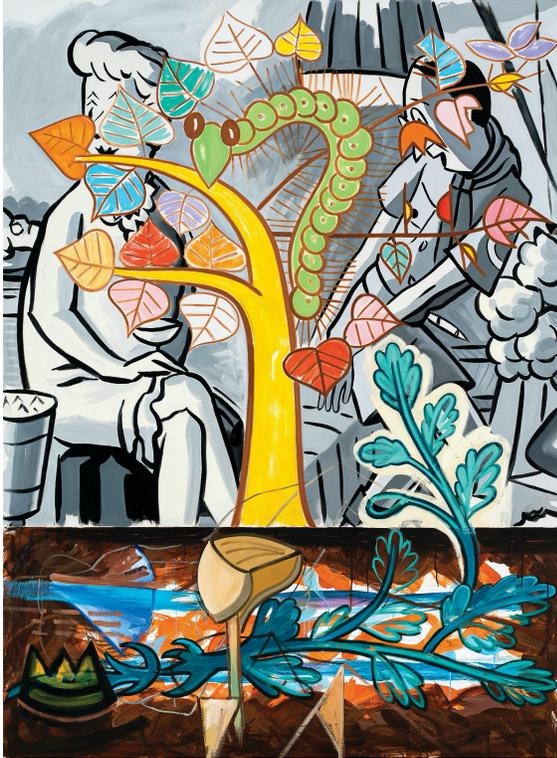


SKARSTEDT



The Pictures Generation painter **David Salle** is the beau ideal of a postmodernist who blurs the lines between high and low. High is inspiring a poem by a cosmopolitan bard (“A Dip in David Salle’s Pool,” by Frederick Seidel); low is a line of luxury swim trunks (by Orlebar Brown) printed with his paintings’ motifs. In 1984, when the artist was a thirty-one-year-old enfant terrible, he exhibited paintings with the legendary Leo Castelli, juggling literary and art-historical allusions, provocative images of female nudes, and incongruous depictions of food. As this magazine’s art critic wrote at the time, “A viewer can leave this show almost as excited about Salle’s future work as about the work he has just seen. After that chop and those biscuits, you may think, God, what will he do with a tree?” Salle answers that question in his new show at the Skarstedt gallery (on view through Oct. 30), using trees as bifurcating devices in the foregrounds of twenty-two pictures (including the eight-foot-high “Tree of Life #14,” above). The paintings borrow their antic cast of anachronistic characters from the cartoons of Peter Arno, whom Harold Ross once described as the “pathfinder artist” of *The New Yorker*.

— *Andrea K. Scott*