

Jenny Saville

Gaze

21 March until 29 June 2025

Internationally acclaimed artist Jenny Saville (born 1970) was a central member of the Young British Artists and the sole figurative painter to participate in the legendary exhibition *Sensation* at the Royal Academy of Arts in London in 1997. For over three decades, Saville has explored the centuries-old tradition of representing the human body, with her figures occupying an ambiguous zone between idealization and deconstruction. Drawing inspiration from the annals of art history – from Old Masters such as Leonardo and Raphael through to Egon Schiele, Picasso, Francis Bacon and Lucian Freud – hers is a painterly practice defined by physicality, carnality and the interplay between new and old media.

Saville translates the traditional artistic gestures of these revered painters into a unique painterly language that is truly contemporary, with her work oscillating between the realms of figuration and abstraction. Like a sculptor with a brush, her figurative representations often begin as abstract color fields and thick coatings of paint, which gradually take on form and definition as the layers continue to build. With ancient or Christian iconography serving as the template for her compositions, for her choreography of space, figures and surfaces, Saville is an artist who through both technique and tribute has developed a hybrid canon of forms that can be read as a painterly renewal of history.

Saville interweaves painting and drawing to explore the aesthetic potential of both graphic and painterly qualities – she paints in oil on large sheets of paper and works with pastel and charcoal on canvas. Since the 1990s she has been creating figurative depictions with an accentuated and explicit corporeality: bodies and faces characterized by directness and great immediacy that can be unusual, unsettling or even extreme. In addition to her celebrated large figures and nudes in classical poses – standing, reclining, sitting – and their contemporary variations, Saville also devotes herself to portraits and selfportraits. But whether she is representing history, the bodies of others or indeed her own profile, her work will always be defined by its defiance of the conventional notions of beauty and ugliness.

ALBERTINA

Gaze at the ALBERTINA Museum is Saville's first solo exhibition in Austria, and will offer a retrospective insight into the developments of her artistic practice over the last two decades. The presentation in the historic Columned Hall also features new works being shown to the public for the very first time.

Press Images

The following images are available free of charge in the Press section of www.albertina.at.
Legal notice: The images may only be used in connection with reporting on the exhibition.



Jenny Saville
Byzantium, 2018
Oil on canvas
190 × 240 cm
The George Economou Collection
© Jenny Saville / Bildrecht, Vienna 2024
Photo: Mike Bruce. Courtesy Gagosian



Jenny Saville
Fate I, 2018
Oil on canvas
260 × 240 cm
The Nixon Collection
© Jenny Saville / Bildrecht, Vienna 2024
Photo: Mike Bruce. Courtesy Gagosian



Jenny Saville
Song of Songs, 2020–2023
Oil and oil bar on linen
180 × 240 cm
Courtesy of the Fredriksen Family Collection
© Jenny Saville / Bildrecht, Vienna 2024
Photo: Prudence Cuming Associates Ltd. Courtesy Gagosian



Jenny Saville
Gaze, 2021–2024
Oil and acrylic on linen
200 × 160 cm
Private collection, Courtesy Gagosian
© Jenny Saville / Bildrecht, Vienna 2024
Photo: Prudence Cuming Associates Ltd. Courtesy Gagosian