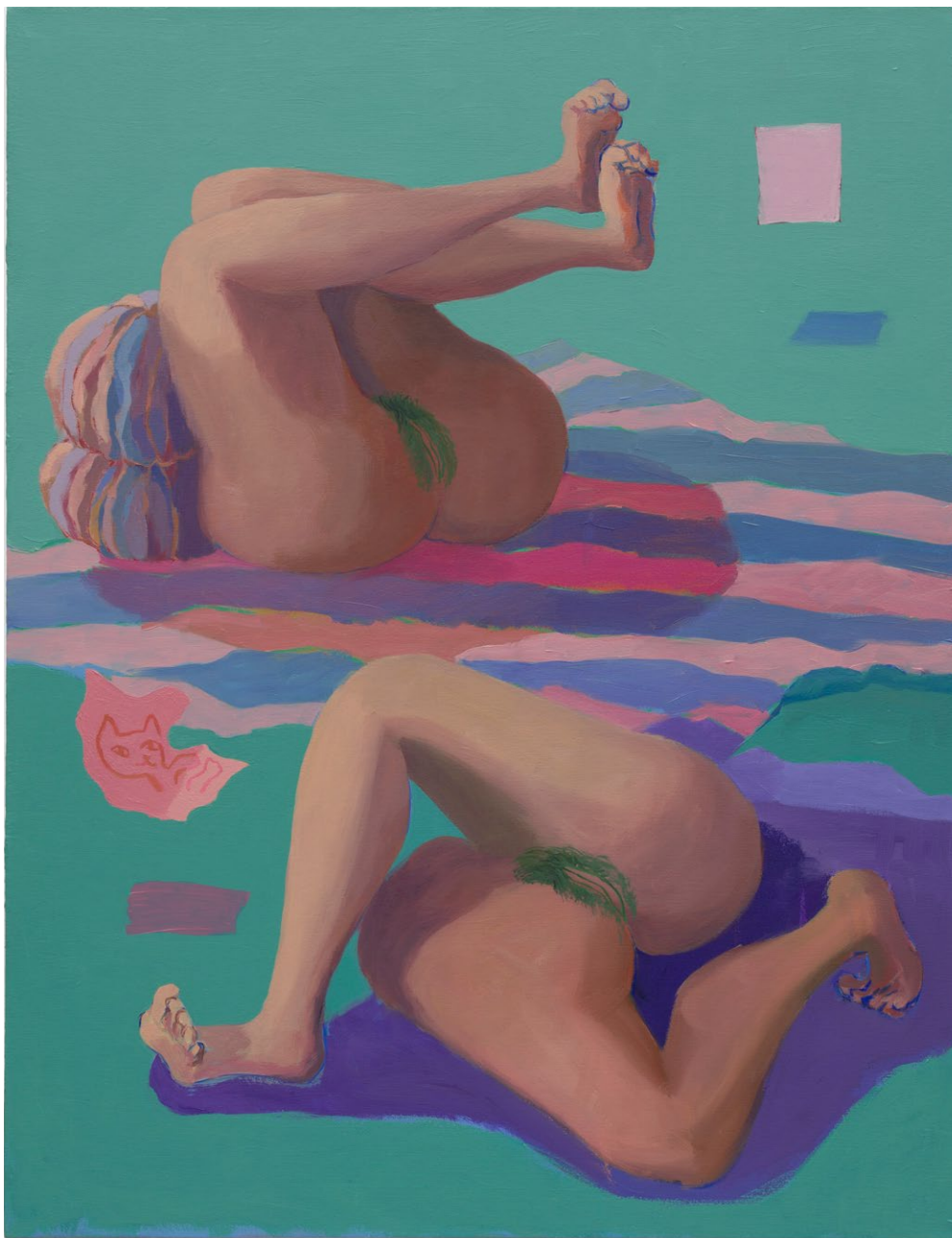
Yui Kugimiya (b. 1981, Tokyo, Japan) lives and works in Brooklyn, New York. She studied at Skowhegan School of Painting and Sculpture, Skowhegan, Maine; Yale University School of Art; Massachusetts College of Art, Boston; and at Montserrat College of Art, Beverly, Massachusetts. Her work has been exhibited at Everson Museum of Art, Syracuse, NY; Galeria Enrique Guerrero, Mexico City; Taka Ishii Gallery, Kyoto, Japan; Horton Gallery, New York, NY; and Ingalls and Associates, Miami. She has also participated in group shows at David Castillo Gallery, Miami; Gasser & Grunert, New York; Regina Rex, Brooklyn; Suzanne Tarasieve Paris; Galapagos Art Space, New York, among others. Her work belongs to selected collections, such as The Museum of Modern Art, New York, and Everson Museum of Art, Syracuse, NY.

