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Eva Beresin

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Eva Beresin nació en Budapest en 1950 y ha vivido en Viena la mayor parte de su vida. Desde pequeña estuvo influenciada por el coleccionismo de su padre y los dibujos que realizaba los domingos en el famoso café Gerbeaud en Budapest, inspirada por los rostros de los amigos de sus padres, también sobrevivientes del holocausto y las expresiones atormentadas de mujeres solitarias de edad avanzada. Estudió en la Escuela de Artes Visuales de Budapest, donde tuvo su propio atelier, perfeccionó la técnica de la composición y adquirió conocimientos básicos de la historia del arte, la geometría, la perspectiva y el dibujo.

Al terminar sus estudios se mudó a Viena, tenía 19 años. Fue una etapa de adaptación e introspección donde estuvo principalmente enfocada en la creación y producción de sus propias exhibiciones. En el 2014 Beresin fue contactada por Charim Galerie con el objetivo de realizar un proyecto. Al mismo tiempo, comenzaba a compartir sus obras en Instagram, alcanzando mayor visibilidad y presentándose de una forma más abierta internacionalmente. Un año después realizó una comprehensiva exhibición personal en Charim Galerie, en Viena, titulada *My Mother's Diary: Ninety-Eight Pages*, basada en el diario de su madre luego de su liberación de Auschwitz. Este ha sido hasta la fecha uno de los shows más importantes de la artista, pues a partir de este momento reafirmó en su obra la influencia

de su historia familiar, lo cual marcaría su creación futura desde una base sólida y consciente.

Beresin captura rostros, criaturas y escenas impregnadas de simbolismo, capaz de transformar el dolor en un momento íntimo y positivo al mismo tiempo. Convencida de que la clave para sobrevivir a la tragedia es el humor; representa el manejo del dolor mediante el cinismo. Expande la memoria de una manera orgánica a través de proyectos multidisciplinarios que involucran arte, arquitectura, diseño y moda, desde la práctica creativa de la interconectividad y el intercambio constante entre las distintas disciplinas. Su obra forma parte de importantes colecciones internacionales de arte, incluyendo el Albertina Museum en Viena y Roux Collection en Panamá.

Fear of Deep Conversations

Serigrafía, 33.8 x 29.9 in (86 x 76 cm)
Producida sobre Somerset Satin 300g

Edición de 42



Estamos felices de anunciar la primera colaboración con la artista Eva Beresin.

Fear of Deep Conversations, es una edición limitada de 42. Serigrafía de 33.8 x 29.9 in (86 x 76 cm) producida en Somerset Satin 300g

“El estrés es combustible para mí. Siempre estoy llena de energía y creatividad, pero también me pueden surgir dudas.” -Eva Beresin

Percepciones de mi cuerpo

– Eva Beresin

Desde los inicios, tu vida ha estado rodeada de arte, influenciada por el coleccionismo de tu padre y los dibujos que realizabas los domingos en el famoso café Gerbeaud en Budapest. ¿Cuál fue el primer tema que te inspiró a pintar?

Mi primer tema de inspiración surgió al ver a mis padres sentados junto a sus amigos en la cafetería, la mayoría de ellos también eran sobrevivientes del holocausto. Después de la Segunda Guerra Mundial regresaron y vivieron en Budapest durante diez o quince años, comenzaron una nueva vida familiar y deseaban un mundo mejor. Me fascinaron los rostros de sus amigos, así como las expresiones atormentadas de mujeres solitarias de edad avanzada y los personajes que cubrían el dolor bajo el maquillaje espeso y los labios rojos. Observar estas escenas realmente me impresionó y decidí representarlas desde mi perspectiva infantil, un poco ingenua.

Durante la etapa en la Escuela de Artes Visuales de Budapest, tuviste tu propio atelier y perfeccionaste la técnica de la composición. ¿Cómo describirías estos primeros años de estudio y evolución?

Lo mejor que me dio la escuela es el conocimiento básico de la historia del arte, la comprensión de la geometría, las perspectivas, el dibujo de desnudos y el ejercicio frecuente de retratar humanos y animales. Aunque fue mi padre quien me enseñó a ver y amar el arte, mucho antes de la escuela, hubo un maestro que recuerdo que fue una influencia adicional. Mi cuarto en casa también era mi estudio, la mesa estaba llena de lápices y pinturas, y luego se convirtió en mi caballete. Estaba en constante movimiento y experimenté mucho durante ese tiempo.

En la década del 70, todavía prevalecía la ideología y estética del realismo socialista como un método de creación oficial dentro de la enseñanza artística de los países de Europa de Este. ¿Esta situación político-social condicionó tu obra en

estas primeras décadas?

