

Xevi Solà
Social Landscape

OPERA GALLERY

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9 – 26 May 2025

MIAMI

OPERA GALLERY



FOREWORD

We are delighted to introduce ‘Social Landscape’, Spanish painter Xevi Solà’s first exhibition with Opera Gallery Miami, featuring 14 new paintings that embody his unique style of ethereal, vibrant and nuanced figuration.

Despite their saturated color, Solà’s paintings exude a striking sense of quietude. Though we find them in vivid, dreamlike locations such as flower-filled meadows, crimson-carpeted rooms and in front of Hockney-esque swimming pools, his figures retain a cool, confident air of calm.

We find ourselves drawn to subtle gestures that might betray their internal states: a bent knee, two hands clasped together, a sidelong glance. In Solà’s world, each small movement becomes loaded with meaning. Like the great modernist portraitists that went before him, from Lucian Freud to Alice Neel, he deals in nuance and implication. His paintings might be described as psychological portraits, wherein the psychological element arrives quietly — entering through a side door, so to speak.

Indeed, Solà’s subjects often tread the line between real and remembered. He often paints from drawings based on found photographs and imagery, but he rarely holds his marks accountable to the originals that he works from. Instead, he allows his brush to map out colors and forms that are not suggested by his source material. This process raises a poignant question about who these images truly represent: an external sitter, or the artist himself? Solà thinks the latter: “My intention is not for my painting to speak of that first photo, which can sometimes have another author, but what I want is for my paintings to speak of my mistakes, my successes, my mood, my dreams, that is, that they speak of me,” he says.

The title of this exhibition is inspired by a phrase often attributed to pioneering American photographer Lee Friedlander. He traveled his country with his camera, documenting natural landscapes and densely-populated city streets. He imbued mundane scenes with deeper meanings — not by manipulating or doctoring his images, not by sensationalizing their subjects but simply by looking deeply. Friedlander’s project is picked up by Solà with this body of work that invites us to look twice at the familiar, teasing out undiscovered layers of meaning within it.

We invite you to enter this exhibition in the same spirit: here, a deep sense of attentiveness is rewarded. Beyond their often opulent surroundings, each of Solà’s figures carries a distinct inner world, expressed through the subtlest shifts in posture and gaze. These paintings contain layers of meaning, waiting to be excavated.

GILLES DYAN
Founder & Chairman
Opera Gallery Group

DAN BENCHETRIT
Director
Opera Gallery Miami



XEVI SOLÀ INTERVIEW

Can you introduce yourself?

I am a figurative painter who loves abstract art.

Can you tell us about your artist pathway? When did you decide to change of career and become an artist?

I was always very fanciful, I liked to tell stories and often, when I was a child, I did it with drawings. I started in the art world more or less professionally drawing science-fiction comics when I was 16 years old. But then at the university I got to know the world of painting and contemporary art. I discovered that you could tell stories with painting, and that's what I did: first in a more descriptive and detailed way, but then more and more I have been attracted by the simplicity and emotion of the stroke.

How would you describe your paintings and how would you define your style?

I consider my paintings to be expressionist in a way, I seek to give importance to each gesture and I want the slight distortion that I apply to help communicate emotions. All of this is mixed with the desire to create psychological portraits of the characters.

What role does colour play in your paintings. What interest do they have for you?

I like the colors to be cheerful and vivid. I use them in a bold and intuitive way. Also, I often use gray or white in my paintings to make the bright colors stand out even more.

Could you tell us a bit about your artistic influences and your painting process?

As a kid, I was obsessed with science fiction comics. While at university, I visited a big Lucien Freud exhibition that took place in Barcelona and it had a huge impact on me. That time was very good for me because I discovered many artists I didn't know, like Basquiat, Hockney, Gerhard Richter, Anselm Kiefer... and I learned to appreciate Picasso and Matisse. In general, I like artists who make the difficult look easy and those who are not afraid to break the rules.