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Yui Kugimiya  
*Untitled*, 2022  
Oil on canvas  
36 x 28 1/2 in | 91.4 x 72.4 cm



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Yui Kugimiya  
*Untitled*, 2022  
Oil on canvas  
36 x 28 1/2 in | 91.4 x 72.4 cm

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Installation view, *Spikes that bite*, 2022

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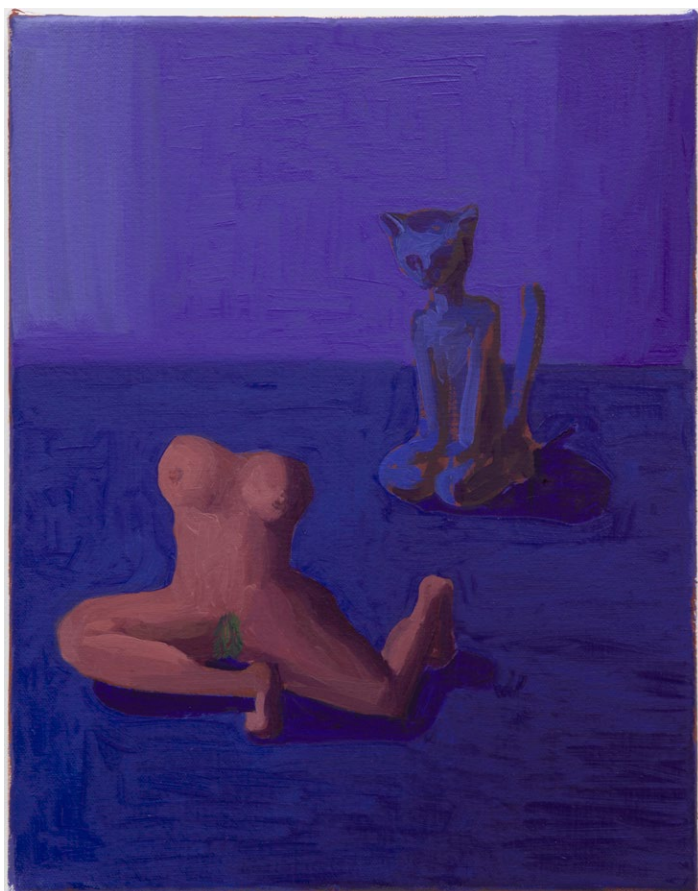
Yui Kugimiya  
*Untitled 022722*, 2022  
Oil on canvas  
17 1/4 x 17 7/8 in | 43.8 x 45.4 cm

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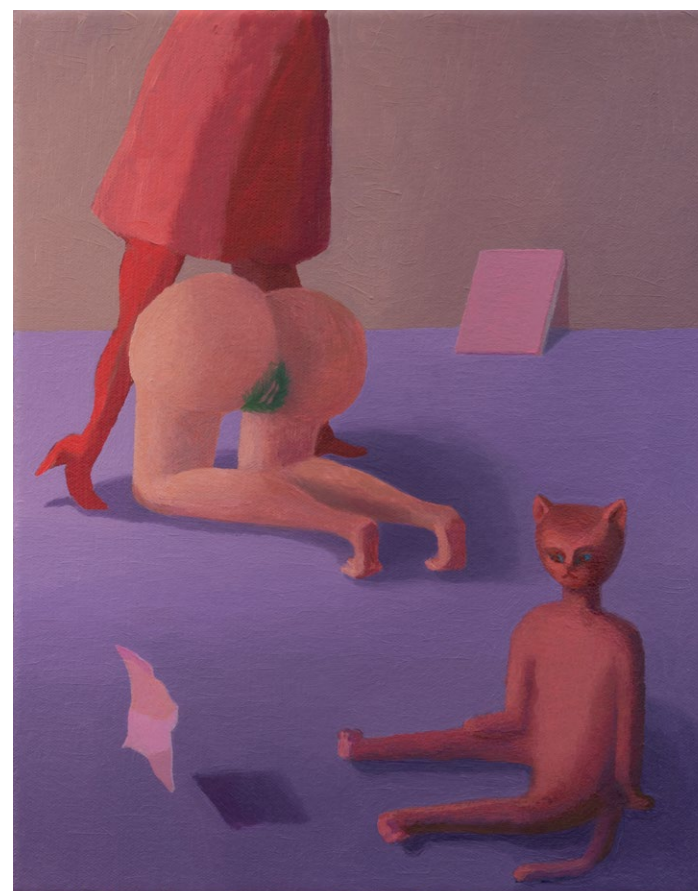


Yui Kugimiya  
*Untitled 050722, 2022*  
Oil on canvas  
18 x 22 1/2 in | 45.7 x 57.1 cm

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Yui Kugimiya  
*Untitled*, 2022  
Oil on canvas  
14 1/4 x 11 1/8 in | 36.2 x 28.3 cm



Yui Kugimiya  
*Untitled 102422*, 2022  
Oil on canvas  
14 1/4 x 11 1/8 in | 36.2 x 28.3 cm