

MAYA FRODEMAN GALLERY

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MAYA FRODEMAN GALLERY ANNOUNCES *BREAK MAIDEN*
AN EXHIBITION OF PAINTINGS BY SUZY SPENCE

Exhibition Dates: 15 FEBRUARY – 30 MARCH 2025

JACKSON HOLE, WYOMING – MAYA FRODEMAN GALLERY is pleased to present *Break Maiden*, a solo exhibition with artist Suzy Spence, on view at the gallery's downtown location from February 14th through March 30th, 2025. An artist reception will be held Friday, February 14th from 5 to 7pm. All are welcome to attend. Spence will be in attendance.

For the last nearly thirty years, the tradition of equestrian painting has been a fertile field of investigation and play for painter Suzy Spence. Finding artistic and conceptual inspiration in its aesthetics, metaphor, and cultural commentary, Spence creates paintings that touch on 18th-century society portraiture, political imagery, equestrian sporting art, and contemporary fashion photography. In her sweeping, intrepid brushstrokes and controlled drips, Spence conjures an air of defiance in her figures that feel alive and ghostly all at once.

Break Maiden, Spence's third exhibition with Maya Frodeman Gallery, presents twenty-four paintings that were created both at her studio in Vermont and while at a residency at The Old Silk Barn in Bruton, England, including the more monumental *Racetrack* (2023-2024). Whether she is painting the details of a rider's sartorial glamour, or stepping back to capture an empyrean sky that threatens to swallow up the pastoral hillsides where the farmland and hunt territory are barely perceptible, Spence's work is charged with visual, historical, and theatrical dynamism as she explores both the intimate and nuanced, as well as the more traditionally rendered moments of equestrian life. She relishes in the rich painting opportunities she finds in the graphics and color of racer's silk uniforms, the subtle emotion of the equine and rider in moments of pure athleticism, or verdant, teeming landscapes inspired by her Vermont surroundings. This exhibition includes a new series of paintings of horses' muscular hind quarters, which were inspired by looking at *The Horse Fair* (1852-1855) by Rosa Bonheur at the Metropolitan Museum of Art. In what she described as "a breakthrough moment," Spence found painters' joy in the realism that came naturally in rendering the sumptuous butts of horses with muted beiges on black paper, and later, on black gessoed panel and canvas. These paintings demonstrate Spence's mastery of her media and the joy she finds in her sensual, intuitive process.

While Spence's work implicitly comments on tropes of femininity, class, and camp, these works equally present the equestrian lifestyle in earnest. Though her entry into equestrian painting was initially spurred by flipping through *Town & Country* magazines while at Skowhegan in 1996 and tinged with irony as a young artist in New York City, Spence now spends the majority of her time in Vermont where horse riding and agriculture is abundant. Spence has immersed herself in that community and found a legion of equestrians who serve as genuine and continuous inspiration for her work. The result of this transition in Spence's life is a body of paintings of heroines with their mounts that are as earnest as they are culturally charged. Many of the works of *Break Maiden* present particularly tender moments between young women and their horses, as one figure gently melts into another, and a wealth of emotion is evident in her subjects' gently rendered expressions as well as in the loose strokes and soft tones of the more abstract

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fields of the works. Spence finds a metaphor for her practice in these riders in their risk-taking, in their endurance, and in their moments of rest.

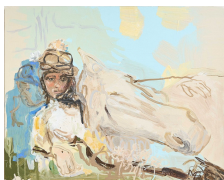
Suzy Spence was born in 1969 and grew up on the coast of Maine, where her mother, painter Marcia Stremlau, frequently brought her along to sketch the local landscapes. Over time, Spence's stylistic development was subtly shaped by the figurative idioms of renowned Maine artists such as Marsden Hartley, Fairfield Porter, Alex Katz, and Lois Dodd. After studying at Smith College and Parsons School of Design in New York and Paris, the artist attended the Skowhegan School of Painting and Sculpture in 1996 and received an MFA at The School of Visual Arts in New York City in 1998. Spence's work first received critical attention for a group of drawings presented at The Chateau Marmont in Los Angeles (1997); Paper Magazine, who covered the show, featured Spence on their pages many times thereafter. Reviews of her work have appeared in The New York Times, The New Yorker, Frieze, Artcritical, The Brooklyn Rail, Two Coats of Paint, and other publications. Solo exhibitions of Spence's work have taken place at Colin De Land's American Fine Arts, New York, NY; The Grazer Kuntzverein, Austria; Kunsthaus Glarus, Switzerland; NeueHouse, New York, Cathouse Proper, Brooklyn, NY; The Helen Day, Stowe, VT; Maya FrodeMan Gallery, Jackson Hole, WY; Arusha Gallery, London and Bruton, UK; and Sears Peyton Gallery, New York, NY. She has been a frequent exhibitor with David Dixon's exhibition space Cathouse Proper, Brooklyn (2014 - 2024). Spence's work can be found in collections throughout the United States, Canada, and Europe. Her work is included in the archives of Colin De Land American Fine Arts Gallery, held at The Smithsonian Archives of American Art and Bard College Library. Recently, Collector Oleg Guerrand-Hermes featured Spence in his curatorial project "The Frame" on the Lower East Side of Manhattan (2024). Spence was just the subject of a podcast interview with British art historian Carrie Scott to air in February of 2025. Spence divides her time between New York City and Vermont.



Suzy Spence, *Racetrack*, 2023-2024, oil and acrylic on canvas, 53 x 65 inches



Suzy Spence, *Rider R*, 2023-2024, oil and flashe on canvas, 48 x 36 inches



Suzy Spence, *Resting Racer (smoker)*, 2023, acrylic and flashe on panel, 16 x 20 inches

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Specializing in modern and contemporary art, Maya Frodeman Gallery unites artists from all over the world in a tightly curated vision. Maya Frodeman Gallery began in 2024, continuing the 23-year legacy of Tayloe Piggott's eponymous gallery, the first of its kind in Jackson Hole, Wyoming. In an expansive exhibition space in downtown Jackson Hole, the gallery pursues a rigorous schedule of exhibitions representing both emerging and established artists, encompassing unique practices of painting, sculpture, paper, photography, and printmaking.

Exhibiting contemporary giants such as Caio Fonseca, Jane Rosen, Richard Fleischner, Rakuko Naito, Nicola Hicks, and Stephen Talasnik alongside emerging stars like Jane Yang D'Haene and Kathryn Lynch, Maya Frodeman Gallery supports its extensive contemporary roster with close relationships with the estates of Wolf Kahn, Emily Mason, Hans Hofmann, and Esteban Vicente.

From first-time buyers to seasoned collectors, the woman-owned and women-led gallery assists a wide range of clients with the intricacies of collecting contemporary art. Our staff has the knowledge and expertise to facilitate art acquisitions, advise collection management, and curate the interiors of private spaces.

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