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Three Decades of Linda Stark's Oil Paintings, on View in New York



Left: Linda Stark's "Samantha" (2005). Right: Stark's "Silver That Girl" (1998). © Linda Stark, courtesy of the artist and Ortuzar, New York. Photos: Jeff McLane (left), Steven Probert (right)

By Sarah Durn

Artists have been working with oil paint for more than a millennium, but few have explored its sculptural possibilities as deftly as the Los Angeles-based Linda Stark. In a process that can take years, Stark drips, layers and shapes oil paint until it rises an inch or more beyond the canvas, creating three-dimensional images that look like surreal, metaphysical clip art. In her first New York show in more than 20 years, "Ethereal Material" at Ortuzar in TriBeCa, Stark's wide-ranging oeuvre will be on full display in pieces spanning over 30 years. "My work is broadly autobiographical and confessional," she says. Sometimes a dream or meditation inspires a painting. After her cat Samantha died, she appeared to Stark during a moment of reflection, surrounded by what the artist describes as a flower of light. "I painted the image ["Samantha" (2005)] and found that afterward a healing had occurred," she says. Other times, personal objects spark ideas. Her eldest sister's senior picture prompted "Silver That Girl" (1998), Stark's simple, shiny version of the actress Marlo Thomas's classic 1960s flip hairdo. It became a tribute to "a generation of graying feminists," says Stark. "It's a statement about the beauty of a silver-haired woman." "Ethereal Material" will be on view through Dec. 7 at Ortuzar, New York, [ortuzarprojects.com](https://www.ortuzarprojects.com).