Los artistas establecidos estaban completamente condicionados por el sistema y la estética del realismo socialista. De niña y luego de joven estudiante, tuve la oportunidad de experimentar dentro de un entorno “libre”, con la condición de que la obra no pudiera ser mostrada o compartida públicamente.

El mundo del arte posee diversos sistemas que contribuyen, o no, al desarrollo de la carrera de un artista y visibilidad de su obra. En tu caso, ¿cómo atravesaste la puerta hacia el reconocimiento internacional y por qué crees que no sucedió un poco antes, por ejemplo, luego de graduarte?

Terminé la escuela de arte a los 19 años y poco después me mudé a Viena. Me tomó un tiempo adaptarme al entorno antes de comenzar a pintar de nuevo. Esto siempre ha sido mi mayor pasión, pero nunca me atreví a imaginar cómo podría vivir de mi trabajo como artista, y de alguna manera, lo logré. Además, nunca tuve suficiente confianza en mí misma para contactar a una galería. Durante años estuve organizando mis propias exhibiciones en espacios particulares que alquilaba por cortos períodos de tiempo. No fue hasta el 2014 que Charim Galerie en Viena me pidió que hiciéramos un proyecto juntos. Durante ese tiempo, comencé a mostrar una pequeña selección de mis trabajos en Instagram. Fue algo muy nuevo para mí y sentí especial el uso de esta forma de visibilidad: una plataforma donde puedes presentarte al mundo y te miran. Así fue como Kenny Schachter vio mi trabajo; su escritura y continuo interés abrieron la puerta al reconocimiento internacional y más allá.

En el 2015 realizaste una comprehensiva exhibición personal en la galería Charim, en Viena, titulada My Mother's Diary: Ninety-Eight Pages, basada en el diario de tu madre luego de su liberación de Auschwitz. ¿Te consideras una intérprete de la historia de tu familia? ¿Fue el proceso de producción de este show una vía para

conectar con el pasado y sanar?

Creo que la traducción del diario de mi madre cambió todo. Durante la realización de este proyecto, me di cuenta de cuánto mi vida estaba influenciada por la historia de mi familia y cuán poco sabía de ella hasta ese momento. Todo lo que antes estaba reprimido quedó claro de repente. Ser consciente de dónde vienes te da una base sólida para entender y contar tu historia.

A parte de la pintura, también dibujas y utilizas diversos medios como la forma 3D. ¿Te reconoces como una artista a favor de la tecnología y la cross-funcionalidad o te sientes más cómoda con los métodos tradicionales de creación?

Definitivamente me encanta probar nuevas tecnologías, posibilidades, mezclar materiales y ver qué va a pasar.

En tu obra capturas rostros, criaturas y escenas impregnadas de simbolismo, tragedia y humor, capaz de transformar el dolor en un momento íntimo y positivo al mismo tiempo. ¿Consideras esto un statement recurrente en tu filosofía vida-artista?

No sé si es esta la filosofía de vida de un artista pero estoy convencida de que la clave para sobrevivir a la tragedia es el humor; y para mí la única forma de manejar el dolor es mediante el cinismo.

Una manera orgánica de conformar la memoria es a través de proyectos multidisciplinarios que involucran arte, arquitectura, diseño y moda. ¿Crees que tu obra abraza la multifuncionalidad?

Me interesa mucho la multifuncionalidad. Todas esas disciplinas que especificaste están profundamente arraigadas en la práctica creativa de la interconectividad y el intercambio constante entre ellas. Siempre han sido influenciadas por el desarrollo económico, político y cultural durante siglos.

¿Cómo es un día habitual en tu estudio mientras pintas?

Trabajo todos los días, generalmente de la tarde a la noche durante algunas horas, pero realmente trabajo duro cuando tengo una fecha límite. El estrés es combustible para mí. Siempre estoy llena de energía y creatividad, pero también me pueden surgir dudas.

Tu obra ha sido adjunta en importantes colecciones internacionales de arte, incluyendo el Albertina Museum en Viena y Roux Collection. ¿Pudieras compartir más detalles de la más reciente colaboración con Multiplo?

Es un honor ser parte de Roux Collection. Simpatizo mucho con el interés de Multiplo por la accesibilidad del arte. El método de coleccionar arte de Jonny Roux es admirable.

“Me di cuenta de cuánto influyó mi historia familiar en mi vida. Ser consciente de dónde vienes te da una base sólida para entender y contar tu historia.”

EVA BERESIN



Prensa

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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