

Bea Scaccia

Wrap Yourself In This Skin

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MARUANI MERCIER is pleased to announce that they will feature their newly represented artist—New York-based Italian American painter Bea Scaccia—as their solo booth artist for the 2024 edition of Art Brussels. Located at the main entrance of the fair (5C-01), the booth, entitled *Wrap Yourself in This Skin*, will be thematically based on the French fairytale, *Donkey Skin*, and will provide an atmospheric, immersive setting for paintings that capture her ongoing exploration of feminine splendour, psychology, and mystery that gives way to subversive imagination.

Rendered in a dark colour palette and enhanced with an impressive utilisation of chiaroscuro, she reworks elements that collectively give rise to illusions of societal beauty constructs, resulting in over-the-top compositions bursting with fur, jewels, wigs, and fabrics that signify deeper, psychological themes. Pearls and hair clips become infestations; what was seen as well-ordered in the sensual hairdos of the Baroque and Rococo periods become unavoidably disturbing.

“In my work, I have been investigating the connection between beauty and monstrosity—how easily something beautiful can turn monstrous, disturbing, mysterious, simply because of placement, number, size, light. This possibility of turning reassuring symbols into something dark is contained in our psychology as human beings; it is behind the uncanny that so much has attracted us,” writes Scaccia. “We are masks, and masks are the only honest face we can have. We are forever engaged in the act of covering

up, hiding, performing, parading, embellishing, metamorphosing, and shapeshifting. Myths and fairytales are filled with women metamorphosing into animals, becoming unrecognisable; usually to escape a difficult situation and to find a new identity. In most cultures, the woman was a symbolic outsider, she was ‘the other’ and ‘a marriage demanded an intimate involvement in a world never quite her own’—hence the animals, the hiding, the metamorphosis—hence *Donkey Skin*.”

Scaccia has been the subject of several exhibitions in the past years including at the Katonah Museum of Art in New York, American University’s Katzen Arts Center in Washington, D.C., Magazzino Italian Art in New York and the Galleria Nazionale in Rome. Later this year Scaccia will be an artist-in-residence with the Marea Art Project in Praiano, Italy where she will continue to develop a project based on Italian myths and fairytales. She was invited by Carol LeWitt, collector and wife of the late American artist Sol LeWitt, whose home Casa L’Orto houses the residency. A trained realist painter from Veroli, Italy, she earned her BA and MFA at the Accademia di Belle Arti in Rome where she studied with the late Italian artist Gino Marotta. Since 2011 Scaccia has been based in New York City, where she worked with Jeff Koons in his studio. Her paintings are found in collections including the William Louis-Dreyfus Foundation and the Portland Museum of Art, among others.

For further information or to arrange an interview, please get in touch at press@maruanimercier.com.