

## Joan Semmel

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*From her feted Technicolor paintings of copulating couples to more recent canvases of her aging nude body, the feminist critique in Joan Semmel's five-decade career of self-exposure has always been blunt, unwavering. Born in 1932 in the Bronx, Semmel moved to Madrid in the 1960s and then back to New York in the 1970s, where she turned from abstraction to figuration—specifically to a non-idealized, non-narrative self-portraiture based on pictures taken from her own perspective. Now a professor emeritus of painting at Rutgers University, Semmel has shown her work in numerous solo and group exhibitions, including "Shifting the Gaze" at the Jewish Museum in 2010, "Solitaire: Lee Lozano, Sylvia Plimack Mangold, Joan Semmel" at the Wexner Center for the Arts in 2008, and the decisive 2007 touring exhibition "WACK! Art and the Feminist Movement," which began at the Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles.*

*Semmel's latest show, "A Lucid Eye," runs at the Bronx Museum from January 24 to June 9, 2013. The exhibition, curated by Antonio Sergio Bessa, includes twenty-seven of Semmel's self-portraits from the past six years. She will also have a solo exhibition of new work at Alexander Gray Associates in New York from April 17 to May 25, 2013. Here she discusses showing her paintings in her home borough as well as what it has meant to be an "outsider" for so many years.*



Interview with Joan Semmel.

— As told to Lauren O'Neill-Butler