



nara roesler

**asuka anastacia ogawa
melinha**

nara roesler são paulo

opening
march 23

exhibition
mar 23 – may 11, 2024

asuka anastacia ogawa

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Nara Roesler São Paulo is pleased to present *Melinha*, Asuka Anastacia Ogawa's (1988, Tokyo, Japan) first solo exhibition in Brazil, which brings together a selection of thirteen paintings developed by the artist especially for the occasion. The show opens to the public on March 23, as part of the official SP-Arte 2024 program, and will be on display until May 11, 2024. Born in Japan, Ogawa spent part of her childhood and adolescence in her mother's hometown in Petrópolis, Rio de Janeiro. The artist then pursued her studies in Sweden, and graduated from Central Saint Martins College in London, later moving to Los Angeles, where she currently lives. The cultural diversity that permeated her formative years has had a significant impact on her artistic production, which incorporates different visual references, beliefs, and traditions. Set against vibrant monochrome backgrounds, her dreamlike paintings depict androgynous figures with carefully constructed faces and almond-shaped eyes that seem to look beyond the limits of the canvas. The images portrayed by Ogawa refer to her Japanese and Afro-Brazilian ancestry. 'Although I don't have a theme when I paint, I'm always thinking about my mother, grandmother, and great-grandmother, and our ancestors' beauty, strength, struggle, and love,' says the artist.

In preparing for this exhibition, her family's presence did not only take the form of memories but was also physical. For the first time, Asuka produced in the company of her mother, who took an interest in painting and took an active part in helping produce some of the works by preparing the backgrounds for the canvases. In addition to her direct participation in the development of the works, her mother's presence provided Ogawa with an atmosphere of calm and serenity that transpires through her paintings. At the same time, her production process was also marked by the artist delving deeper into meditative practices. During this period, mother and daughter were also able to revisit memories of Amelia, Asuka's maternal grandmother, whose nickname, *Melinha*, gives this exhibition its name.

The influence of the ancestral legacy on Ogawa's production is visible both through the various elements and details present in her canvases, such as clothing, props, objects, and animals carefully inserted into her compositions, as well as through the representation of everyday situations and themes related to affection, creating ambiguous and mysterious works loaded with symbolism that connect her to her diverse roots.



Listening, 2024
acrylic paint on canvas
188 x 185,4 x 3,8 cm
73.3 x 74 x 1.7 in

Ageru!, 2024
acrylic paint on canvas
190,5 x 182,9 x 3,8 cm
72.2 x 75 x 1.7 in







Stones, 2024
acrylic paint on canvas
226,1 x 134,6 x 4,1 cm
89 x 53.3 x 1.7 in





Candle, 2024
acrylic paint on canvas
190,5 x 157,5 x 3,8 cm
62.2 x 75 x 1.5 in







Amelia, 2024
acrylic paint on canvas
183,5 x 121,9 x 4,1 cm
72.2 x 48 x 1.6 in





Ao, 2024
acrylic paint on canvas
170,2 x 190,5 x 3,8 cm
75 x 67 x 1.5 in





Lily, 2024
acrylic paint on canvas
129,5 x 218,4 x 3,8 cm
51 x 86 x 1.7 in



Mizu, 2024
acrylic paint on canvas
121,9 x 182,9 x 3,2 cm
48 x 72.1 x 1.5 in







Melinha, 2024
acrylic paint on canvas
152,4 x 101,6 x 3,5 cm
60 x 40 x 1.5 in





Monday, 2024
acrylic paint on canvas
41 x 51,4 x 4,1 cm
16.1 x 20.2 x 1.6 in







Murasaki, 2024
acrylic paint on canvas
61 x 76,5 x 3,8 cm
24 x 30.1 x 1.5 in





Baby Mushrooms, 2024
acrylic paint on canvas
61 x 76,2 cm
24 x 30 x 1.5 in







Kaori, 2024
acrylic paint on canvas
175,3 x 205,7 x 3,8 cm
69 x 81 x 1.7 in



asuka anastacia ogawa

b. 1988, Tokyo, Japan

lives and works in Los Angeles

Born in Japan, Asuka Ogawa spent part of her childhood and teenage years in Brazil, completed her studies in Sweden and graduated from Central Saint Martins in London. The cultural diversity that permeated her formative years had a strong impact on her artistic production, which incorporates different visual references, beliefs and traditions.

Her dreamlike paintings, with monochrome and vibrant backgrounds, feature frontal representations of androgynous, doll-like children, constructed with great formal economy, with carefully constructed faces and almond-shaped eyes that seem to look beyond the painting. The construction scheme of these pictorial compositions, which due to their formal economy and chromatic intensity carry a certain aura of mystery, ends up bringing them closer to images of a spiritual nature. There is a strong reference in her poetics to her own ancestry, which combines Japanese and Afro-Brazilian elements. In the artist's words: 'Although I don't have a theme when I paint, I'm always thinking of my mother, grandmother and great-grandmother, and of the beauty, strength, struggle and love of our ancestors.'

This ancestral legacy is visible in the other elements that make up Asuka's paintings, such as clothing, props, objects and animals. The situations in which these characters are inserted are quite enigmatic and even banal, everyday scenes such as a wash or a game between children, in Asuka's paintings take on metaphysical contours, loaded with symbolism that connects the artist to her various roots.

selected solo exhibitions

- *Pedra*, Blum & Poe, Los Angeles, USA (2023)
- *Tamago*, Blum & Poe, Los Angeles, USA (2022)
- *Feijão*, Half Gallery, New York, USA (2019)
- *Soup*, Henry Taylor's, Los Angeles, USA (2017)

selected group exhibitions

- *Room by room: concepts, themes and artists in The Rachosfy Collection*, The Warehouse, Dallas, USA (2023)
- *Co-responses: Brazil and abroad*, Nara Roesler, New York, USA (2023)
- *5471 Miles*, Blum & Poe, Los Angeles, USA (2020)
- *Don't Eat Me*, Deli Gallery, Nova York, USA (2018)
- *Early 21st Century Art*, Almine Rech Gallery, Londres, Reino UK (2018)

selected collections

- Dallas Museum of Art, Dallas, USA
- Nasher Museum of Art, Duke University, Durham, USA
- X Museum, Pequim, China

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