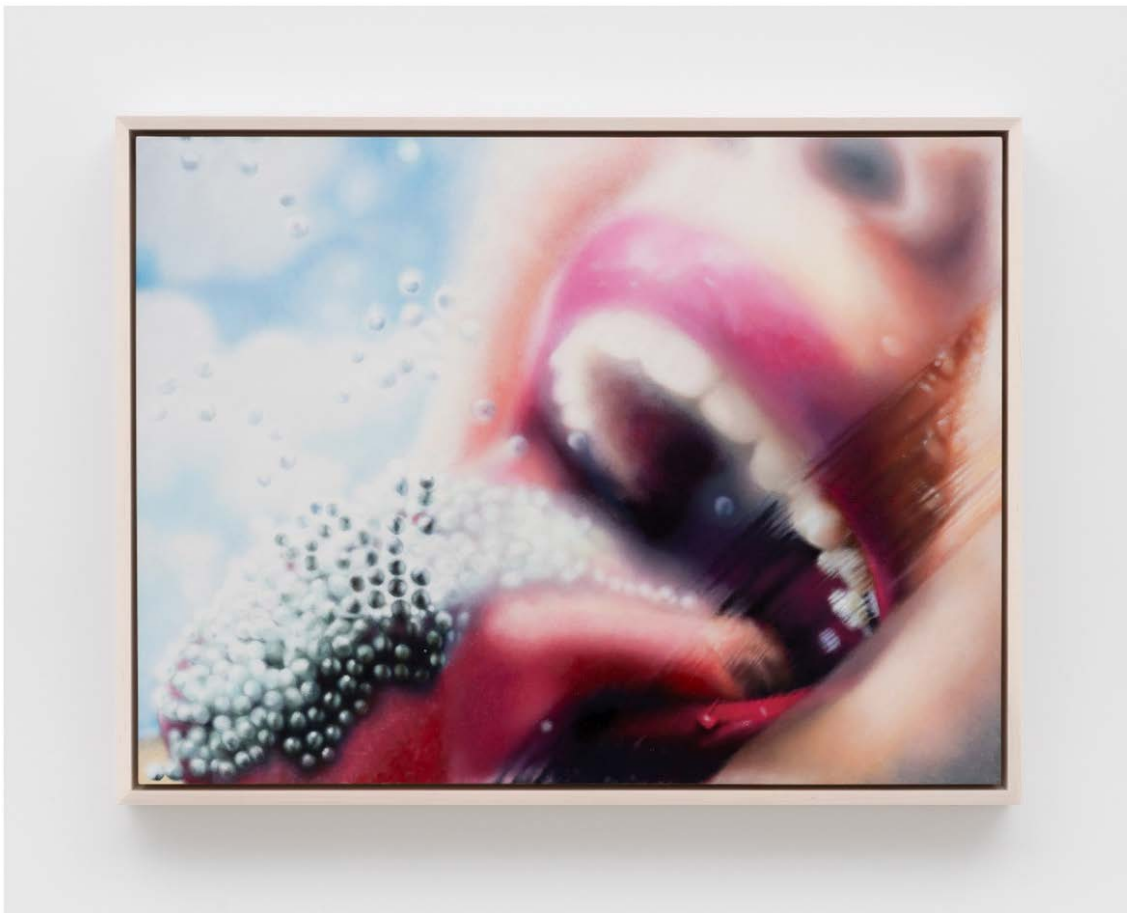


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Marilyn Minter at Regen Projects: Painting After Shame



Marilyn Minter, *After Guston, #21 (Mouth)*, 2024, Enamel on wood, 24 x 32 x 2 inches (61 x 81.3 x 5.1 cm). All individual images: © Marilyn Minter, courtesy the artist and Regen Projects

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Marilyn Minter has spent five decades turning glamour inside out. Her hyperreal paintings — at once candy-colored, sensual, and subversive — depict women's bodies, mouths, and shoes with an intensity that seduces and unsettles in equal measure. "My whole goal is to name shame," she said during a recent walkthrough of her exhibition at Regen Projects in Los Angeles. "We like to shame beautiful women. I want to make pictures of that shame (so we can get rid of it)."

The show gathers four interrelated series — large-scale celebrity portraits, her *Odalisque* and *After Guston* paintings, and paintings of magnified mouths. Across these bodies of work, Minter continues her career-long excavation of beauty, power, and female agency. Each piece oscillates between seduction and critique, forcing the viewer to confront how desire is constructed, consumed, and performed.

In the exhibition's portraits series, Minter trains her lens on figures she referred to as colleagues and comrades — artists and cultural icons who have shaped public imagination on their own terms. Jane Fonda, defiant as ever, extends a middle finger to the viewer; Jeff Koons presses against the glass in his portrait, his face distorted in a moment of manic self-regard. "They've all changed culture somehow," Minter said. In the recent documentary *PRETTY DIRTY: The Life and Time of Marilyn Minter*, she describes many of her subjects as "admired but degraded."