My process is usually as follows: I make lots and lots of very small drawings, practically made with a single stroke. When a drawing seems interesting to me, I transfer the idea to the canvas. I try to keep the freshness of the drawing, painting directly on the canvas.

I can use photographs for the drawings and then use these schematic drawings as model for the paintings, forgetting the photographic model as much as possible.



Artist's studio, Gerona, Spain, 2025 © Enrique Palacio



I force myself to rectify less and less. Although it is very difficult for me, to preserve the mistakes, in this way I can move away from the previous image and the result is more and more personal.

You once said, 'I paint quickly more than ever, to regain freshness.' The subjects in your paintings are often in motion. Is there a connection between this movement and your desire to paint quickly?

When I say that I paint fast, I mean that I try not to correct over and over again as I did before. The figures are sometimes in motion because I use stills instead of posed photographs.

How did your subject and style evolve over time?

I think a lot about the theme of my exhibitions and I find that, once I have chosen a theme, it conditions the style. If the theme were boxing, for example, I would like to think that the line and color become more aggressive.

What causes you to be intrigued by a person and want to paint them? Are the people in your portraits generally based on people you've met in real life, or are some of the people from your imagination?

It's been many years since I've taken a portrait from my imagination, I need a base model, even if I change it completely afterwards. I fall in love with people who live their beauty without being aware of it. Sometimes they are people I know, sometimes I have to build a portrait from photos to convey that idea. They could even be objectively ugly people, it doesn't matter. I'm looking to portray self-confidence.

In your work, you depict the body in a very longiline way, and female figure are generally thin and ethereal. Is there a particular reason?

This comes to me for several reasons: although specifically in this case, it's because the models are really like that. But, in general, building



El Greco, Portrait of Jorge Manuel Theotocopuli, circa 1600-1605, oil on canvas, 74 x 50.5 cm, Museo de Bellas Artes de Sevilla, Spain



Artist's studio, Gerona, Spain, 2025 © Enrique Palacio

the portrait from the bone structure is more effective. Mainly I have to confess that my favorite classical painter is El Greco.

Your painting can be described as psychological portraits. Is it because you worked before as a nurse in a psychiatric hospital? Do you think that it influences the way you paint?

The world of mental illness is very interesting for my work because you are with people who don't pretend and their behaviors can be viewed as very histrionic. Working around people who are so authentic and fully themselves has helped my psychological portraiture.

How does landscape and scenery factor into your portraits? In some cases, there is a cinematic quality to these surroundings depicted in your paintings and I wondered if they were inspired by your native Spain or elsewhere?

Lately I have been replacing the landscape with neutral spaces behind the characters, which allows me to isolate the character and present him or her more clearly. But when I try to make a painting more narrative, I need the landscape to be part of it. As a child, I was very much a homebody and my source of inspiration for landscapes were movies; therefore, the landscape in my pictorial films is more akin to the landscape in the United States than in my country.

Can you tell us more about this specific show 'Social landscape' and this new body of work?

My way of painting the human figure is changing lately, the faces and bodies are becoming more imperfect, more different from each other and that has made them more human. Looking for the difference between the fashion models I paint now, forces me to look a lot at how they place their hands, how they walk, how they look, even what they think. I think that has enriched my work.

Do you have any upcoming projects?

On the one hand, I want to return to a topic that I dealt with tangentially some time ago, which is that of "Cosplay". It is a colorful theme, like fashion, and allows me to portray interesting personalities. I would like to continue with the theme of fighting or combat, I think it's a good way to get more movement in my paintings. I'm thinking about going back to landscape painting. And finally, another theme that I have already started working on is a series of portraits of assassins based on "Mugshots".



‘ In this exhibition, I am interested, not in fashion, but in the mystique of models, beautiful beings who appear distant like statues in a Gothic cathedral. It seems like they are looking at us, but they don’t see us. I think that in contemporary painting it is better if you act on instinct, when we try to leave consciousness aside and only use what we have learned automatically. It would be like hitting a can with a rock without hardly aiming at it. That’s why I paint quickly.

