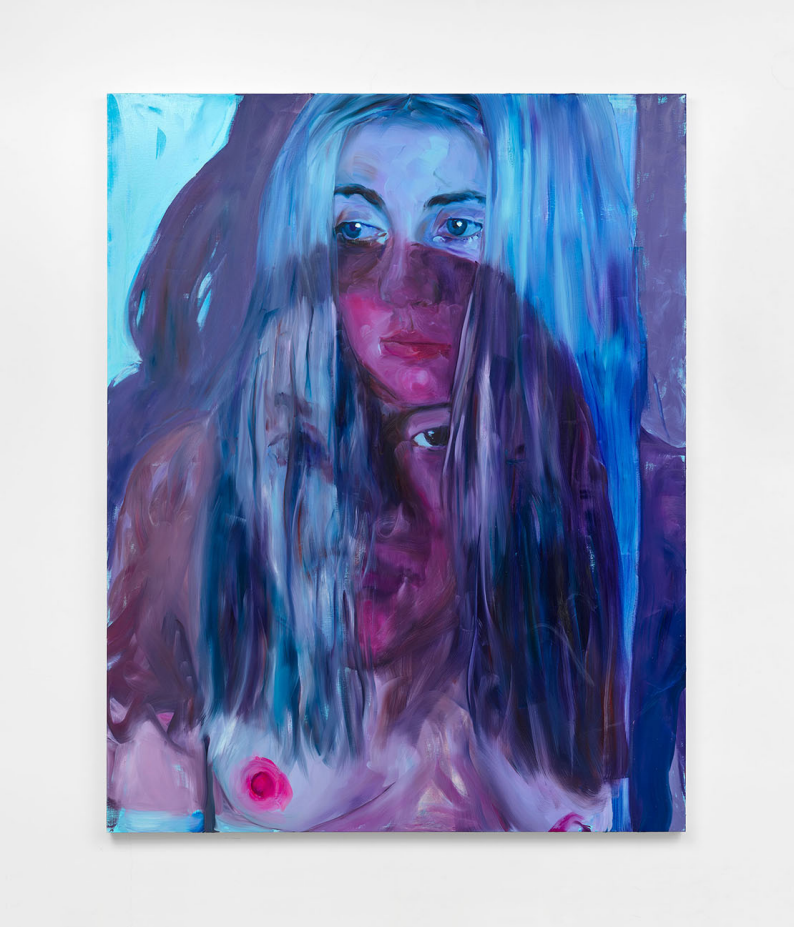
Artoni, Margherita, “Jenna Gribbon. The Body as a Trace,” *Juliet-Artmagazine.com*, November 18, 2026

JULIET

Jenna Gribbon. The Body as a Trace

by MARGHERITA ARTONI • 18 NOVEMBER 2026 • REVIEWS

In *Projections*, at David Kordansky Gallery in New York, Jenna Gribbon approaches intimacy through the unstable boundaries between two people. Her paintings place the nude at the center of this inquiry, giving physical experience a formative role in the production of meaning. Flesh becomes a record of desire, memory, and contact; painting gives this accumulation a visible form.



Jenna Gribbon, “Harpy”, 2026, oil on linen, photo: On White Wall Studio, copyright: © Jenna Gribbon, courtesy of the artist and David Kordansky Gallery

