

GAGOSIAN GALLERY

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David Ebony's Top 10 New York Gallery Shows for February

David Ebony



James Ensor, *Squelette peintre (The Skeleton Painter)* (ca. 1896)

Photo: Courtesy Gagosian Gallery © 2014 Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York/SABAM, Brussels.

2. “In the Studio,” at Gagosian, through April 18

In this massive, two-part exhibition, the concept of the artist studio as a locus for private contemplation and public exposure is explored in great detail and depth. Organized by MoMA chief curator emeritus John Elderfield, “In the Studio: Paintings,” at 522 West 21st Street, constitutes a museum-quality survey of some 50 works, arranged more or less chronologically. A vast time span and a stellar array of artists are represented, from William Hogarth to Jasper Johns. Among the many highlights: Jean-Léon Gérôme’s 1890 neoclassical gem, *Working in Marble* or *The Artist Sculpting Tanagra*, shows a nude model seated next to her stone doppelgänger. The scene looks quite contemporary, like a snap taken in John DeAndrea’s studio. Similarly arresting, James Ensor’s iconic *The Skeleton Painter* (ca. 1896) offers a rather macabre view of artistic pursuit.

Part Two of the exhibition, “In the Studio: Photographs,” curated by Peter Galassi, former chief curator of photography at MoMA, appears on two floors at Gagosian’s 980 Madison Avenue location. Thematically rather than chronologically arranged on two floors, with 150 works by 40 artists, ranging from Thomas Eakins to Robert Mapplethorpe, the show at first appears rather disjointed compared with Part One. But it contains many iconic and some fresh images; and Galassi succeeds in his aim here, which is primarily to show how photography has radically altered the notion of an artist’s studio practice.