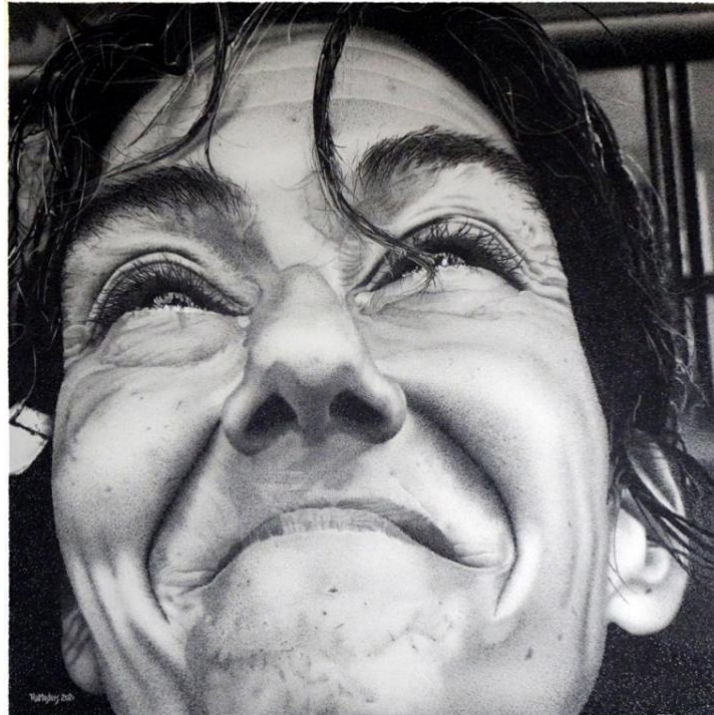


For Immediate Release
March 11, 2026



Richard Masters, *Toni*, 2021, Oil-based paint and ink pens on paper, 50 x 50 inches.
Courtesy of the artist.

HUMANSCAPE

Richard Masters

April 10–May 8, 2026

Opening Reception: Friday, April 10, 6–8pm

Artist Talk and Closing Reception: Friday, May 8, 6–8pm

NARS Main Gallery and Project Space

NARS Foundation is pleased to announce the launch of its **Invitationals Exhibition Program**, a new annual exhibition series. Beginning in 2026, the program brings overdue visibility to accomplished artists whose practices have been historically overlooked within New York’s art landscape. By inviting artists with sustained, rigorous bodies of work, the program repositions their contributions at the center of contemporary dialogue—affirming the value of persistence, experience, and long-term artistic vision.

We inaugurate the Invitationals series with ***HUMANSCAPE***, a solo exhibition by **Richard Masters**, organized by curator **Yun Jung Rhee**, featuring a powerful body of work developed over four years on the streets of Manhattan.

HUMANSCAPE brings together 11 large-scale black-and-white portraits of individuals Masters encountered throughout New York City, many of whom live on the margins of urban life. Rendered with extraordinary precision using oil-based paint and ink, each 50 x 50 inch portrait confronts viewers with an enlarged human face that is impossible to ignore. At first glance, the works resemble photographs; upon closer inspection, their meticulously hand-drawn surfaces reveal a sustained commitment to observation, time, and presence.

The monochromatic palette removes the distraction of color, directing attention to line, structure, and form while emphasizing the timeless and universal nature of human resilience. The portraits possess a documentary sensibility, capturing subjects marked by both hardship and survival within the vast and impersonal urban landscape.

Central to the exhibition is an audio component composed of recorded conversations Masters had with his subjects. These recordings expand the exhibition into a multidimensional experience, allowing visitors to encounter not only the faces of the subjects, but also their thoughts, identities, and lived realities. Because the recordings were captured on the street, some voices may be difficult to hear clearly. QR codes accompanying the portraits provide transcriptions of these audio recordings, allowing visitors to better understand the content and context of the voices. Themes of homelessness, mental illness, grief, and social neglect are poignantly embedded throughout the work.

HUMANSCAPE emerged, in part, from the artist's personal loss after the death of his son, whose compassion toward unhoused individuals deeply influenced his empathetic approach. Through close observation and candid conversation, the project documents not only the visible presence of its subjects, but also the invisible social forces that have shaped their lives.

HUMANSCAPE aligns with the NARS Foundation's mission to support socially engaged artistic work. The exhibition invites reflection on visibility, dignity, and responsibility, asking viewers to consider who is seen, who remains unseen, and what it means to truly witness another person. Public programs, including an artist talk, will further extend the exhibition's reach.

About the Artist:

Richard Masters is a visual artist based in New York, whose work explores portraiture, urban experience, and social visibility through painstakingly detailed drawing and painting practices. Working primarily in black and white, Masters combines oil-based paint and ink to create large-scale portraits that blur the boundaries between drawing, painting, and documentary image-making. His work is rooted in sustained observation and direct human encounter, emphasizing empathy, presence, and lived experience. More information and selected works from *HUMANSCAPE* may be viewed at: <https://richardalanmasters.com/portfolio/>.

About the Curator:

Yun Jung Rhee is a New Jersey-based curator, director, artist, and arts educator whose practice bridges contemporary art, community engagement, and international cultural exchange. She is the director of Gallery Marie ("Making Art Reach Infinite Eyes") and serves as the exhibition curator for the Jersey City Poetry

Festival. Rhee is also the founder and director of Creativemind Art at the Museum of International Art, where she has developed exhibitions and educational initiatives since 2009.

About the Invitationals Exhibition Program:

The Invitationals Exhibition Program at NARS Foundation is a focused initiative to recognize and elevate accomplished artists whose work has been historically underacknowledged within the New York art community.

This program identifies artists with sustained, deeply committed practices—those who have developed significant bodies of work outside dominant systems of visibility and market attention. By inviting these artists to exhibit, NARS creates a platform for renewed engagement with their work and a critical reexamination of their contributions.

Beyond exhibition-making, the program is grounded in a broader vision: to affirm artistic longevity as a vital cultural value. These artists represent not only individual achievement but also a depth of experience that is essential to shaping future generations. Through increased visibility and institutional support, the Invitationals Exhibition Program positions invited artists as influential voices capable of guiding, inspiring, and sustaining the next wave of artistic practice.

This initiative reflects NARS Foundation’s commitment to equity, continuity, and the enduring impact of artists who remain dedicated to their vision over time.

For press inquiries please contact:

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The NARS Galleries are open Monday - Friday from 12 to 5 pm. For more information, please call the office: 718-768-2765 or email info@narsfoundation.org.

The New York Art Residency & Studios (NARS) Foundation is a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit arts organization committed to supporting artists and curators on an international level as well as engaging the local community in Brooklyn and the Greater New York area. Our mission is to present diverse platforms on which to nurture creative inspiration and innovative cross-pollination of ideas.



NARS exhibition programs are, in part, supported by public funds from the **New York City Department of Cultural Affairs**.