

**MULTI  
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**Eva Beresin**

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## Eva Beresin

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Eva Beresin was born in Budapest in 1950 and has lived in Vienna for most of her life. Since she was little, she was influenced by her father's collecting and the drawings she made on Sundays in the famous Gerbeaud café in Budapest, inspired by the faces of her parents' friends, also Holocaust survivors, and the tormented expressions of lonely elderly women. . He studied at the School of Visual Arts in Budapest, where he had his own atelier, perfected the technique of composition and acquired basic knowledge of art history, geometry, perspective and drawing.

When he finished his studies he moved to Vienna, he was 19 years old. It was a stage of adaptation and introspection where she was mainly focused on the creation and production of her own exhibitions. In 2014 Beresin was contacted by Charim Galerie with the aim of carrying out a project. At the same time, he began to share his works on Instagram, achieving greater visibility and presenting himself more openly internationally. A year later he had a comprehensive solo exhibition at Charim Galerie in Vienna entitled *My Mother's Diary: Ninety-Eight Pages*, based on his mother's diary after her release from Auschwitz. This has been one of the artist's most important shows to date, since from that moment on she reaffirmed the influence of of his family history, which would mark his future creation from a solid and conscious base.

Beresin captures faces, creatures and scenes imbued with symbolism, capable of transforming pain into an intimate and positive moment at the same time. Convinced that the key to surviving tragedy is humor; represents pain management through cynicism. It expands memory in an organic way through multidisciplinary projects that involve art, architecture, design and fashion, from the creative practice of interconnectivity and constant exchange between the different disciplines. His work is part of important international art collections, including the Albertina Museum in Vienna and the Roux Collection in Panama.

# Fear of Deep Conversations

Silkscreen print, 33.8 x 29.9 in. (86 x 76 cm)  
Screen print produced on Somerset Satin 300g

Edition of 42



We are happy for our first collaboration with artist Eva Beresin

Fear of Deep Conversations, is a limited edition of 42. Silkscreen print 33.8 x 29.9 in (86 x 76 cm), produced on Somerset Satin 300g

“Stress is fuel for me. I am always full of energy and creativity, but doubts can also arise.” -Eva Beresin

# **Perceptions of my body**

**– Eva Beresin**

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**From the beginning, your life has been surrounded by art, influenced by your father's collection and the drawings you created on Sundays at the famous Gerbeaud cafe in Budapest. What was the first subject that inspired you to paint?**

My first subject inspiration was born from seeing my parents sitting together at the coffee house with friends, most of them also holocaust survivors. After the Second World War they returned and lived in Budapest for ten to fifteen years, started a new family life, and hoped for a better world. I got fascinated by their friend's faces, as well as the tormented expressions of aged solitaire women and the characters that cover the pain under the thick make up and red lips. Observing this truly impressed me and I decided to represent these bizarre looks from my childish slightly naive perspective.

**During your studies at the School of Visual Arts in Budapest, you had your own atelier and refined the technique of composition. How would you describe these first years of learning and developing?**

The best thing that school gave me is the basic knowledge of art history, understanding of geometry, perspectives, nude drawing and the regular exercise of portraying humans and animals. Although it was my father who taught me how to see and love art, long before the school, there was one teacher who I remember to be an additional influence. My room at home was also my studio, the table was full of pencils and paints, to later become my easel too. There was constantly something going on. I experimented a lot during that time.

**In the 70s, the ideology and aesthetics of socialist realism still prevailed as an official method of creation within the artistic education of the countries of Eastern Europe. Did this political-social situation condition your work in this period?**

The established artists were completely conditioned by the system and the aesthetic of socialist realism. As a child and later

as a young student, I had the opportunity to experiment within a "free" environment, with the condition that the resulting work could not be shown or shared outdoors.

**The art world is made-up of various systems that contribute, or not, to the development of an artist's career and the visibility of the work. In your case, how did you "get through the door" to international recognition and why do you think it didn't happen a little earlier, for example, after you graduated?**

I finished art school at the age of 19 and moved to Vienna shortly after. It took me a while to adjust to the environment before I started painting again. This has always been my biggest passion, but I never dared to imagine how I could make a living from my work as an artist, and somehow, I did. Also, I never had enough confidence in myself to contact a gallery. For years I was organizing my own exhibitions in private spaces that I rented for short periods of time. It wasn't until 2014 that Charim Galerie in Vienna asked me to do a project together. During that time, I started to show a small selection of my work on Instagram. It was something very new for me and I felt special about the use of this form of visibility: a platform where you can present yourself to the world and they look at you. That was how Kenny Schachter saw my work; his writing and continued interest opened the door to international recognition and beyond.

