

IN THE FRAME

## Aged to perfection: Joan Semmel's new work on the older female body

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Joan Semmel with her work *Flesh Ground* (2016). Photo: Gabriella Angeleti

This week, the Alexander Gray Associates gallery in New York opened an exhibition of new works by the octogenarian artist Joan Semmel that depict the ageing female body to present a “confrontational perspective on images that we don’t often see in popular culture and art history”, said the gallery director, Alexander Gray. Joan Semmel: New Work (until 15 October) includes 16 paintings and works on paper that Semmel created over the past year using herself as the only model, a decision that was made to undercut the “idealisation of women and take possession of the objectivity that comes from being the subject”, she said at the press preview for the exhibition. Semmel, who has produced work that deals with the body and female identity for more than five decades, added that in a culturally youth-oriented society, ageing is a prescient but unaddressed topic that is “rather difficult to see, and maybe not classically beautiful, but something that one can live through and try to understand”.