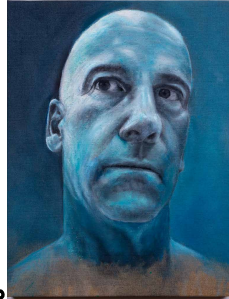


tethers both artist and subject to the moment. *Blue Nude* (2021), which is very much about lust, bears a direct reference to a François Boucher's painting of the same name, as both artists clearly celebrate the allure of the female form. On the other hand, the diagonal axis of the subject in Sanders' version does add more than a bit of anxiety to the composition, a mood contrasted by the relaxed pose of the subject. All three of these works have a specific level of unfinishedness, which adds to the immediacy of the moments, while the texture created by quick brushwork, dripping paint and untouched areas reveals the conscious process of choice in painting.

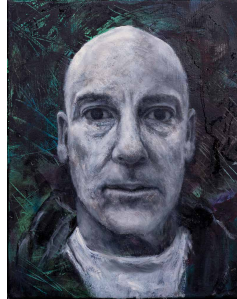
David (2021) is far more resolved than any of the aforementioned works. It also has a tinge of reference to the School of London (1960's and 70's) when their renditions of realism heavily contrasted abstraction, conceptual art and minimalism that was far more influential at that time. There is also a London School connection in the use of natural light and earth tones used to define the subject, and the very relaxed, casual state of the subject. Having placed the subject on the left side of the canvas, any leaning a bit that way, invites the viewer to enter the space and join him for a cup of morning coffee.

Self-portraits also play an important role in art - think of Van Gogh, Rembrandt, Cindy Sheznan. One of Sanders' many examples of this type, *Self Portrait* (2021), momentarily brings us back to a blue period, only here, the subject looks focused with compelling ideas, goals, and ready to act. The colors in this instance - the blues of the head, neck and background, as opposed to the hints of warmth emanating from the upper chest adds a transitional state, which emphasizes readiness and pending movement. *Double Self Portrait* (2002), which is the only work discussed in this essay that utilizes acrylic paints instead of oils, incorporates a photographic transfer in the process. Having represented the artist with his painting brings us directly into the process, while the technical aspects, the juxtapositions of the workspace that defines a normally unseen view brings the viewer right into the studio, albeit through a dreamy and veiled view.

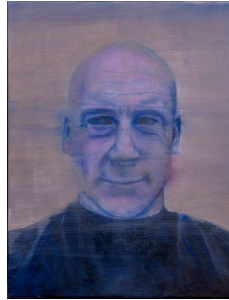
In the end, Sanders is a seeker, a person who is looking to capture a type of representation that is both tangible and intangible - a side of his subjects that is both solid and transient, which, when seen and felt, goes deeper into the moment.



Self Portrait, 2021, Oil and Oil Stick on Linen, 19" x 14.5"



Monochromatic Self Portrait, 2022, Oil on Canvas, 14" x 11"



Self Portrait (in the Style of Gerhard Richter)
2021, Oil on Canvas, 14" x 11"



Contemplative Self Portrait, 2021, Oil on canvas, 14" x 11"

Eric Sanders UNSEEN CONNECTIONS

November 23-December 16, 2022, Opening December 3, 5-9 pm
TAG Gallery 5458 Wilshire Blvd., Los Angeles, CA 90036 taggallery.net

StudioSanders.com | Instagram: @eric_sanders_art



Eric Sanders

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D. Dominick Lombardi

Portraiture is one of the more intimate genres. In its purest form, it is a mutual experience, a synergistic interaction between the sitter and the artist with the end goal of creating a defining representation. Within this process, a subject will often feel revealed, observed, slowly seen, and wondering what the artist might specifically be noting and interpreting. Conversely, for the artist, aside from looking for definitive individual physical characteristics, they might search for a place of common connection that would successfully transmit a fuller understanding of the sitter's being - in essence, the artist is searching for a representation of a soul. Additionally, within the realm of maintaining a likeness, the artist may choose to distort color, change backgrounds, adjust light or dark, vary detail, and even make a stylistic reference to a specific artist or period of art to attract the eye of the viewer. These are the elements that make the portraits of Eric Sanders so effective.

Stylistically speaking, Sanders sometimes pairs his subjects to an outside influence, method, media or approach to enhance the narrative, which is very much in keeping with his fascination with chance and discovery. State of mind, place in time, the subject's relationship to negative space within the composition all come into play as Sanders farms a narrative that gives his subjects life. For instance, in *Black and Blue* (2021), Sanders makes reference to Picasso's early *Blue Period* (1901-04) when he once focused on the pain and poverty of the poor and downtrodden in Barcelona and Paris. In Sanders' *Black and Blue* most or all of the depression that defined Picasso's *Blue Period* is gone, but the vulnerability remains despite the fact that the subject's pose can be seen as defiant or confident as he stares coolly back at the viewer. Perhaps this mixed message is due to the fact that this was painted during the time of COVID. Compositionally, the various blue voids that surround the subject seem to both weigh upon and support the physical presence of the sitter - a key part of the success of this work.

Then there are three individual portraits of young women that show the subject at rest. In *Cat Nap No. 2* (2022) the subject is embedded in rolling waves of olive green, floating, as her right hand attempts to hold on as if she is about to submerge deeper into a void. We may assume in this instance that the subject is actively dreaming, challenged by a state of the "in-between", and crossing from earthly plane to earthly plane in a mixed-up dreamscape. *Anna Sleeping No. 2* (2021) reveals love and passion, a pleasurable moment between two individuals in an unspoken connection that



Eric Sanders
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Self Portrait Print 2
2022, Acrylic on Canvas,
19" x 14.5"



Self Portrait Print 3
2022, Acrylic on Canvas,
14" x 11"



Self Portrait Print 5
2022, Acrylic on Canvas, 14" x 11"



Self Portrait Print 7
2022, Acrylic on Canvas, 14" x 11"



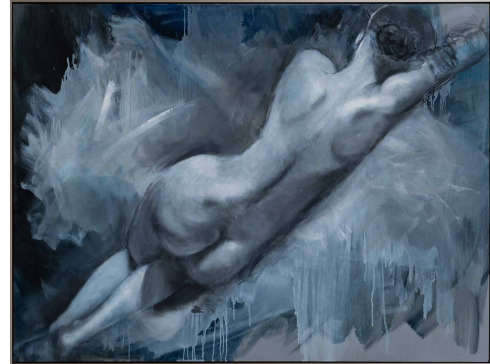
Double Self Portrait
2022, Acrylic on Canvas, 19" x 14.5"



Cat Nap No. 2
2022, Oil on Canvas, 136" x 164"



Anna Sleeping No. 2
2021, Oil on Canvas,
72" x 88"



Blue Nude
2021, Oil on Panel, 36" x 48"



David
2021, Oil on Canvas, 48" x 36"



Black and Blue
2021, Oil on Canvas, 30" x 24"