

PRESS RELEASE
BASEL 28/03/2023

voskhod
GATHERING



OLYA AVSTREYH

When We Poke It, the Blood Runs and We Find Ourselves in a Belly

April, 13th

Voskhod Gallery

Presented by Voskhod x Gathering

Voskhod Gallery and Gathering Gallery are pleased to present 'When We Poke It, The Blood Runs And We Find Ourselves In The Belly', a new exhibition by Olya Avstreyh.

The show opens on April, 13th and will be on view until mid-May and will include the most recent works by the artist, created in Israel in the past few months.

In the current project presented in the vitrines of Voskhod gallery, **Olya Avstreyh** creates an almost theatrical moment — with a huge intensely painted piece as its ecstatic center. We witness a certain scene — a dying swan or a crucifixion, surrounded by bright yellow, building an unsettling impression that forms a unified semantic entity together with a collection of smaller carefully spread canvases. While the emotions portrayed by Avstreyh can be easily followed by the viewer, the stories behind them are complex. Grotesque faces and shapes of bent and 'broken' bodies speak of anxiety, rage, pain, and trauma, but also ecstasy and excitement — the feelings she has experienced in the past year.

When We Poke It, The Blood Runs And We Find Ourselves In The Belly, takes its title from Jean-Paul Sartre's introduction to Jean Genet's masterpiece 'Our Lady of the Flowers', published in 1943. This semi-autobiographical novel, narrated as a sexual fantasy, depicts the Parisian underworld and revolves around the story of a drag queen named Divine. Although Avstreyh stumbled upon the

book while browsing her friend's bookshelf, it is not surprising that Sartre's reflections on Genet have found their way into her practice. Avstreyh shares Genet's explicit approach to representing the body and his fascination with the drama of the complex and ambiguous human nature. When asked about the choice of the exhibition title, Avstreyh recalls that the line just felt right to her, as it reflected her immediate emotional state and accurately captured the dramatic nerve of her work.

The exhibition will be opening with the vernissage on April, 13th at 19.00 in the presence of the artist.

Our vitrines are available for viewing 24/7
Voskhod Gallery, [Post-Passage 9, 4051 Basel](#)

[Olya Avstreyh](#) is Russian-Israeli artist who currently resides in Tel-Aviv. Born in 1998, Olya pursued her education in English studies before moving to the UK for a degree in media management. She returned to Russia in 2013 during the height of the protests and worked for the main opposition channel Dozhd, which has since been banned. Frustrated with the political reality, she pursued a degree in Fine Art in contemporary painting.

Her first serious breakthrough came during the Covid lockdown with her online project Videochat: send nudes in collaboration with artist Jenya Milyukos, which was extensively covered by [DAZED](#) and other international publications. Unfortunately, the same exhibition was censored and canceled in Russia. Since then Olya has been exploring the perception of the female body by patriarchal society and rethinking the taboo on nudity. She also examines the complexity and awkwardness of human behavior and the sense of alienation that she believes defines her generation. Her work, driven by impulse and intuition, is an invitation to confront fears and desires through raw, physical and vulnerable images. The fragility of the human body and psyche is one of the main themes in her art.

[Voskhod Gallery](#) was founded out of Basel with two distinctive goals: Firstly, to engage a broader audience into understanding and communicating through art, while making the process of buying art more accessible. Secondly, to help talented young artists advance their careers and get more exposure on the international stage. To merge these two goals, Voskhod operates as an online art platform offering a fine selection of curated works from talented young artists.

[Gathering Gallery](#) is an online platform, representing contemporary artists. The gallery showcases artists working with various media — painting, photography, sculpture, — and also publishes one of the few independent online art magazines in the country, which covers the local art scene and stories on local collectors, galleries and emerging artists. Gathering's mission is to unite artists with their audience and make contemporary art more approachable.

Press images available [via link](#).

Installation photos [available here](#)

Press contact: info@voskhod.ch