**In 2015 you held a comprehensive personal exhibition at the Charim gallery, in Vienna, entitled My Mother's Diary: Ninety-Eight Pages, based on your mother's diary after her release from Auschwitz. Do you consider yourself an interpreter of your family history? Was the production process of this show a way to connect with the past and heal?**

I think the translation of my mother's diary changed everything. During the completion of this project, I realized how much my life was influenced by my family's history and how little I knew about it until then.

Everything that was previously suppressed suddenly became clear. Being aware of where you come from gives you a solid foundation to understand and tell your story.

**Beside painting, you also draw and use various media such as 3D. Do you recognize yourself as an artist in favor of technology and cross-functionality or do you feel more comfortable with traditional methods of creation?**

I definitely love trying new technologies, possibilities, mixing materials and seeing what will happen.

**In your work you depict faces, creatures and scenes impregnated with symbolism, tragedy and humor, able to transform pain into an intimate and positive moment at the same time. Is this a recurrent statement in your artist-life philosophy?**

I don't know if this is an artist's life philosophy but I am convinced that the key to surviving tragedy is humor and for me the only way to handle pain is through cynicism.

**An organic way to shape the memory is through multidisciplinary projects that involve art, architecture, design and fashion. Do you think your work embraces multifunctionality?**

I am very interested in multifunctionality. All those disciplines you specified are deeply rooted in the creative practice of interconnectivity and constant exchange between them. They have always been influenced by economic, political and cultural development for centuries.

**How is a typical day like in your studio while you paint?**

I work every day, usually from afternoon to night for a few hours, but I really work hard when I have a deadline. Stress is fuel for me. I am always full of energy and creativity, but doubts can also arise.

**Your work has been incorporated in important international art collections, including the Albertina Museum in Vienna and the Roux Collection. Could you share more details on the latest collaboration with Multiplo?**

It is an honor to be part of the Roux Collection. I strongly sympathize with Multiplo's interest in the accessibility of art. Johnny Roux's method of collecting art is admirable.

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*“I realized how much my family history influenced my life. Being aware of where you come from gives you a solid foundation to understand and tell your story.”*

EVA BERESIN





# Press

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# AMANITA



Eva Beresin (b. 1955, Budapest, Hungary) started drawing and painting in her childhood while spending countless afternoons with her parents at vibrant Café Gerbeaud in Budapest. There she loved to observe the other guests especially the older ladies with their wild makeup and styling. After finishing the School of Visual Arts in Budapest she moved to Vienna. Beresin has been working with different media for the past decades and continuously showed her paintings at various locations. Besides painting she has been working in private and corporate interior design as well as corporate graphic design.

In 2015, Eva Beresin exhibited at Charim Galerie an artistic confrontation with her mother's diary written after her liberation from Auschwitz. "I only began to process it after her death. I got her still intact world from 1943 where Jews in Hungary could live in relative normality converted into my painting and a multi-layered representation of her history."

The majority of her works from summer 2019 which were painted with oil colours directly onto old fashion magazines, depicted self-portraits, the perception of her body, which she placed virtually within the time and location of Auschwitz in order to retrace her family's tracks. Sometimes in the paintings, she is moving naked and vulnerable, in order to be able to start a dialogue with those she was never able to actually meet. She used subjects and postures from fashion magazines because they were surprisingly easy to transfer to the extremity of the time. Her courage to show all of this made her laugh and comforted her. "Because despite all the hardships, we are still here. The last couple of months I am still dealing with myself and my body and I feel I'm getting braver about it and this fact I am enjoying a lot. The story of where I come from and who I am today seems an inexhaustible source." Based on that exhibition the book "Ninety-Eight Pages" was published by Verlag für moderne Kunst in 2019.

"I'm addicted to Instagram it's like a new coffeehouse culture, see and be seen, communication platform and imaginary resource." Instagram was also pivotal as it was the place where Eva Beresin and Kenny Schachter met in 2019. With whom she developed a close

correspondence since the pandemic that has had a stimulating influence on her work. Schachter's writings as a critic and his curatorial work has also been central to her introduction to a wider public.