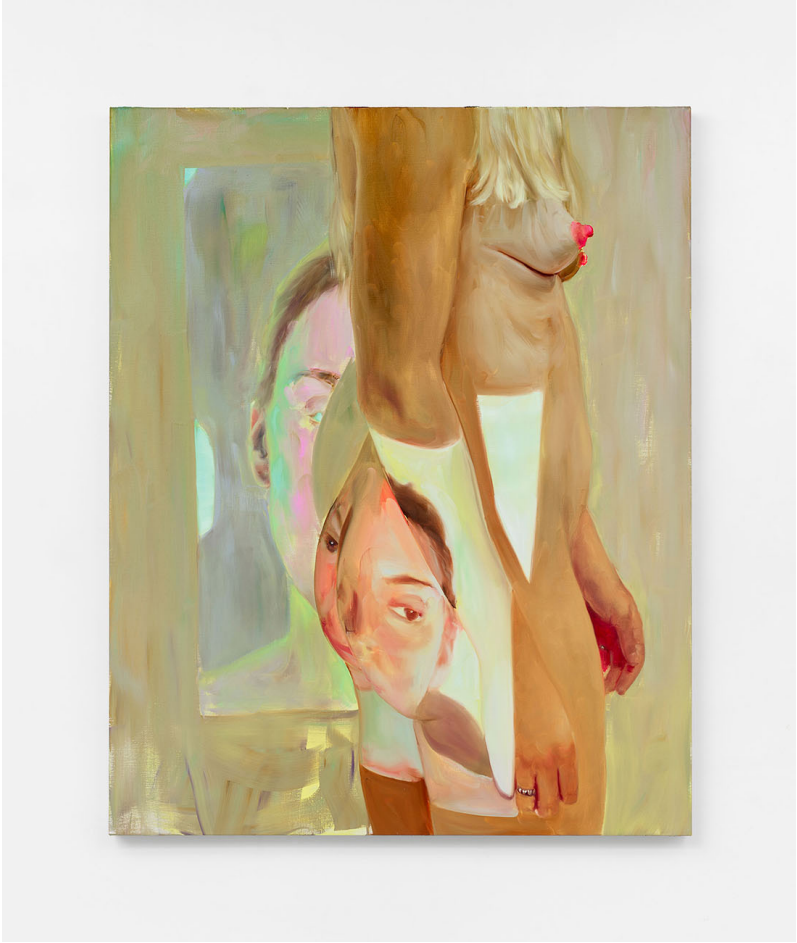
The exhibition’s large canvases originate in a photographic procedure. Images of Gribbon, taken by her wife, are projected onto her wife’s physically present figure and the surrounding studio walls. Gribbon translates this arrangement into compositions where photographic fragments, illuminated skin, and shadows occupy the same pictorial space. The resulting superimpositions unsettle the distinction between the person being photographed and the person appearing in the projection. Nudity makes this exchange tangible, exposing the surface on which their images meet.



Jenna Gribbon, “Janus”, 2026 oil on linen, photo: On White Wall Studio, copyright: © Jenna Gribbon, courtesy of the artist and David Kordansky Gallery

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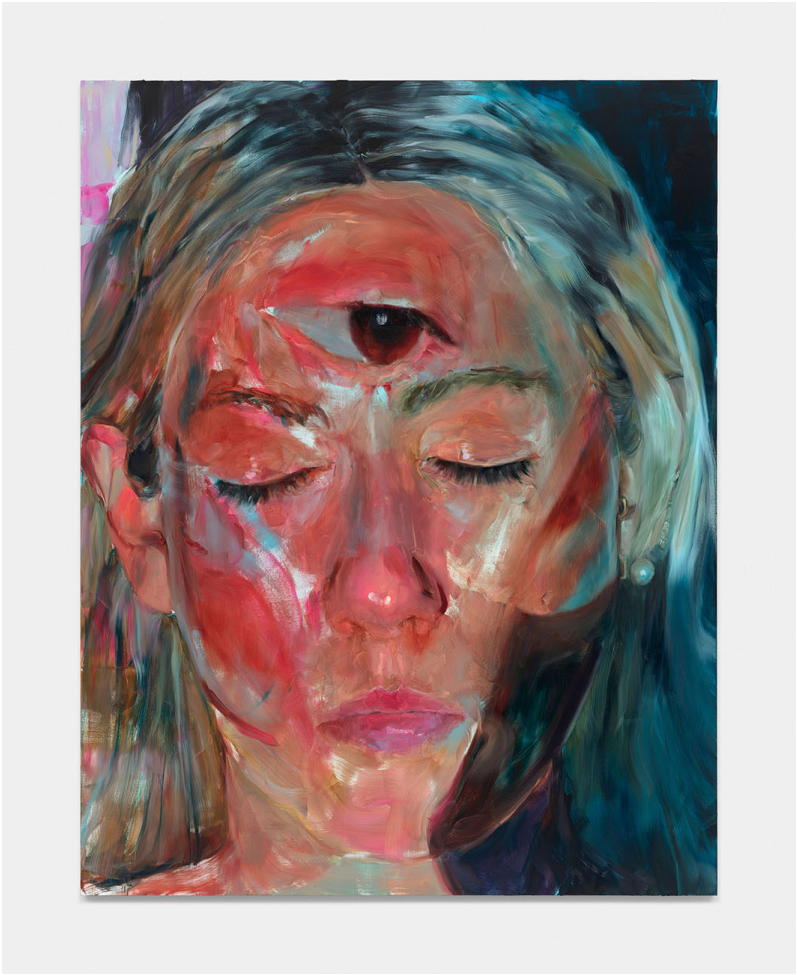
The paintings also engage with the history of the female nude and its relationship to spectatorship. In *Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema* (1975), Laura Mulvey writes: “In a world ordered by sexual imbalance, pleasure in looking has been split between active/male and passive/female”. Although formulated in relation to cinema, her argument offers a useful framework for considering the gendered conventions of figurative representation. Gribbon shifts the terms of spectatorship through an exchange between two women: her subjects look, desire and contribute to the formation of the scene. Their exposure carries physical immediacy, free of theatrical seduction. Breasts, shoulders, faces, and limbs retain their weight and vulnerability, asserting the authority of lived experience. This understanding of the nude resonates with the work of Joan Semmel, whose paintings reclaim the female figure through an embodied perspective, and Mickalene Thomas, whose self-representations challenge established structures of visual agency. Christina Quarles explores unstable corporeal boundaries through fragmented figures; Marlene Dumas treats flesh as a register of memory and psychological experience. Gribbon shares these concerns while directing attention towards the effects of intimacy: proximity alters how each person is seen and understood.



