

WHITE CUBE

Press Release

Ilana Savdie
Glottal Stop
May 2 – June 14, 2025
White Cube New York

Press Preview and Artist Tour Thursday, May 1, 2025, 10.30am–11.30am

White Cube is pleased to present a solo exhibition of new works by Ilana Savdie (b. 1986), marking her first presentation in the city since the solo show 'Radical Contractions' at the Whitney Museum of American Art in 2023.

Based in Brooklyn, Savdie is best known for her vibrant paintings in acrylic, oil, and beeswax, exploring themes of performance, excess, resistance and transgression.

Across these ten new paintings, shape-shifting configurations unfurl orifices, entrails and other bodily fragments. Large areas of the canvases are coated in a tactile, organic surface of pigmented beeswax. Trompe l'oeil elements are juxtaposed with abstract drips and pools of neon paint, while bodies fracture, mutate, disguise themselves or disappear altogether.

Alongside disembodied limbs, bones, parasites and unidentifiable masses, the body of the frog reappears in various forms. Inspired by survival strategies found in the natural world, Savdie's paintings refuse stability or categorization: they mimic, mock, masquerade and play dead. Solid supports, bandages, grids, coils, and gravitational centers add structure to the riotous, visual excess, in a seemingly futile attempt to bind everything together.

Savdie has created her first site-specific installation, stage-managing our encounter with her paintings on the first floor, and disrupting the clinical whiteness of the gallery. Entering by a narrow corridor between walls of pinky-yellow latex, we must pass through this membrane in order to view the works on either side. It is a visceral experience and a sculptural enactment of the paintings' oscillation between the interior and exterior of the body.

The exhibition is titled 'Glottal Stop' — a reference to the muscular spasm of the throat that interrupts the flow of speech. Reflecting on the title and concept, Savdie has remarked, "We're constantly inhaling headlines, disasters, injustices. There's momentum. The system is primed for speech—for action, for outcry, for change—but instead we get stuck in the throat of the moment. Speech, action, feels like it's coming. But it doesn't arrive."

The artist draws a parallel between this sensation and today's slow drift into extremism and polarization, where overlapping crises—of climate catastrophe, racial injustice, rising

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authoritarianism, rampant misinformation, and economic inequality—often trigger paralysis rather than action.

'Ilana Savdie: Glottal Stop' is on view at White Cube New York from May 2 through June 14, 2025.

For additional information, interview requests, or press images please contact:

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Notes to Editors:

- Ilana Savdie (b. 1986, raised in Barranquilla, Colombia) lives and works in Brooklyn, New York. In 2008 she received her BFA from the Rhode Island School of Design, Providence, and in 2018 she received her MFA from Yale University, New Haven, Connecticut. In 2023 she presented a solo exhibition titled 'Radical Contractions' at the Whitney Museum of American Art, New York. Her work has been exhibited in numerous international exhibitions, including at the Dallas Museum of Art, Dallas, Texas (2024); Jewish Museum, New York (2024); NGV Triennial, Melbourne, Australia (2023–24); Ballroom Marfa, Marfa, Texas (2023); Hammer Museum, Los Angeles, California (2023); Santa Barbara Museum of Art, California (2023); Museum of Contemporary Art, San Diego, California (2021); Kunstraum Potsdam, Germany (2021); Museum aan de Stroom, Antwerp, Belgium (2019); and the B3 Biennial, Frankfurt, Germany (2017). In 2022 she became one of the inaugural Artists-in-Residence at Horizon Art Foundation, Los Angeles, California.

Savdie is recipient of the Creative Capital Award for her forthcoming project 'Festejeros'. Drawing extensively on Carnival traditions of Barranquilla, Colombia where the artist was partly raised, her project explores the cultural history of carnivals and will result in a video and installation investigating these festive forms of resistance and their historical context.

- White Cube's exhibition programme extends across locations in London, Hong Kong, Paris, New York, Seoul and online. Since its inception in 1993, the gallery has exhibited the work of many of the world's most highly acclaimed contemporary artists.
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