"My work is the constant attempt to translate the images in my head. The banal, everyday or fleetingly-perceived have the same status as phantasias or images from art history. I am impatient and want to make the pictures in my head visible in my own visual language as quickly as possible, so the pictures are never finished, but rather remain in a continuous process. The overpainting, the use and experimentation with different materials—such as collage, photography and painting—are an expression of what seems important to me at the moment, a narrative form that is only safe from myself when I hand it over in a further process of change. Invisible figures, people either in motion or standing in front of each other commingle. They are mostly female figures—my own engagement with femininity and sexuality, history and the questioning of painting." - Eva Beresin

## KENNY SCHACHTER



I am not sure how Eva and I actually met, other than the fact it was on Instagram – that great social media leveling platform, where the entrenched art world hierarchies have all but been obliterated. What is certain is how much I’ve grown to love not only the art of Hungarian-born, Vienna-based, Eva Beresin; but, even more so (if that’s possible), the artist herself – one of the kindest, most generous people I know.

Her paintings cloak both herself and various members of her immediate family in lighthearted, riotously colorful scenarios, often of the domestic variety. As most of our relatives are so universally...umm... “special”, why look any further? But don’t be fooled.

The mundane daily occurrences of life, shopping, sharing meals, and playing games together come across as funny – mostly by way of cartoonishly distorted, engorged hands, feet and facial features. Yet lurking not too far underneath the surface, the images are imbued with a more melancholic notion of the absurd, grotesque, and forlorn. Beresin explains: “I found myself unattractive for a lifetime – only my hands, feet, and skin were highlights [for me]. Maybe that’s why unconsciously it always comes out that way. Hands and especially feet have a very strong expression for me anyway. Both my parents [who suffered unspeakably in concentration camps] were extremely elegant and blessed with great taste.”

“The story of where I come from and who I am today seems an inexhaustible source.”

The wedding of humor and horror, contradictory impulses wherein one laughs in the face of impending old age, bodily decay, and sundry tragedies, are nothing less than survival methods in a world typified by gratuitous violence and unprovoked death; something I can readily relate to since entering similar, excessively unpleasant territory myself. But ageing, however ungracefully, is better than the alternative I think.

Beresin brings to mind, more than any other artist for me, the works of Belgian painter James Ensor (1860-1949). Little traveled in his lifetime, he dwelt in a bizarre, wildly colorful landscape, primarily peopled by those closest to him. Eva replaces the masks frequently featured in Ensor's works with everyday faces of her friends and family – in anything resembling a state of flattery. They also share an acute sense of aggressive sarcasm and scatology – words used by Los Angeles County Museum of Art director Michael Govan to characterize Ensor.

On a more sobering note, if that's possible, Beresin previously staged a 2015 art show at Charim Galerie in Vienna (along with an astounding publication) titled "My Mother's Diary: Ninety-Eight Pages", published by Verlag für moderne Kunst. In her own words, as written in a letter to me last year:

I exhibited my biggest project, the artistic implementation of my mother's diary, as written after her liberation from Auschwitz. I could only bring myself to read and process the diary after her death, which I then converted into a series of paintings that served as a multi-layered representation of her history. My work in general depicts me and my perception of my body, which I place virtually within the time and location of Auschwitz in order to retrace my family's tracks. Sometimes in the paintings, I am moving naked and vulnerable, in order to be able to start a dialogue with those I was never able to actually meet. My courage to show all of this somehow makes me laugh and comforts me because, despite all the hardships, we are still here. The story of where I come from and who I am today seems an inexhaustible source."

In the diaries, her mother spoke of being numbed by the matter-of-fact ordinariness of the daily atrocities meted out as "nothing special", including being made to stand naked with her hands raised in front of Josef Mengele [German SS officer known as "The Angel of Death"], of watching countless murders on the spot of anyone who could not manage the inhumane quantities of work, and of not knowing which, if any, family members managed to survive. After her release, she wrote

she was "freed but still imprisoned, full of doubt and confidence with an indifference to nature". The art of Eva Beresin, in the face of such unfathomable hideousness, offers solace and hope in a world that seemingly goes from worse to worse, without respite. Something for which I am eternally grateful.

**Eva Beresin**  
Laugh, don't cry

# METAL



Eva Beresin stars in the next annual exhibition at the Fundación La Nave Salinas in Ibiza. She's an artist who is committed to the risky and radical. The solo show opens 16th July and features works that focus on the comic nature of the tragedy inherent in human behaviour. They represent the banality of the grotesque in scenes full of witnesses: sometimes manifested as animals and creatures interacting with humanity or looking directly at the viewer with surprise or despair. With site-specific works, attendees will be able to see pieces of monumental dimensions with others of a more domestic format.

