

Statement

May 2025

I grew up in museums, facing countless works depicting women in extremes —either a passive nude object or an anguished vehicle to convey power. I initially saw these images as mythic or folkloric, but as an adult, I began to understand how that same tire, confusion, and stress persist in contemporary women, often more quietly and contained. My work depicts the somber ennui of sculptural bodies in nameless landscapes bearing the weight of contemporary existence.

The monumental scale defines the presence and focus of the female bodies who, throughout art history, have been anxiously waiting for and demanding attention. The technicolor figures are captured in statuesque poses of leisure and repose, but their bodies are exaggerated and resist anatomical correctness, suggesting the emotional unrest from the effects of world weariness. In swimwear, the figures deny the viewer historical classification of the nude, with their body hidden in color, pattern, and style. Vibrant colors refrain from expectation, both locally and descriptively. Here, discomfort and awkwardness are obscured by a vivid decorative palette. The canvas's edge can be viewed as a container, defining a constraining boundary and simultaneously offering a space for the figure to stretch across, fill, and dominate. Working on paper allowed me to explore these ideas immediately and clearly, requiring declarative decisions. On paper, the image emerges through a balance of control and release, formed not through constant revision, but through trusting and accepting confident movements. The large pink body in *Sleeping giant* occupies the majority of the purple plane, maintaining composure, while balancing on its head, half draped with a blanket.

The formal tensions become visual metaphors for resilience, suggesting that individuals, particularly women, must maintain poise even as they endure. In the context of the bather, Linda Nochlin writes that Renior's bathers are "sites of contradiction and uncertainty, inscribing anxieties and their repression." While they appear carefree, it must be understood that the position of women in the 19th century was one of oppression. At this time, the French *mal du siècle* and *fin-de-siècle* movements, both in subject and content, parallel a current and familiar climate- a society overwhelmed by political instability, cultural dissonance, and environmental fear. I am working in conversation with the world-weariness spirit of these movements with modern references in the writing of Sally Rooney, films of Ari Aster, and music of the sad girl genre.

In my current work, I am driven by, as Baudelaire writes, an "oasis of horror in a desert of ennui". My poses are expressions of a human desire for leisure while navigating the challenges of complex reality, both personal and social. By representing more multi-figure compositions and pushing the physical tensions of bodies, I aim to develop deep resonating angst. On reflecting upon the dualities of comfort and vulnerability, containment and exposure, I wish to paint the saturnine mood of contemporary humanity.