

KATHRYN
MARKEL

FINE ARTS
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KATHRYN MARKEL FINE ARTS PRESENTS *SEA VIOTET* FEATURING NEW
PAINTINGS BY TESS MICHALIK

April 9 - May 16, 2026
Artist Reception: April 9th, 6-8pm
529 W 20th St. 6W

NEW YORK, NY — March 28th, 2026—Kathryn Markel Fine Arts is pleased to announce *Sea Violet*, an exhibition of new paintings by Tess Michalik. Her work explores material and its relationship to gesture. This is her first solo exhibition with the gallery. A reception for the artist will be held on April 9th from 6-8pm.

Michalik’s floral paintings move between abstraction and naturalism, drawing on Romanticism, Abstract Expressionism, and 18th-century decorative patterns and textiles. Working *alla prima*, forms emerge through quick, voluminous layers of impasto, with individual marks remaining distinct as single daubs of paint transform into petals and leaves. Shaped by touch rather than description, the paintings depict flowers in various states of bloom, what the artist describes as the “zenith of their short-lived existence.”

The flowers are set against flat, often single-color grounds that recall wallpaper or fabric. These backgrounds create stage-like spaces where the subject hovers rather than settles into depth. In some paintings a visible smear interrupts this flatness, pulling gesture across the surface and complicating the distinction between figure and ground.



Michalik’s paintings hold both pleasure and transience in view, evoking a quiet *memento mori*. As she writes, “They are small protestations to the drudgery of the mundane and the pain of existence. These are little love letters to the warm days of ecstasy that are captured by the autumn bouquet or the first blooming of the spring crocus, the first bit of purple to pop out of the snow.”

Tess Michalik is a Brooklyn based painter. She received her MFA at Northern Illinois University. Michalik’s work has been exhibited nationally and internationally including at Katherine Markel Fine Arts (NYC), The Schoolhouse Gallery (Provincetown, MA), The Painting Center (NYC), Indiana State Museum (Indianapolis, IN), WAG-Qaumajuq (Manitoba, CA). Her paintings have been published internationally in *Architectural Digest*.

IMAGE CAPTIONS

Tess Michalik, *Sweet Tart*, 2026, oil on panel, 24 x 20 in.

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MEDIA CONTACT

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ABOUT KATHRYN MARKEL FINE ART

Established in 1976 with the belief that significant contemporary art can be beautiful as well as visually and intellectually rigorous, Kathryn Markel Fine Art is committed to the experience of discovery and collecting at the highest level. Committed to serving a deep network of collectors and institutions, Kathryn Markel Fine Art showcases a diverse array of primary market artists, unified by excellence in their craft, compelling intellectual framework, and a love of the art-making process. <https://www.markelfinearts.com/>

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