**"We were struck by her way of painting, her strokes. But also, how she approaches delicate situations with risky images", explains Lio Malca, promoter of the Fundación La Nave Salinas, a 700-square-metre stone building located on the edge of the sea where Beresin will be exhibiting her work this summer. On occasions, Beresin inserts self-portraits that seem amusing, mainly through hands, feet and facial features distorted like a caricature - a constant in her work. "I use my face and my body, I put them at the centre in situations that are relevant to me, combining them with my creatures, those that have accompanied me since childhood," she says.**

Of Beresin's work, art critic Kenny Schachter has said that "her paintings are equally seductive, hilarious and disturbing. While lulled into a false sense of comforting entertainment, Eva hits us over the head after luring us in with her unparalleled, unbridled, symbolically violent and disturbing images." She confesses, "I've never looked for beauty, so I can't define what it means to me". Whilst Kenny adds that "I have always found a fascination for interesting, extraordinary and exciting people and things".

Eva Beresin trained as a painter at the Budapest School of Visual Arts. The daughter of an art collector, she was always exposed to the art world from an early age, and since the age of 9 she has known that painting is her great passion. Based in Vienna, Beresin is the first woman artist to exhibit at the foundation. In 2015, Beresin realised a deeply personal exhibition project for the Charim gallery in Vienna that

brought her into the international art spotlight, titled *My Mother's Diary: Ninety-Eight Pages*, that was also materialised as a book.

This acclaimed exhibition was based on a diary written by her mother after her liberation from Auschwitz. With a bold handling of symbolism, her work captures stories inspired by tragic situations, but wrapped in a positive atmosphere, being able to extract beauty from pain. "You have to have a sense of humour to cope with horror," explains Beresin. "My courage to show all this somehow makes me laugh and encourages me because, despite all the hardships, we are still here".

In addition to being present in important international collections, Beresin's work has entered the permanent collection of the Albertina Museum in Vienna. We made time to talk about the seven deadly sins, the Shoah's pivotal impact on her need for humour to cope with tragedy, seeing little animal faces everywhere and her impressive 10 hour a day screen time.

**Congratulations on your new show at Fundación La Nave Salinas! This is your first time exhibiting your work in Spain. Are you excited about it?**

Of course, I am excited to have received this unique invitation from a very special person -Lio Malca- to this extraordinary place.

**What are you going to be showing for this new exhibition? What can people expect from your most recent work to date?**

The work that I do consists of stories, stories that emerge with a constant engagement with matters that I am consciously or subconsciously concerned by. A lot of things would be unbearable if I wouldn't intertwine them and combine them in satirical mostly bizarre ways. For this particular show I have been thinking about the seven deadly sins and how surprisingly contemporary they are.

**We are slowly getting out of the biggest pandemic the contemporary world has experienced for decades. How are you feeling? Did this event become a source of inspiration for**

**the work you're showing this summer in Ibiza?**

The pandemic has changed us all in different ways, me and my work too. Simply the fact that I could live with so many limitations, without so many things that I was used to before. As a consequence, my values shifted, everything was put in new perspectives, and I developed a new found clarity for seeing the essential. So indirectly it's still a source for the show but there is no specific inspiration relevant to the show at La Nave.

**After seven years since its opening, you are the first woman to show artworks at the Fundación, how do you feel about it? Have you ever faced difficulties when developing your work due to being a woman?**

It's actually so sad that we still have to think or talk about it. I would call it a pure coincidence that I am the first woman. Personally, I never had any bad experiences [due to] being a woman. From a very young age I was always able to enjoy using my feminine merits very consciously and knowing my own limits. Back then, when I hadn't even heard about feminism, I'd say I was still a feminist in my own way.

**Humour is a key to understand the narrative of your work. It so happens that in other artistic disciplines humour is not only a healthy coping mechanism but it's also quite political when it's used to highlight other issues. When did you discover that it was part of your painting style or structure?**

Intuitively, I was always simply interested in exaggerated representation. Exaggeration has always something tragical and that's where we arrive at humour. Enduring tragedy is for me only possible with humour on one's side. I am convinced that is tied to my family's history. But I really first became fully aware of it, when I visited Auschwitz Birkenau, where my mother had to spend a few months. She survived but her entire family was killed. Nothing I experienced was as absurd as standing there and trying to imagine ... From that moment on nothing was sacred or taboo to me anymore. And only able to go on with a lot of humour.



**You also started painting at a young age, while observing the old ladies with their wild makeup and styling. Do you remember any special painting or piece that made you dedicate your work to art?**

Yes, I remember so many paintings and pieces, my dad was an art addict, a collector of art books among other things. So, I had more than enough material around, and often sat on his lap and absorbed the art books, while he explained them to me. He also took me to art auctions when he acquired new things. He was my first and until very recently my only fan, he kept hanging my works between the real works of art.

