

**Artist:** Samala Meza

**Exhibition title:** I tamed a wild horse (once)

**Venue:** New Low, Los Angeles, CA

**Date:** 14 April–25 May, 2024

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New Low is pleased to present *I tamed a wild horse (once)*, an exhibition of new works by Samala Meza.

Across media, the work of Samala Meza has explored Americana, desire, critters, cuteness, roundness, and sex. Stars and stripes, Arizona desert scapes, white trash icons, doggies, signs of femininity, like wigs and lipstick, have all featured prominently, but none as much as her “dolls” of recent years. In Meza’s “Doll” paintings, we encounter big, bold, bulbous figures, colourful and in positions that could be considered compromising. Ever cute (thinking of Sianne Ngai’s claim of “the cute” being something you want to squeeze, perhaps even to death), the scale of many of the dolls lend to claustrophobic compositions - yet they always seem powerful. None have eyes - what they do have is curves, hair, and holes - all the holes - and an uncanny ability to stare directly at you, confidently confrontational.

In her newest large paintings presented at New Low, much of the dolls’ shapes and feelings remain, but they’ve opened up into “landscapes”. Where the dolls possess a soft, flatness, their implied rotundity is now represented in paint, through repetitive rock forms, or are they plants? There’s still holes, openings, rather, where there is a light source illuminating the alien terrain above and below. They’re sci-fi, abstract, hellish, and tunnel-of-love, serene and scary, all at once. And not to worry, they’re still very sexy.

A new series of smaller doll works will be shown alongside these larger works. Where roundness has found a more physical space in the larger, created worlds, these new dolls lean toward the pointed. She mentioned something to me about umbrellas, but knowing we share Arizona upbringings, and given their purple and orange colourway, I can’t help but see suns, especially because all of her work is pretty hot. Fun and free, Meza continues to push the parameters she has set up for her work, and *I tamed a wild horse (once)* proves she’s no one trick pony.

Samala Meza (b. 1996, Santa Rosa, California, USA) is an Aries Sun, Cancer Moon, and Pisces Rising. She received her BFA from Otis College of Art and Design. She lives and works in Los Angeles.

## List of works:

1. File name: 01\_New Low\_Samala Meza\_8612.jpeg  
Samala Meza, *I tamed a wild horse (once)*, 2024, installation view
2. File name: 02\_New Low\_Samala Meza\_8596.jpeg  
Samala Meza, *I tamed a wild horse (once)*, 2024, installation view
3. File name: 03\_New Low\_Samala Meza\_8592.jpeg  
Samala Meza, *I tamed a wild horse (once)*, 2024, installation view
4. File name: 04\_New Low\_Samala Meza\_8586.jpeg  
Samala Meza, *I tamed a wild horse (once)*, 2024, installation view
5. File name: 05\_New Low\_Samala Meza\_8583.jpeg  
Samala Meza, *I tamed a wild horse (once)*, 2024, installation view
6. File name: 06\_New Low\_Samala Meza\_8564.jpeg  
Samala Meza, *I tamed a wild horse (once)*, 2024, installation view
7. File name: 07\_New Low\_Samala Meza\_8604.jpeg  
Samala Meza, *With Love (Landscape 1)*, 2024, oil on canvas, 50 x 70 x 1.5 in.
8. File name: 08\_New Low\_Samala Meza\_8605.jpeg  
Samala Meza, *With Love (Landscape 1) (detail)*, 2024, oil on canvas, 50 x 70 x 1.5 in.
9. File name: 09\_New Low\_Samala Meza\_8627.jpeg  
Samala Meza, *With Love (Landscape 2)*, 2024, oil on canvas, 60 x 72 x 1.5 in.
10. File name: 10\_New Low\_Samala Meza\_8628.jpeg  
Samala Meza, *With Love (Landscape 2) (detail)*, 2024, oil on canvas, 60 x 72 x 1.5 in.
11. File name: 11\_New Low\_Samala Meza\_8573.jpeg  
Samala Meza, *Wall Doll (Cowgirl 1)*, 2024, oil on canvas, over wood panel, 25.25 x 18.25 x 1.5 in.
12. File name: 12\_New Low\_Samala Meza\_8571.jpeg  
Samala Meza, *Wall Doll (Cowgirl 2)*, 2024, oil on canvas, over wood panel, 25.25 x 18.25 x 1.5 in.
13. File name: 13\_New Low\_Samala Meza\_8578.jpeg  
Samala Meza, *Wall Doll (Cowgirl 3)*, 2024, oil on canvas, over wood panel, 25.25 x 18.25 x 1.5 in.