

SKARSTEDT

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

DAVID SALLE: HAM AND CHEESE AND OTHER PAINTINGS

OPENING RECEPTION: SEPTEMBER 14, 6-8PM
20 East 79th Street



This fall Skarstedt gallery is pleased to present, *Ham and Cheese and Other Paintings*, a show of new works by David Salle—the celebrated master of postmodern painting who, for the past 40 years, has deconstructed the image by embracing the performative, as well as the cinematic aspects of his medium. *Ham Cheese and Other Paintings* opens September 14.

The new works have never been seen in the U.S., and showcase an evolution that expands his vision of American surrealism. In 1993, Salle created his Early Product Paintings, which featured the artist's improvised interventions on painted backgrounds of collaged advertisements. The new works return to that territory. The images—cars, edibles, cigarettes, shoes—may literally have come from 1960s advertisements, but more likely came from a certain part of our American minds. The painting over and alongside of them embraces new materials like Flashe, a French matte paint, that brings a new depth of color to Salle's palate, alongside new techniques like frottage. Long recognized as a superb and innovative colorist, Salle in these new paintings takes his color to another, more emotive level. In these paintings overall, we see both a greater freedom, at times even a letting go, and an even stronger sense of compositional organization than in the past. Salle's signature, expressive line returns, becoming a space within the painting itself. In addition, the new works play imagistically in the world of Max Beckmann and Marsden Hartley, among others.

"There's a piece of a Chevy seen from the back, magically merging with the torso of a woman in a bathing suit, and you can't figure out how it works spatially, but they seem perfectly companionable," Salle said. "It's like the Magritte painting I've always wanted to see."

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The period of the 1980s in which Salle rose to prominence was hailed as the return of painting, as Salle and cohorts like Julian Schnabel, Ross Bleckner, and Eric Fischl became household names. Salle, who in the same period was also seen as part of the “Pictures Generation”, distinguished himself by making work that pleasantly overwhelmed the viewer with image fields which were dense, sensuous and invitingly intellectual. As a bridge between the warring rulers in decline, Abstract Expressionism and Pop, Salle seemed to bear no grudges against either. His work can be found in the collections of many of the world’s major museums, such as the Centre Georges Pompidou, the Los Angeles County Museum of Art, the Museum of Modern Art, the Stedelijk Museum, the Tate Modern, the Walker Art Center, the Guggenheim Museum, and the Whitney Museum of American Art, which in 1987, honored Salle, at age 34, with the youngest mid-career survey ever. When the museum opened its new building last year his *Splinter Man* (1982) was featured prominently in the debut, collection show “America Is Hard to See.”

Salle is also a celebrated writer whose essays and reviews have been published in *Artforum*, *T: The New York Times Style Magazine*, *Art in America*, *Modern Painters*, and *The Paris Review*, as well as numerous exhibition catalogs and anthologies. A volume of Salle’s collected writing, *How to See*, was published by W.W. Norton in October 2016, and his memoir is forthcoming from that publisher soon.

Ham Cheese and Other Paintings runs September 14 through October 28.

About David Salle

Born in 1952 in Norman, Oklahoma, David Salle grew up in Wichita, Kansas. In 1970, he began his studies at the newly founded California Institute of the Arts in Valencia, where he worked with John Baldessari. After earning a BFA in 1973 and an MFA in 1975, both from CalArts, Salle moved to New York, where he has lived since.

Like many artists of his generation, David Salle initially drew inspiration for his rich visual vocabulary from existing pictures. Based on models from art history, advertisements, design, and everyday culture, as well as, most significantly, his own photography, Salle creates an assemblage with manifold cultural references. Since the mid-80s, his paintings have included allusions to the works of the Baroque painters, from Velázquez and Bernini, to the Post-Impressionist Cézanne, to Giacometti and Magritte, and to American art both post and pre-war.

In 1981 Salle was asked to design the set and costumes for *Birth of the Poet*, an opera by Kathy Acker under the direction of Richard Foreman. Since then he has designed sets and costumes for more than 15 ballets by choreographer Karole Armitage. Their ballet and opera collaborations have been staged in theaters around the world, including the Metropolitan Opera House, the Paris Opera, and Sadlers Wells, London. In 1986, Salle was awarded a Guggenheim fellowship for his work in the theater.

Since his first solo museum exhibition at the Museum Boijmans Van Beuningen in Rotterdam in 1983, Salle has continued to evolve as a painter intent on integrating multiple points of authorial agency into an unprecedented gestalt; his originality and inventiveness have been manifest in many distinct series including the *Tapestry Paintings* (1989–91), *Ballet*



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Paintings (1992–93), *Early Product Paintings* (1993), *Vortex Painting* (2004–2005), and *Battles/Allegories* (2009–2010). In the 1990s, he added sculpture to his oeuvre and also began exhibiting his black-and-white photographs, many of which were made in preparation for canvases. He also directed the feature film *Search and Destroy* (1995), which was produced by Martin Scorsese and features Ethan Hawke, Dennis Hopper, and Christopher Walken.

Salle's paintings have been shown in museums and galleries worldwide for over 35 years. Solo exhibitions of his work have been held at the Whitney Museum, New York; Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles; Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago; Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam; MoMA Vienna; Menil Collection, Houston; Haus der Kunst, Munich; Tel Aviv Museum of Art; Castello di Rivoli, Turin; the Kestner Gesellschaft, Hannover, and the Guggenheim Bilbao. He was the subject of a solo exhibition at the Dallas Contemporary in 2015. He has participated in major international expositions including Documenta 7 (1982), Venice Biennale (1982 and 1993), Whitney Biennial (1983, 1985, and 1991), Paris Biennale (1985), and Carnegie International (1985). Salle lives and works in Brooklyn, New York.

Salle is also a prolific writer on art. His essays and interviews have appeared in *Artforum*, *Art in America*, *Modern Painters*, *The Paris Review*, and *Art News*, as well as numerous exhibition catalogs and anthologies. He was for some years a regular contributor to *Town & Country Magazine*. Starting this fall his writing will be featured in *The New York Review of Books*. Salle is the first visual artist ever to appear as a writer in that journal. His collection of critical essays, *How to See*, was published by W.W. Norton in 2016.

About Skarstedt

With spaces on London's Old Bond Street and New York's Upper East Side, Skarstedt is renowned for its core program of historically researched exhibitions from modern and contemporary masters. The gallery works with the following artists and artists' estates: Francis Bacon, Georg Baselitz, Jean-Michel Basquiat, George Condo, Willem de Kooning, Eric Fischl, Peter Fischli & David Weiss, Lucio Fontana, Keith Haring, Jenny Holzer, Mike Kelley, Martin Kippenberger, Yves Klein, Jeff Koons, Barbara Kruger, Juan Muñoz, Cady Noland, Albert Oehlen, Richard Prince, David Salle, Thomas Schütte, Cindy Sherman, Rosemarie Trockel, Cy Twombly, Andy Warhol and Christopher Wool.

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Image Details: David Salle, *Ham and Cheese*, 2017, oil, acrylic, Flashe, charcoal and archival digital print on linen, 74 x 104 in. (188 x 264.2 cm). © David Salle/Licensed by VAGA, New York, NY.

