

DIANE ROSENSTEIN GALLERY

Vanessa Prager: Talk To Me
September 19 – October 31, 2026

Opening reception: Saturday, September 19 from 4p - 6p

Diane Rosenstein is pleased to present *Talk To Me*, an exhibition of paintings by Los Angeles-based artist Vanessa Prager. These ten impasto oil paintings trace an evolution of Prager's floral portraiture into exuberant still lifes. Her new series renders the vibrant bricolage of domestic life — a world fully inhabited by patterns, people, and objects — as a single unified dimension.

The history of painting is filled with attempts to capture a likeness, often placing subjects alongside objects from their lives to add information. In this way, small details — such as a basket of cherry tomatoes, a Sharpie, and the rosetta design on a latte in *June, July, August* (2026) — tell at least part of the story, and become a portrait in themselves. In Prager's paintings, "you are what you eat" definitely takes on a new meaning.

In *Affectionately*, 2026, figures gather around a table set for a celebration: a birthday cake is decorated with strawberries and a candle, another reads 'Happy Birthday Stella' in pink icing; platters of seafood, fish, salad, cereal boxes, corn, and summer melons cascade over blue checkerboard tablecloths in a composition that flattens the picture plane in a dazzling interplay of color and texture. Images of children and friends stare back at us — from the periphery as well as on the various screens and devices the artist sets in place — revisiting her early practice of figurative portraiture.

In her 2024 essay, "What I See of Flowers: The Work of Vanessa Prager," Amanda Fortini wrote: "What I also see slightly differently, after interviewing Prager, are the possibilities for a female artist. No matter what the art world or society at large tells women (and it's hard not to find oneself affected by the predominant dim view) marriage and children are not automatic impediments to making great art. Prager works from a studio adjacent to her home, and has an involved husband, but she is also staggeringly, impressively disciplined...[S]he is clear about the tenacity it requires: 'I am not supposed to have this job. I had to create this job and fight hard to make it what it is, and I have to fight hard to keep it.'"

Talk To Me is Prager's third solo exhibition with Diane Rosenstein Gallery.

Vanessa Prager (b. 1984, Los Angeles) is a self-taught artist who is known for her elaborate impasto and classical painting technique. Her abstract paintings explore themes of identity, self-reflection, and the human condition in the 21st century. Since 2021, she has presented two solo shows with Diane Rosenstein Gallery, who published a monographic catalogue, *Vanessa Prager: Paintings (2020-2024)* in 2024. Other solo presentations include those at Kristin Hjellegjerde, Berlin (2019) and London (2018); The Hole, New York (2018, 2016); Richard Heller, Los Angeles (2017); and Jenkins Johnson Gallery, San Francisco (2012). The artist's work has also been featured in group exhibitions such as *The Flower Show*, L.A. Louver, Venice, CA (2023); *The Street and The Shop*, curated by Michael Slenske, Venice, CA (2022) and Los Angeles (2021); *Go Figure!*, curated by Beth Rudin DeWoody, Eric Firestone Gallery, East Hampton, NY (2019); Richard Heller Gallery, Los Angeles (2017); *Russian Doll*, M+B Gallery, Los Angeles (2015); *Seven Sisters*, Jenkins Johnson Gallery, San Francisco (2013); *High Five*, New Image Art, Los Angeles (2012); *California Girls*, Katherine Cone Gallery, Los Angeles (2012); *Girls, girls, girls*, Jenkins Johnson Gallery, New York (2011); and *Crazy for Cult*, Gallery 1988, Los Angeles (2008).

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