

GLADSTONE GALLERY

Cecily Brown
Nana and other stories
April 26 – June 8, 2024
760, Samseong-ro, Gangnam-gu, Seoul
Gladstone Seoul

Nana and other stories is an exhibition of new paintings by Cecily Brown at Gladstone Gallery in Seoul. Expanding upon her established practice, Brown's paintings turn inward revisiting works from the artist's oeuvre some of which were recently shown in her seminal survey, *Death and the Maid*, at the Metropolitan Museum of Art in 2023. Preparing this exhibition invoked a new interest in Brown to continue examining previous series and familiar subjects, asserting the artist's radical ability to reimagine narratives and amplifying her innovative reinterpretation of historical motifs.

Layered and narratively complex, Brown's paintings defy categorization, drawing upon a multitude of genres and seamlessly balancing provocative female figuration with a distinctive gestural style of abstraction. Singular female nudes are a marked departure from the artist's usual subjects, yet Brown's commitment to rewriting the artistic traditions of the nude enlivens the sensualized subject with a newfound agency. In her new work, *Nana* (2022-2023), Brown revisits her previously exhibited work *No You for Me* (2013) and takes the title of Édouard Manet's controversial 1877 painting, *Nana*, depicting a courtesan with her awaiting client. Transforming her original loosely suggestive and vigorously painted figure into an identifiably expressive and contoured woman, Brown's adjusted visual language commandeers the past narratives. In *Lavender's Blue* (2023) the artist sources Walter Richard Sickert's reenvisioned nudes of the early 20th century. Brisk, wide-reaching strokes of rollers, simultaneously apply and blur pastel tones of blues and purples, contrasting the painterly gestural strokes of the fleshy peach form. An aura of confidence and insouciance radiates through both the lounging figure and Brown's hand, assuring a contemplative stability and a profound sense of empowerment within the artist's revision.

Brown's new works negotiate morality with mortality. *Nana and other stories* reprises the theme of the still life, reflecting upon Brown's fascination with the uncanny and recalling her previous heavily abundant iterations that draw on Dutch and Flemish traditions in the genre. In *Offal with lemons* (2023-2024) and *The sorcerer's apprentice* (2023-2024) Brown evokes the architectural forms of *Selfie* (2020) and *Hangover Square* (2005) amplifying the earlier works' deep saturation with a greater visual density that leans into abstraction. With this shift to meticulously punctuated, tighter strokes, Brown imbues a frenzied expression within the familiarly crowded domestic interiors. Through the act of painting, Brown reveals compelling visual and thematic fluidity in her explorations of the tension between desire and power, past and present, figuration and abstraction, emphasizing the subversive potential of artistic expression.

For further information, please contact press@gladstonegallery.com
New York gallery hours: Tuesday-Saturday, 10am-6pm
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