

## asuka anastacia ogawa melinha

nara roesler são paulo

opening march 23, 11am–3pm

exhibition march 23 – may 11, 2024



Asuka Anastacia Ogawa. *Listening*, 2024. [detail] Photo: Evan Walsh.

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.

#### asuka anastacia ogawa

In recent years, Ogawa has exhibited in solo shows such as *Pedra* (Blum, Los Angeles, USA, 2023), *Tamago* (Blum, Los Angeles, USA, 2022), *Feijão* (Half Gallery, New York, USA, 2019) and *Soup* (Henry Taylor's, Los Angeles, USA, 2017). She has also participated in group shows such as *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, Los Angeles, USA, 2020), *Early 21<sup>st</sup> Century Art* (Almine Rech Gallery, London, UK, 2018), and *Don't Eat Me* (Deli Gallery, New York, USA, 2018). Her work is included in the collections of the Dallas Museum of Art (Dallas, USA), the Nasher Museum of Art at Duke University (Durham, USA) and the X Museum (Beijing, China).

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#### nara roesler

Nara Roesler is a leading Brazilian contemporary art gallery, representing seminal Brazilian and international artists who emerged in the 1950s as well as preeminent mid-career and emerging artists who dialogue with the currents put forth by these historical figures. Founded by Nara Roesler in 1989, the gallery has consistently fomented curatorial practice while upholding the utmost quality in art production. This has actively been put into practice through a select and rigorous exhibitions program created in close collaboration with its artists; the implementation and fostering of the Roesler Curatorial Project, a platform for curatorial projects; and continued support to artists beyond the gallery space, working with institutions and curators in offsite shows. In 2012, the gallery doubled its São Paulo exhibition space, in 2014 it expanded to Rio, and in 2015 it opened in New York City, continuing its mission to provide the best platform for its artists to show their work.

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melinha

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avenida europa, 655

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#### exhibition

march 23 – may 11, 2024  
monday – friday 10am–7pm  
saturday, 11am–3pm

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