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Local Art News

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New Joan Semmel in N.Y.C.

“A Necessary Elaboration,” a show of paintings made during the last two years by Joan Semmel, will open at Alexander Gray Associates in Chelsea with a reception next Thursday from 6 to 8 p.m. and remain on view through Feb. 16. The paintings continue the artist’s four-decade investigation of the nude self-portrait.

In the new paintings, the single figure fills or extends beyond the frame, sometimes tending toward abstraction as the twisting limbs and torso emphasize lines and curves. The surfaces consist of a range of painting techniques, from gestural and expressive color combinations to more uniform brushwork and tone.

Ms. Semmel has written, “The issues of the body from desire to aging, as well as those of identity and cultural imprinting, have been at the core of my concerns. The carnal nature of paint has seemed to me a perfect metaphor, the specifics of image, a necessary elaboration.”