Marilyn Minter, *Lizzo Odalisque*, 2023–2025, Enamel on metal, 60 x 96 x 2 inches (152.4 x 243.8 x 5.1 cm)

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Her *Odalisque* paintings push that reclamation further. Long a symbol of passive femininity in art history, the odalisque becomes, under Minter's brush, a site of agency and resistance. *Lizzo Odalisque* (2023–25) depicts the musician reclining in lingerie and heels, holding an iPhone — capturing Minter's image at the same time she is being captured. *Padma Odalisque* (2024) shows Padma Lakshmi half-clothed and defiantly upright, devouring fruit amid smashed cake, as if feasting on the very tropes that once consumed her. "We've all seen odalisques made by men," Minter said. "I wanted to show what a portrait in the 21st century looks like, imagined by a woman."

If the *Odalisques* rewrite art history's scripts of desire, the *After Guston* works position Minter within its lineage of dissent. After seeing the traveling Philip Guston retrospective in 2022, she recognized echoes of her own visual vocabulary: eyes, mouths, shoes. Her *After Guston #23 (Lightbulb)* places a glowing bulb above a stiletto surrounded by cigarette butts, while *After Guston #33 (Hat)* replaces Guston's infamous Ku Klux Klan hoods with MAGA caps, recoding the same symbols of American extremism for our current era. Both artists, she suggests, wield familiar objects to expose what hides beneath them.



Marilyn Minter, *After Guston, #23 (Lightbulb)*, 2024, Enamel on wood, 30 x 30 x 2 inches (76.2 x 76.2 x 5.1 cm)

Minter's signature series featuring mouths remains her most distilled statement — close-ups of open, laughing, biting, and breathing lips pressed against glass. "A mouth can be sexy, grotesque, pitiful," she said. These images, layered in enamel paint on metal and wood, shimmer between seduction and defiance. They also function as metaphors for speech and consumption — what it means to voice, devour, or be silenced.

Her surfaces, glossy and tactile, are deceptive: the slick finish draws you in, but the subject matter resists comfort. That paradox — between pleasure and confrontation —

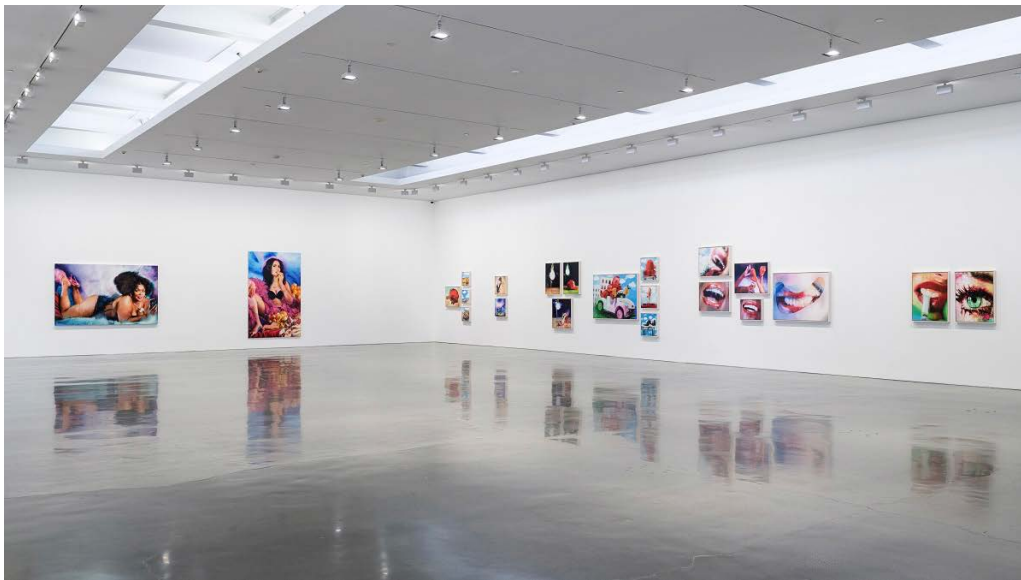
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has defined Minter's work since the 1980s. Once criticized by second-wave feminists for her depictions of eroticized femininity, she now stands as a progenitor of what's been reframed as "sex-positive feminism." "I got canceled very early on," she laughed. "Now I have street cred because I survived — the Internet happened, and my side won."

Minter's latest paintings continue to collapse distinctions between pop spectacle and painterly rigor. Her process begins with photography — shooting her subjects behind panes of glass, then manipulating the images in Photoshop before translating them into enamel on metal or wood. The result is both meticulous and chaotic: beauty heightened to the point of distortion, artifice so vivid it becomes its own truth.

If Guston sought to "bear witness to the brutality of the human condition," Minter bears witness to the spectacle of it — its shame, desire, and excess refracted through a woman's gaze. Her subjects are at once muses and mirrors, icons and accomplices.

Five decades into her career, Minter remains as mischievous and incisive as ever. Her art insists that pleasure is political, and that to look — really look — is an act of confrontation. The culture may have finally caught up to her, but Minter's paintings still stare back harder.



Installation view of Marilyn Minter at Regen Projects, Los Angeles November 6 – December 20, 2025,
Photo: Evan Bedford, courtesy the artist and Regen Projects

Marilyn Minter is on view November 6–December 20, 2025 at Regen Projects, Los Angeles.