

*PARRHESIA*

natalia ocerin

15.06.2025 - 21.06.2025



Natalia Ocerin, 'Fortune Teller', 2025, oil on linen,  
80 x 80 cm, 31.5 x 31.5 in

gallery rosenfeld is proud to present *Parrhesia*, the first solo exhibition at the gallery by Spanish artist Natalia Ocerin. Inspired by Michel Foucault's notion of parrhesia—the act of speaking truthfully, even when it entails risk—this exhibition offers a fearless and theatrical reflection on power, identity, and complicity. For this occasion, the entire gallery has been transformed into a surreal circus, highlighting the artist's vision of the art world as a site of both performance and observation.

Natalia Ocerin is based in London and is known for her remarkable hyperreal oil paintings, which begin as hand-sculpted plasticine maquettes. Each figure, object and scene is meticulously modelled, then photographed and translated into oil with astonishing trompe-l'œil technique. Her work combines humour and darkness to explore pressing social themes, including mental health, body image, and the illusion of freedom in consumer

society. By using childlike materials to address complex realities, Ocerin creates a visual language that is both accessible and conceptually rigorous.

At the heart of *Parrhesia* is a monumental carousel. Rather than evoking nostalgia or play, it spins through unsettling scenes of educational control, digital dependency, anxiety, and death. Money becomes a symbolic anaesthetic, dulling the senses and suppressing speech; in some cases, the figures are literally blinded and gagged by money. What appears to be motion is in fact stasis - an endless cycle of alienation.

Elsewhere in the exhibition, a puppet theatre presents a pointed and nuanced reflection on the art market. Framed like a traditional Punch and Judy show, with the words '*The Circus of the Art Market*' emblazoned above, the scene depicts an auctioneer energetically selling off artworks while a placid audience sits watching, tittering amongst themselves. It is a scene that captures both absurdity and complicity, exposing the theatrical rituals through which value and visibility are constructed. This is not a straightforward critique, but rather a mirror held up to the system. Ocerin does not condemn from the outside; instead, she speaks from within, refusing the role of silent participant and embracing the risk of dissent.

In another installation, a fortune-teller's wheel replaces predictions with philosophical texts. Viewers are reminded that truth is not found in answers, but in the acceptance of uncertainty. This gentle irony cuts deep, offering a quiet but resolute kind of truth-telling.

The final room recreates a richly textured circus interior. Here, paintings are accompanied by the original plasticine models that inspired them, revealing the artist's process in full. The illusion is broken, but what remains is something more powerful: an act of radical honesty. Viewers witness not just the result, but the labour, imagination and time embedded in every work.

Throughout the exhibition, the circus operates as metaphor, stage, and social critique. Visitors become part of the performance, both observer and participant, caught within the structures the artist so vividly exposes.

*Parrhesia* is not an exhibition designed to flatter or soothe. It is a call to attention. Ocerin does not offer easy conclusions, but instead reminds us that truth often arrives through discomfort. Her work is an act of artistic and ethical courage, one that invites us to look more closely, to speak more freely, and to question what we think we know.

As the artist writes:

*"Art, even in its fragility, can be a space for freedom. Even if it unsettles. Especially if it does."*