My goal for my paintings is they look more and more like my calligraphy, that is, to become more personal, free, unique and perhaps also uglier. In my opinion, the more imperfect a painting is, the less boring and therefore the more interesting it is. ’

Xevi Solà

Artworks



Sitting
2024

Acrylic on canvas
Signed, titled and dated
on the reverse
45.7 x 35 in | 116 x 89 cm

PROVENANCE
Artist's studio



Silvia
2024

Acrylic on canvas
Signed, titled and dated
on the reverse
36.2 x 28.7 in | 92 x 73 cm

PROVENANCE
Artist's studio





Dandy
2024

Acrylic on canvas
Signed, titled and dated
on the reverse
36.2 x 28.7 in | 92 x 73 cm

PROVENANCE
Artist's studio



Boxer
2024

Acrylic on canvas
Signed, titled and dated
on the reverse
36.2 x 28.7 in | 92 x 73 cm

PROVENANCE
Artist's studio

In a Hurry
2024

Acrylic on canvas
Signed, titled and dated
on the reverse
28.7 x 23.6 in | 73 x 60 cm

PROVENANCE
Artist's studio





Outdoors
2024

Acrylic on canvas
Signed, titled and dated
on the reverse
51.2 x 63.8 in | 130 x 162 cm

PROVENANCE
Artist's studio





Desert
2024

Acrylic on canvas
Signed, titled and dated
on the reverse
70.9 x 86.6 in | 180 x 220 cm

PROVENANCE
Artist's studio



Behind the Curtain
2024

Acrylic on canvas
Signed, titled and dated
on the reverse
51.2 x 63.8 in | 130 x 162 cm

PROVENANCE
Artist's studio



Backstage 1

2024

Acrylic on canvas
Signed, titled and dated
on the reverse
63.8 x 51.2 in | 162 x 130 cm

PROVENANCE
Artist's studio



Backstage 2

2024

Acrylic on canvas
Signed, titled and dated
on the reverse
63.8 x 51.2 in | 162 x 130 cm

PROVENANCE
Artist's studio



Movement
2024

Acrylic on canvas
Signed, titled and dated
on the reverse
63.8 x 51.2 in | 162 x 130 cm

PROVENANCE
Artist's studio





Garden
2024

Acrylic on canvas
Signed, titled and dated
on the reverse
63.8 x 51.2 in | 162 x 130 cm

PROVENANCE
Artist's studio



Neighbors
2024

Acrylic on canvas
Signed, titled and dated
on the reverse
63.8 x 102.4 in | 162 x 260 cm

PROVENANCE
Artist's studio







The River
2024

Acrylic on canvas
Signed, titled and dated
on the reverse
63.8 x 102.4 in | 162 x 260 cm

PROVENANCE
Artist's studio





BIOGRAPHY

Xevi Solà

(b. 1969)

Xevi Solà was born in Santa Coloma de Farners, Spain in 1969.
He graduated from the Faculty of Fine Arts at University of Barcelona in 2007.
He lives and works in Girona, Spain.

AWARDS

- 2014 Young Art Taipei, Young Art Award. Taipei Contemporary Art Fair, Taiwan, Taipei
- 2010 Selected for the Biennal d'Art de Girona, Girona, Spain
- 2007 Project Wanted, Arts Santa Mònica, Barcelona, Spain
- 2000 Selected for Jaurena Art, Painting Contest, Barcelona, Spain

