

GAGOSIAN GALLERY

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PRESS RELEASE

GAGOSIAN GALLERY
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JENNY SAVILLE: Continuum

Thursday, September 15 – Saturday, October 22, 2011

Opening reception: Thursday, September 15th, from 6 to 8 pm

(Flesh) is all things. Ugly, beautiful, repulsive, compelling, anxious, neurotic, dead, alive.

--Jenny Saville

Gagosian Gallery is pleased to present an exhibition of recent paintings and drawings by Jenny Saville, her first in New York since "Migrants" in 2003.

Fascinated by the endless aesthetic and formal possibilities that the materiality of the human body offers, Saville remits a highly sensuous and tactile impression of surface and mass in her monumental oil paintings. In the compelling *Stare* paintings she renders the contours and features of the face and the nuances of skin texture and color in strokes both bold and meticulous. Enlarging the facial features of her human subjects to a vast scale and rendering them in layer upon layer of paint, she imbues in them with a sense of mass and weight that is almost sculptural and at times wholly abstract. Intense pinks, reds, and blues erupt through pale skin tones, disclosing the internal workings of the painting like the flesh and blood of a living organism.

Saville portrays the intimate relationship between mother and child in a series of life-sized drawings directly inspired by Renaissance nativity portraits -- in particular Leonardo da Vinci's cartoon *The Virgin and Child with St. Anne and John the Baptist*, an atypical scene in which the Virgin contends with a lively Christ-child. In *Study for Pentimenti IV (After Michelangelo's Virgin and Child)* (2011), and *Componimento inculto* (2011), the subjects -- a pregnant woman and young child-- are recorded in symbiotic flux. Multiple impressions of each figure are drawn, erased, and superimposed again to create studies in simultaneity; the relationship between them is expressed in a series of dynamic poses rather than in static compositions of iconographic order. Through these intricate studies, Saville gives powerful graphic life to the anatomical details and expressive movements that animate and underpin her visceral paintings.

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Jenny Saville was born in Cambridge, England in 1970. She studied at the Glasgow School of Art. Her work has been included in exhibitions worldwide including "Sensation: Young British Artists from the Saatchi Collection," Royal Academy of Arts, London (1997, traveled to Hamburger Bahnhof, Berlin and the Brooklyn Museum of Art, New York 1998-1999); "The Nude In 20th Century Art," Kunsthalle Emden, Germany (2002, traveled to Arken Museum of Modern Art, Copenhagen in 2003); "Painting," Museo Correr, 50th Biennale di Venezia (2003); "Paint Made Flesh," Frist Center for the Arts, Nashville (2009, traveled to the Philips Collections, Washington DC and Memorial Art Gallery, University of Rochester, Rochester, NY in 2010) and "Eroi," Galleria d'Arte Moderna, Torino, Italy (2011). Her work was the subject of a solo exhibition at the Museo d'Arte Contemporanea, Rome in 2005. Her first solo U.S. museum exhibition will open at the Norton Museum in West Palm Beach, Florida later this year.

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