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She-Ra

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She-Ra

Jennifer King's Artist Statement

My work voices a contemporary female perspective on female identity, psychology, and power. It addresses the questions "What does it mean to be feminine?" Can women be strong and feminine at the same time? What does that look like? Images in the media give us false expectations of reality when it comes to the female bodies. This not only affects how women view themselves, but also affects men's expectations of women. My goal is to depict contemporary, strong women as a positive message, encouraging consideration for how society views women and what that effect is on women today.

I create images through a mix of the imagined and the observed, focusing on the female form. I primarily use oil paint on canvas, which allows me to achieve the fleshy, vibrant, intense version of reality that I strive for. The solid form of the figures is essential to my work. This adds power and presence to the women I paint. Figures are painted in a large scale to highlight the importance of a woman's awareness of her body, but also to portray her in a heroic way long ignored in art history: in control and confident. It's important for me to depict women who own their confidence and are not seeking power through their sexuality. I achieve this through their body language, including confrontational eye contact, and positions that include uneasiness or tension. Compositionally, figures are enlarged to fill the space, bending and contorting themselves to fit within the limits of the canvas. This adds an element of claustrophobia and highlights their oversized existence. These ambiguous paintings consider many emotions, and in some cases, show a tension between strength and vulnerability, or confidence and insecurity.

My work addresses the questions concerning power, femininity, and body image that frustrate me the most. Dissecting and expressing these ideas visually through paint is my goal and my hope for presenting alternative perspectives, and a fresh portrayal of women in painting.