SOLO EXHIBITIONS

2024	‘Xevi Solà’, Opera Gallery, Geneva, Switzerland
2023	‘Common People’, Alzueta Gallery, Barcelona, Spain
2022	Voltz Clarke, New York, USA ‘Xevi Solà Serra’s Solo Exhibition’, Alzueta Gallery, Barcelona, Spain ‘To Be’, Alzueta Gallery, Madrid, Spain ‘Xevi Solà’, Alzueta Gallery, Barcelona, Spain
2020	‘MUTE’, Alzueta Gallery, Barcelona, Spain ‘Untitled’, Palau de Casavells, Girona, Spain
2019	‘The Most Beautiful City’, Galeria Esther Montoriol, Barcelona, Spain ‘Xevi Solà’, Kunstverein Familie Montez, Frankfurt, Germany
2018	‘Pan y Circo’, Galeria Inox, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil
2017	‘Xevi Solà’, Galerie Tokonoma, Paris, France ‘Jungles’, Galeria Esther Montoriol, Barcelona, Spain
2016	‘Dual Pathology’, Yiri Arts, Taipei, Taiwan ‘Pintura sobre pintura’, Galeria Inox, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil
2015	‘Decameron’, Yiri Arts, Taichung, Taiwan ‘De dentro’, Galeria Inox, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil
2013	‘Agadoisó’, Galeria Inox, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil
2010	‘Bel-Air’, Galeria Victor Saavedra, Barcelona, Spain
2009	‘Exterior amb freak’, Espai zer01, Olot Art’s Museum, Olot, Spain

SELECTED GROUP EXHIBITIONS

2024	‘Crowds’, Opera Gallery, Madrid, Spain ‘Summer Vibes ‘, Opera Gallery, Madrid, Spain ‘New Portraits’, Alzueta Gallery, Barcelona, Spain
2023	‘La Terre est bleue comme une orange’, Alzueta Gallery, Madrid, Spain ‘Nuevos paisajes’, Alzueta Gallery, Madrid, Spain ‘New Landscapes’, Alzueta Gallery, Barcelona, Spain
2022	‘Álbum de Familia’, Alzueta Gallery, Barcelona, Spain
2019	‘DelicARTessen 19’, Galeria Esther Montoriol, Barcelona, Spain
2018	‘DelicARTessen 18’, Galeria Esther Montoriol, Barcelona, Spain
2017	Mana Contemporary, Jersey City, USA Galleri Ramfjord, Oslo, Norway
2016	Galleri Ramfjord, Oslo, Norway ‘DelicARTessen 15’, Galeria Esther Montoriol, Barcelona, Spain Galleri Oxholm, Copenhagen, Denmark ‘Power Flower’, Magic Beans Contemporary Art Gallery, Berlin, Germany
2015	‘DelicARTessen 14’, Galeria Esther Montoriol, Barcelona, Spain
2014	‘Grande y felicísima armada’, Yiri Arts, Taipei, Taiwan

SELECTED PUBLIC AND PRIVATE COLLECTIONS

University of Barcelona
Leonel Kaz’s ollection
ESKFF Eileen S. Kamisnsky Family Foundation
Del Arco collection, Barcelona
Cuperior collection, Berlin

ART FAIRS

2024	Kiaf Seoul, Alzueta Gallery, Seoul, South Korea UVNT Art Fair, Alzueta Gallery, Madrid, Spain
2023	Art Paris, Alzueta Gallery, Paris, France Art Central, Alzueta Gallery, Hong Kong, China
2022	MARFA International, Hotel Paisano, Marfa, Texas, USA Intersect Aspen, Voltz Clarke, Aspen, USA Art Paris, Alzueta Gallery, Paris, France Art Miami, Alzueta Gallery, Miami, USA
2021	UVNT Art Fair, Madrid, Spain
2020	Art Paris, Alzueta Gallery, Paris, France
2017	Aqua Art, Miami, USA ArtRio, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil
2015	PAN Amsterdam, Amsterdam, The Netherlands SP-Arte, São Paolo, Brazil
2014	Art Kaohsiung, Kaohsiung, Taiwan Young Art Tapei, Taipei Contemporary Art Fair, Taipei, Taiwan Art Lima International, Lima, Peru
2013	ArtRio, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil



Sitting 14
2024



Sylvia 15
2024



Dandy 18
2024



Boxer 19
2024



Backstage 1 30
2024



Backstage 2 31
2024



Movement 34
2024



Garden 36
2024



In a Hurry 20
2024



Outdoors 22
2024



Desert 26
2024



Behind the Curtain 28
2024



Neighbors 40
2024



The River 44
2024

This exhibition catalogue is created upon
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