

# LUHRING AUGUSTINE

## CHELSEA

531 West 24<sup>th</sup> Street, NY 10011

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## Salman Toor

### *Wish Maker*

Luhring Augustine Chelsea + Luhring Augustine Tribeca

May 2 – June 21, 2025

Opening reception: Thursday, May 1, 6-8pm (Chelsea only)

Luhring Augustine is proud to announce *Wish Maker*, an exhibition of new work by **Salman Toor**. This marks the artist's first major presentation in New York since his watershed exhibition at the Whitney Museum of American Art in 2020, as well as Toor's first solo show with the gallery. On view from May 2 through June 21, 2025, the exhibition will be installed across both of the gallery's locations, with paintings featured at Luhring Augustine Chelsea and the artist's first dedicated presentation of works on paper at Luhring Augustine Tribeca.

Through his sumptuous and evocative figurative works, Toor examines “vulnerability within contemporary public and private life and the notion of community in the context of queer, diasporic identity.”<sup>i</sup> Mining the opportunities, anxieties, and comedies inherent in the search for selfhood, as well as in the immigrant's journey living between cultures, Toor employs and destabilizes specific tropes in order to reflect on the way difference is perceived by the self and by others. In many of Toor's compositions, his figures dwell in allegorical spaces of waiting, anticipation, and apprehension, while in others these often-marginalized bodies flourish safely and inhabit the comfort and intimacy of their private lives with dignity. In the new paintings, drawings, and etchings created for this exhibition, Toor places his imaginary and yet deeply relatable figures in a wide range of circumstances and settings, examining the nuances and complexities of our paradoxical and polarized time.

Toor's work oscillates between heartening and harrowing, seductive and poignant, inviting and eerie; such dichotomies are echoed in the way he employs his frequent viridescent palette. As critic and writer Evan Moffitt explains, “the Emperor Nero watched gladiator flights through a cut emerald to shield his eyes from the blazing Roman sun. When green applies its filter to the world, it can be a lens onto great beauty or horrific violence; in Toor's work, it always illuminates specific sensations of both. Toor's palette lends itself as readily to dreams as it does to nightmares, to poisons as well as to salves. Liberation and entrapment are never that far apart. It all depends on how you hold it up to the light.”<sup>ii</sup> Throughout his work Toor also fuses and complicates art historical references with contemporary concerns, as he does with recurring motifs, such as his “fag puddles”—leaky and often perversely opulent heaps of limbs, clothing, and objects—and the way in which he attires his figures in fashions from across time and cultures. As curator Rachel Cieřla notes, the artist's work “is a compilation of ‘things’ that mixes historical traditions with pieces of local history, popular culture, politics and his lived experience... [Toor] pulls from art history's ‘pile of limbs’ to bring into being new bodies composed from part-bodies. After all, style is embodied knowledge and by specifically recounting the tradition of European painting in his compositions, Toor carries that history into this century and muddies the divisions of time, place and circumstance. He shows us that what painting can do as a progressive practice is to make history spatial as it becomes outer and inner, leaking in all directions.”<sup>iii</sup>

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**Salman Toor** (b. Lahore, Pakistan, 1983) currently lives and works in New York. He studied painting and drawing at Ohio Wesleyan University and received his MFA from Pratt Institute in Brooklyn, NY. Recent notable presentations of his work include the 60th International Art Exhibition of La Biennale di Venezia (2024); *Salman Toor: New Paintings and Drawings* at M WOODS, Beijing (2023-24), with a publication produced by Art Gallery of Western Australia; *Salman Toor: No Ordinary Love* at Baltimore Museum of Art (2022), which travelled to Tampa Museum of Art, Honolulu Museum of Art, and Rose Art Museum, Waltham, MA (2023-24); as well as *Salman Toor: How Will I Know* at Whitney Museum of American Art, New York (2020-21). Other significant exhibitions include *Le monde comme il va / The World As It Goes*, Bourse de Commerce–Pinault Collection, Paris (2024); *Effetto Notte: Day for Night: New American Realism*, Aishti Foundation, Palazzo Barberini, Rome (2024); *Capturing the Moment*, Tate Modern, London (2023-24); 16th Biennale d'Art Contemporain Lyon (2022-23); and *Living Histories: Queer Views and Old Masters*, Frick Madison, New York (2021-22). Toor is the recipient of a Joan Mitchell Foundation Grant, and his work is in the permanent collections of The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York; Whitney Museum of American Art, New York; Walker Art Center, Minneapolis; Dallas Museum of Art; Baltimore Museum of Art; Tampa Museum of Art; Speed Museum of Art, Louisville; High Museum of Art, Atlanta; Hessel Museum of Art at Bard College, Annandale-on-Hudson, NY; RISD Museum, Providence; Rose Art Museum, Waltham, MA; Wake Forest University Art Collection, Winston-Salem; Des Moines Art Center; Tate, London; Moderna Museet, Stockholm; Pinault Collection, Paris; M WOODS, Beijing; Art Gallery of Western Australia, Perth; Museu de Arte de São Paulo; and Courtauld Gallery, London; among others.

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<sup>i</sup> Christopher Y. Lew and Ambika Trasi, Whitney Museum of American Art (2020). *Salman Toor: How Will I Know* [Press Release].

<sup>ii</sup> "Green as the Night." *Salman Toor: No Ordinary Love*, exh. cat. Baltimore: Baltimore Museum of Art, 2022.

<sup>iii</sup> "Drawing is a being born." *Salman Toor: New Paintings and Drawings*. Perth: Art Gallery of Western Australia, 2024.