

Most Days OR Sheela na gig

Most days Georgia Spain takes a photograph of her expanding body.
Most days Georgia Spain goes to the studio to make paintings.

Lately Georgia Spain's paintings have been taking the measure of her expanding body.
They have been watching her, sizing her up, as they come into the world.

Spain works in surges and bursts, with eight canvases on the go at once.
She is the mother of many.

These paintings are born upright, but they are conceived on the ground.
Poured paint pools onto canvas, only to be smudged, blurred and turned upright – tilted in their becoming bodies.
Ribbons of paint trace elegant contours, replacing the blocks of colour that we first came to know as signature Spain.

Also signature is Spain's family of colours.
Sang de Bouef features in her palette, as always, though now the deep red, once made with bull's blood, means more.
It means everything.
But colour isn't overly considered, or laboured, it too is carried in the body.

Spain's mothers are here in this exhibition - Nancy Spero and Louise Bourgeois beckon from bold tributes.
Dying within months of each other, here they cradle us all, especially the artists they have engendered.
Lately Spain dreams of carrying herself as a giant baby.
Cradling her infant self in outstretched arms.
She is her own sheela na gig, the patron saint of the heavily pregnant woman, and now of artists too.
Move over St. Luke.

Spain titled her first show at Tolarno, *Time is the thing a body moves through*.
This exhibition came in 2022, the year after she won the Sir John Sulman Prize at the Art Gallery of New South Wales, and six years after leaving art school.
Spain knows that time makes our bodies, but she also knows that our bodies make time, and that her canvasses when laboured too long lose their energy.
Just like the rest of us.
Time is the fire in which we burn.

Lisa Slade 2026