

Artist Statement

Emma Geary

In this series of figurative oil paintings, I use color and form to explore the relationship between how men and women have been traditionally depicted in art and other media, and the actual reality of being a woman in a largely man dominated world. For the female figures, I have chosen vibrant, highly contrasting colors and energetic poses, while the males are depicted in more muted tones and submissive, closed off poses. These stylistic choices help to subvert the traditional images of the man and the woman in art.

Originally, this series started as a simple exploration in color. However, through my work with the figure and my search for models, both male and female, it evolved into a commentary about what the female body vs. the male body really means in art. In my search for references photos, I noticed that it was considerably harder to find poses of women in these powerful and controlling poses, while it was quite easy to find males in them. On the other hand, it was quite difficult to find male figures in these submissive and closed off poses. I think this is one of the major reasons why I chose to use stock photos for my models instead of working from life, because it felt like a reflection of real life.

These paintings are as much a reflection on the image of women in art as they are a self-reflection on how I personally feel about my place in the world as a woman. I feel like I often struggle against men to make myself heard and to be seen, and I know many women who feel the same. These paintings are a way for me to express this struggle and show how it really feels to be a woman – powerful and vibrant.

Prostrated
Oil on wood panel
16" x 20"
Emma Geary

Passive
Oil on wood panel
18" x 24"
Emma Geary

Drained
Oil on canvas
40" x 16"
Emma Geary

Heavy
Oil on canvas
40" x 16"
Emma Geary

Closed
Oil on canvas
20" x 24"
Emma Geary

Beaten
Oil on canvas
24" x 18"
Emma Geary

Invitation
Oil on canvas
30" x 40"
Emma Geary

Pressure
Oil on canvas
18" x 24"
Emma Geary