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"Fruit Envy (Gatherers),
2014 by Ella
Kruglyanskaya. Courtesy
of the artist.

How to Work Together Artist Ella Kruglyanskaya discusses her first London show

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The women in [Ella Kruglyanskaya's](#) paintings boast cartoonish curves and wear figure-hugging outfits in look-at-me, vintage-style prints, but they're not passive 1950s pin-ups. These dames play by their own rules and the New York-based artist offers a witty, probing take on the complexities of female social experience—crackling with desire, jealousy and clashing egos.

Kruglyanskaya's first London show at [Studio Voltaire](#) is part of a three-gallery collaboration for which artists are exploring the theme "How To Work Together." Her pairs of women perform traditional male and female labors, including cleaning, grocery shopping and construction. But is the bricklayer in loud stripes and spots collaborating with her co-worker or walling her up? Are the buxom French maids parading their skills (and snazzy stockings) in unison or competing for our attention? What about the giant mural where two women paint in contrasting hues: are these team players or in a race to the finish? "My women have agency, they're very active," said Kruglyanskaya while installing the show. "Even when they're offering themselves up to be looked at, there's a sense of resistance. Consuming their voluptuousness feels a bit risky."