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Cory Arcangel Hits Massive Techno
Festival, Painter-Bassist Ana Cristina
Sells Out New York Debut, and More
Juicy Art-World Gossip



Ana Cristina, *The Master Baiter*, (2026). Courtesy of the artist.

Gabi Vidal-Irizarry • Jul 15, 2026

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Ana Cristina flips through a Goya book at her Bushwick studio. Notice the glass of water perched on top of the Bible.

Ana Cristina Is Self-Taught

A year ago, Ana Cristina was working bottle service at PHD, a nightclub in the Meatpacking District. When I met her, she was setting off fireworks outside Eldridge Street Store, a Chinese restaurant in Chinatown, at the afterparty for “Primitive Romanticist” at Jarvis Art, a two-person exhibition pairing new paintings with works by the maverick American artist Louis Eilshemius (1864–1941). Max Werner, a partner at the gallery, had flown in from Berlin for the occasion. Last Thursday, I caught up with her at her Bushwick studio, deep in post-sold-out-show blues.

At age 18, Cristina walked into a Brandy Melville in Los Angeles barefoot, asking for a job. An argument with the store’s manager, Jesse, ensued. Then he hired her, recognizing her capacity to withstand discomfort. A week later, she was at the company’s factory in Guangzhou.

For two years, she worked in product development for the brand, picking up modeling gigs on the side and going to weird full-moon parties in Malibu with Orlando Bloom on her time off, she said. Living a

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very L.A. life was “awesome, but I got kind of bored of it,” she said. The dreams, however, were frequent, strange, and vivid.



Ana Cristina, *The Master Baiter*, (2026). Courtesy of the artist and Jarvis Art.

She relocated to New York after a visit that included a trip to the Met. Her first neighbors were two young male models. “At first glance I thought they were probably extremely daft, no substance to them,” she said. “But they were painters, and they started showing me their paintings, and they were so weird, and dark, and strange. I felt like I could see their insides, and it was such an attractive thing, to be understood so immediately, in a visceral way, within five seconds.”

The trio began hanging out often, drawing, painting, and playing music. She kept modeling, and in her off hours she watched YouTube tutorials on how to paint. Then the pandemic wreaked havoc: Her financial security slipped, a relationship frayed. She returned to painting, this time from a place of boredom and despair. The color yellow wrecked her.

“That was the first time I started painting from a more emotional space,” she said. “Everything changed. My color palette changed, the subject matter changed. In a cheesy way, I felt like I became fused with it.”

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Soon she started spending hours at the Met, studying artworks, tracing who taught whom, why certain periods favored allegory, what the Paris Salon rewarded, and when those values began to shift. Later in the conversation, Ana mentioned that she tap-danced as a child.

Her first show was last August, at Corner Gallery in Andes, New York, across the street from Leo Koenig's upstate space. Her second was at F2T in Milan this past March.

What she makes now are landscapes, in the register of Hudson River School painters like George Inness and John Frederick Kensett. In some, she borrows their serpentine line, the winding path or shoreline that pulls your eye deep into the scene, and bends it somewhere darker. In *Tangled Up in You* (2026), that line leads you to a naked woman being enveloped by a python.



Ana Cristina, *Tangled Up in You*, (2026). Courtesy of the artist and Jarvis Art.

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She pulled one work, *The Master Baiter*, straight from the dream journal she had when she was 18. A fish flies in the sky. There are three naked bathers, two wrestling, one on a rock cradling a fish in their lap.

We were flipping through a Goya book when I spotted the bass propped in the corner. Cristina taught herself to play the instrument. She's in the indie slash synth-pop band Porches, who came out for her opening before a Philly show the next night. Aaron Maine, the lead singer, ended up on the floor with his noodles because the place was packed. I'd taken his seat.

Painting and music pull in opposite directions for her. "Painting, you're alone, wrapped up in your own head," she said. "Music feels more out of body. You're physically connecting with another person, and that almost charges you."

During a studio visit, a potential collector flagged her lack of formal schooling, essentially questioning whether she should be taken seriously. Before showing with Mary Boone (Max's mom, as it happens), Basquiat played synth for the experimental band Gray, despite having no formal musical training. He never attended art school, either.