

# *Althuis Hofland Fine Arts*

## ***Absorbed by digestion***

**Eva Beresin**

Opening 8 September 17:00 - 20:00 & 9 September 12:00 - 18:00

Absorbed by digestion:

how to digest the past while swallowing the present and chewing the future?

*„No arguments are necessary to convince us of the importance of that function on which all parts of our frame depend for their nourishment. In one respect its organs may be regarded as of greater importance than even those which are more immediately essential to life.“ -\**

Eva Beresin's second solo exhibition with Althuis Hofland shows a new series of paintings following the trace of the food from the communal table to the bathroom - a place of recollection and relaxation. Where, in a solitary act we eliminate the debris of the once so carefully arranged meal. Known to be a space of contemplation, of peaceful (or less peaceful) self-reflection, the toilet and its surroundings are also at times a grand equalizer : everyone experiences the same relief the same awkwardness and the same tensions while we press for defecation. During these moments we are reduced to our very existence as a pile of bloody muscles, bile, liquids and excrements. Chillingly reminded of the dubiously light layer of fat and skin holding this body together.

The bathroom has the ability of transformation sometimes even dissolving time. Its functions alternate to fit the different aspects of the occupants needs becoming a sanatorium, a stage or a confessional booth. This heterogeneity is reflected onto the female form in „Sometimes I feel beautiful“ (2023), Beresin shows how a female body exists in a multitude of their own variations throughout different stages of life and its incarnations.

At first glance two paintings in this series curiously don't quite seem to belong to the others. They diverge from the very intimate privacy of the times spent in refuge pampering the body before its very public display.

Contained in obscurity „Absorbed by digestion“ (2023) displays a decrepit couple marked as royals by their insignia in an undefined eerie place. Overwhelmingly past their bloom their faces are contorted into a formless substance and the entirety of their image looks run down. The duo is surrounded by a group of creatures and animals moderately interested in the humane figures.

Despite their disagreeable state they seem strangely detached from their appearance. Their attention is so intensely captivated by their incapability of getting rid of their past meaning that they give the impression of being apathetic of their surroundings.

In „Something intentional“ (2023) a guest hidden behind a voluminous hat sits amongst a crowd of unsettled faces while they attend a very public and excessively mediated event. The individual faces are remarkable as they are in different stages of disintegration but all still have their very own grotesque expression.

The only comfortable sentient being seems to be the glowing pink meerkat, smiling right back at you with a mischievous smirk. The animal is a ghostly or sacrilegious figure enthroned over the terrestrial audience. The animal witness to the ridicule of human behavior is a recurring scene in Beresin's paintings. They happen to be accidental witnesses to our devastating stupidity and unfathomable violence. The horrors that humans bring onto each other are registered and stored in that fleshy body we tend and care for. Exposures are engraved during a lifetime and brought to the next generation by our genes. In consequence generational trauma could be seen as indigestion of experiences. Since the delicate movements of the bowels are directly interconnected with the state of our consciousness. The repetition of traumatic patterns/circumstances can only be broken up by the knowledge and recalibration of the memory of the

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mind-body relationship. We cultivate outside flesh and it's fluids in intricate ingenious beauty routines simultaneously neglecting mind and gut left trapped, rotting in obsolete arrangement.

\* Alexander Philip Wilson, Some observations relating to the function of digestion, in "Philosophical transactions of the Royal Society of London", 1833, Vol.2, p. 137-142

Text by: Paulina Buda

*Beresin grew up surrounded by a vast collection of art and objects accumulated through the compulsive collecting of her father. His inclination gave her access to a vast imaginary landscape fusing with the images produced by the collision of soviet realism and the 1960's counter culture slipping through the iron curtain. These conditions established a seedbed for the development of Beresin's grotesque comedy firmly embedded in melancholia. She finished her education at the School of Visual Arts in Budapest before moving to Vienna.*

*Since 2015 Charim Galerie has represented Beresin. That same year the gallery exhibited Beresin's confrontation with her mother's diary written after her mother was liberated from Auschwitz. The book "Ninety-Eight Pages" was published by Verlag für moderne Kunst (First Edition 2015). In 2018 Beresin started to produce concrete sculptures emerging from the praxis of her paintings. Appearing as if they are extracted right out of her canvases, they materialize like a sort of a three dimensional painting.*

*During Summer 2019 the majority of her works were painted with oil colours directly on pages of vintage fashion magazines. They depicted self-portraits, placed virtually, within the time and location of Auschwitz in order to retrace her family's path. Some of the self-portraits are showing her moving naked and vulnerable, to start a dialogue with those she was never able to actually meet. The subjects and postures taken from fashion magazines are eerily easy to transfer to the extremity of the time. Kenny Schachter and Eva Beresin met in 2019 on Instagram. His writings as a critic and his curatorial work introduced her to a wider public.*

*A selection of paintings and her first enlarged 3D print was acquired by the Albertina Collection throughout the year 2022.*