**“The story of where I come from and who I am today seems an inexhaustible source. 2020 was the year of a worldwide lockdown, my work since then inevitably explores how it affects each one of us”. This is a comment you made in one of your recent interviews. It made me think of your show at Charim Schleifmuhlgasse in 2015, when you went through the story of your mother through a diary of hers relating how she was liberated from Auschwitz. How did you approach this project both personally and professionally? Was it healing in some way?**

Yes, it was definitely a kind of healing from things that were withheld from me but have always been present. I was able to develop a very special intimacy to my mother after her death. At first, I didn't think about what I could be developing. I just wanted to read this diary which I was never capable to read until then. Overwriting her handwriting to make it readable again was a very long procedure. Time to think. I was asking myself how to show this story in paintings without slipping into clichés. What could I show? [Whether] to show what you want to see, we all knew and saw seemingly everything about the Holocaust ... Then I realised, I only wanted to show her how she was before. I wanted to make her beautiful happy world visible again, what she was torn away from.

**Some places in the world, including many European countries, have political narratives that are getting quite dangerous. It feels like we are going back to dark places we**

**were supposed to have overcome. The evidence of fascist behaviour is quite worrying. How does this affect you and your work?**

I believe that hate never disappeared. We only stopped reflecting, we in Europe kept this particular problem away from us, we thought something like that would never happen again, but we knew hate was always omnipresent, and now it is coming to the surface again.

**What feeling would you like the spectator to experience when looking at your work?**

Joy.

**According to the show's statement your work represents yourself within all your facets; a work in which you throw fun to dark situations. Do you consider yourself optimistic?**

Optimistic with a lot of doubts and recurring depressive episodes.

**What are your main influences? Not only other visual artists and painters, but also in film, music and literature. Are there other sources of inspiration that are key to your work's development?**

It's a huge mix of everything. It's very hard for me to pick names. It's me, my person, my mentality, experience, and everything I have ever seen, heard and read in my life.

**Do you have any special work ritual at the studio?**

I constantly have my iPhone in my left hand. Average screen time: 10 hours.

**You mentioned that some of these creatures that have accompanied you since you were a child. Can you develop on this and how it has affected your work?**

I just see faces and creatures everywhere and all the time. They can be in a tree, a shadow, a dirty glass or leftover food. It's always been like that, I read the expressions without an idea where they come from, it's been like that since my childhood.

**Distortion is a very interesting subject for painting. It has been used by some of the greatest artists like Francis Bacon, it sometimes feels like it's technically easy, but I found it such a difficult technique; details in brushstrokes can form very different expressions and sentiments, especially when painting portraits. How have you given shape to your unique style? And how has it evolved through the years?**

I hate to sound so very old, but I actually was taught way back in the days that you have to know the basics. First, you must learn anatomy, descriptive geometry, only if you master it you are allowed to distort it. But after you learn the rules, and just study the rules for years, it takes away a certain freedom. Your own very special way of seeing things. I remember in art school; at some point you could hardly tell the works apart from each other. So, after learning the rules, you must do a lot of work to create your own way of distorting. I do not believe this would work through a special technique, it's more about your own personality.

**We are going through this surreal moment in which metaverses are becoming a real thing and NFTs have played a huge part in it. For some people, it's a very exciting new thing and they even consider them as a part of this new artistic discipline. But digital and Net art were already here, the main difference is how NFTs have affected the art market and have kind of democratised the system in which someone become a so-called artist. How do you feel about all of this?**

I love them. I don't understand the aggression towards it, it's just a great possibility for digital art. An NFTs are just like a new way of conserving and exchanging digital art. Humans hate new things, most people are afraid of anything changing. I created some NFTs from my previous digital work, it was really fun. Kenny Schachter was a huge inspiration for this, his way of working I find very powerful, and he is a brilliant mind. He has understood what NFTs can be.

**Absurdity has become the norm in a real life. Politics and social issues are in such a state that the way technology, media, and institutions deal with them is sometimes ridiculous. We've got to the point that it feels like we reality**

**and fiction are fighting. Do you think your paintings are more relevant or representative than ever?**

The match between reality and fiction is my topic. But reality can be much worse than any fantasy.

**Do you have any special plans for your stay in Spain while you're setting up the exhibition?**

There is going to be an art fair at the same time which I really want to see. I am looking forward to finally meeting some people on the Island that I have as yet only known through Instagram. I am definitely not going to the beach, I want only shade and good food.



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