Jenna Gribbon, “Hindsight”, 2026, oil on linen, photo: On White Wall Studio, copyright: © Jenna Gribbon, courtesy of the artist and David Kordansky Gallery

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In *Artemis of Ephesus* (2026), repeated female profiles recall the many-breasted goddess. Successive silhouettes gather around a foreground figure whose orientation remains distinct. The composition suggests a plurality of forms held within a single pictorial structure, allowing multiplicity to coexist with individual presence. In *Harpy* (2026), overlapping faces produce a more unsettling configuration. A frontal visage is crossed by another partially emerging face; further features appear within the dark mass of hair. The mythological creature gives form to hybridity, opening a space for configurations that exceed conventional categories. Deep blues, violets, and magenta carry the flesh into an unstable chromatic register. The frontal eyes meet the viewer directly, while additional gazes emerge from the surrounding features. The scene unsettles the distance usually separating the person who looks from the person being looked at. *Hindsight* (2026) introduces the passage of time. Its superimposed figures and displaced faces evoke recollection, suggesting how an experience can be revised through memory and another person’s perspective. The title points towards retrospective understanding: what has been lived returns in altered form. Here, the painted surface retains the impressions of an encounter, allowing different moments of perception to coexist.



Jenna Gribbon, “Steropes”, 2026, oil on linen, photo: Christopher Stach, copyright: © Jenna Gribbon, courtesy of the artist and David Kordansky Gallery

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Gribbon’s brushwork gives these transformations their formal coherence. Her strokes are fluid, incisive and technically assured; contours loosen, features migrate across layers of pigment, and shadows acquire an independent visual force. In *Artemis of Ephesus*, successive profiles preserve alternative configurations of the figure. In *Harpy*, dark passages and violet shadows become sites from which further faces emerge. This openness is deliberate: the painterly gesture establishes each form while allowing it to remain unsettled. Color intensifies the effect. Projected illumination produces saturated blues, violets, pinks, and oranges, altering the perception of skin and making the distinction between natural light and artificial projection difficult to maintain. Flesh becomes a chromatic field, shaped by illumination as much as by anatomy. The eyes, rendered with particular intensity, give the compositions an almost tactile charge.



Jenna Gribbon, “Artemis of Ephesus”, 2026, oil on linen, photo: Christopher Stach, copyright: © Jenna Gribbon, courtesy of the artist and David Kordansky Gallery

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The smaller paintings introduce a quieter register. *Kitchen table, May light* (2026) returns to domestic space, where ordinary objects and natural illumination replace the mythic scale of the larger canvases. *Self, September light* (2026) offers a more intimate form of self-portraiture. These scenes locate the exhibition’s visual intensity within the rhythms of shared life. Gribbon’s distinctive achievement lies in the way painting materializes relation. Pigment holds the pressure of touch; light alters the contours of a figure; shadow carries one person’s image into the space of another. Through a brushwork that combines precision with openness, intimacy becomes a tangible yet unsettled structure. The painted surface preserves the complexity of closeness: two people can inhabit the same image while retaining their difference.

Info:

Jenna Gribbon. *Projections*
06/11/2026 – 19/12/2026
David Kordansky Gallery
520 W. 20th Street, New York, NY
davidkordanskygallery.com
