

*...having seen human bodies dissected one knows how the bones lie, and the muscles and sinews, and all the order and conditions of anatomy, so that it is possible with greater security and more correctness to place the limbs and arrange the muscles of the body in the figures we draw.*

—Vasari, On Technique

These paintings are concerned with two ‘figurative’ subcultures: academic figure painting and diaristic zine comics. Both fixate on the human body: for the former, it is a naturalized humanist subject, physically self-evident; for the latter, an avatar within a real-life narrative that offers the stylized self as DIY product. The paintings depict, literally, nude art workers and artist-protagonists.

— Poseurs present a 21st century subject in a 19th century style.

— Life Drawings present a 19th century (romantic) subject in a 21st century package.

— “thirteen oil paintings on canvas”: a zine-like collection of small paintings.

The historical setting for these bodies of work is the convergence of private life and public speech, and the question of how to engage, since engagement itself was customarily defined by the identification of a dissolute public space and the fortification of a myopic subcultural refuge. Today these games with taste and reference take place in one continuous sphere. The question has no obvious answer. But we artists have lost the comfort of choosing between private cultural impotence and public personal corruption.

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