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Press Release

Ana Karkar *Return From Exile*

15 October - 19 November 2022
Galerie Marguo, 4 rue des Minimes, 75003 Paris



Ana Karkar's paintings have a distant memory of films, not at all virtuous, more haunted than exact. Ana Karkar paints these images of films as they continue to live in us, after their projection, inhabiting the back of our mind: caution, a permanent storm.

— Philippe Azoury, Journalist and Film Critic

Galerie Marguo is pleased to present *Return From Exile*, a suite of new works by French-American artist Ana Karkar. On view from 15 October to 19 November 2022, this exhibition marks the artist's first solo show with the gallery on the occasion of the inaugural edition of Paris+ by Art Basel.

Editor Jeremy Benkemoun writes of Ana Karkar's work: "From one hell to another the line is so fine, so which one to choose: a hell in reality or one of images? In truth, it is on the border of these two that Ana's figures exist, living in our imagination as well as on our screen. Like Adjani in *Possession* (1981), who from a fit of hysteria gives birth to a

god, the paintings pay homage to those marginalized, those who access the sacred when they explode. Ana Karkar reflects on multiple planes: on the parallels between reality and film, and bridges between film and today's painting.

The exhibition opens with a portrait of a crowned queen covered in blood, conveying De Palma's *Carrie* (1976), and immediately sets the tone to follow: a sequence of figures on the edge of madness and who accept it. Figures that resist the community, contending with homogeneity. Figures immersed in profound darkness yet continue to hold true to the light. Ana refers to cult films in her paintings: subversive figures who stop hiding, whose existence is self-sufficient, whose difference, uniqueness, burst and propagate onto their environment, which had previously pushed them into autarky. In other words, those who are often called crazy, freaks, witches, sluts, perverts, psychopaths come together in Ana Karkar's work and reveal all the rawest and strongest aspects of our humanity.

The return from exile which Ana Karkar speaks of is not a return to society, but rather a triumphant "come back" in a role that previously did not exist. After exile, difference is accepted, the marginal no longer bend, but on the contrary become an agent for change. The idea of being together only appears in the paintings in its carnal form, sex, both brutal and fluid, like an impulse wavering between the desire to love and the desire to destroy. Doubled faces, melting bodies, sometimes intimately or being watched, in the end even the sex scenes seem closer to a mental space, where several angles of the same figure intertwine, like a celebration of contradictions. In short, the paintings offer us chaos as a form of harmony: to exist between blood, sex and death, so we can delve deeper into life."

About the Artist

Born and raised in San Francisco, Ana Karkar studied at the San Francisco Art Institute, the Sorbonne and the École Nationale Supérieure des Beaux-Arts in Paris. She dropped out of her MFA for a job at Louis Vuitton HQ where she worked for 7 years in image production and digital media. In 2013 she was mentored in the TURPS Correspondence program based in London.

Her work is influenced by images held in the collective conscious, experimental film and cinema. She offers an alternative perspective to these images via painting. The storytelling in her work is inspired by film directors such as Stanley Kubrick, Brian De Palma and Dario Argento as well as a number of contemporary photographers. Her painterly stroke evokes that of Edvard Munch, Francis Bacon and Egon Schiele as well as the Viennese Secession reprised in Psychedelic Art from her hometown.

More recent exhibitions include a solo show at the Consulat de la Gaité in Paris, Museum of Contemporary Art North Miami, and DZIALDOV in Berlin. Her work has been presented by international galleries, mostly in Germany and Luxembourg, but also in France, Belgium, the UK and Japan.

Press Inquiries

Maud Cartron
maud@marguo.com
+33 7 66 14 91 25

#AnaKarkar #AnaKarkarParis
#AnaKarkarReturnFromExile
@galeriemarguo
marguo.com

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Ana Karkar
Call Me Snake, 2022
Oil on linen
130 x 195 cm