

VENUS OVER MANHATTAN

Press Release

ANA BENAROYA: SWEPT AWAY

April 8 – May 21, 2022

Opening: Friday, April 8th, 6:00 - 8:00 pm

Venus Over Manhattan

55 Great Jones Street

New York, NY 10012



(New York, NY) – **Venus Over Manhattan** is pleased to present **Swept Away**, an exhibition of new works by **Ana Benaroya**. The presentation will inaugurate the gallery's new downtown space, located at **55 Great Jones Street**. The exhibition comprises seven paintings and seven works on paper that depict women's bodies—the artist's central theme—considered through their relationship to water. **Swept Away** is Ana Benaroya's first solo exhibition with the gallery and will be on view from April 8th through May 21st.

Ana Benaroya's paintings depict substantial women whose extravagant musculatures gleefully upset traditional expectations of dainty femininity. Her work constructs a fresh female gaze that recasts women in dominant roles, endowing them with an assertive, idiosyncratic and frankly sexual presence. Referencing art historical and contemporary sources, Benaroya explores the dynamics of queer desire, in which bodies are on display for themselves and on their own terms. In compositions animated by complex networks of attraction, Benaroya makes visible forms of lesbian desire that are typically rendered latent or invisible.

Sense of place has played an important role in Benaroya's artistic project; she contextualizes the bodies in her work as "a form of escape" to "rewrite the world as I wish it to be." Thus, with the works in **Swept Away**, Benaroya considers water as a place, and

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includes imagery that mines relationships between bodies of women and of water. The artist writes:

“Water is a place—but also a place that cannot easily be defined unless you start to place it in the context of history, art history, and contemporary culture. For women, I feel it has been an especially fraught place, where our bodies have been on display for judgement and consumption, but also a place for rebirth and a symbol of purity.”

Benaroya’s highly particular visual language is executed with offbeat, charged, and sometimes macabre color juxtapositions that dominate her compositions and balance her subjects’ vigor and allure. The intense, pulsating palette highlights the formal connections between water and women’s bodies, flowing through the undulating shapes of bodies and hair in each work, and showing that women “can be breathtaking or frightening and endlessly mutable as a body of water.”

ABOUT THE ARTIST

Ana Benaroya (b. 1986, New York City, NY) lives and works in Jersey City. She holds a BFA from the Maryland Institute College of Art (MICA), and an MFA from the Yale University School of Art. Benaroya’s work has been the subject of numerous solo presentations,

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including recent exhibitions at Carl Kostyal, London; Ross + Kramer Gallery, New York; Postmasters Gallery, New York; and the Masur Museum, Monroe, Louisiana. Her work features frequently in major group exhibitions both stateside and abroad, including recent presentations at Almine Rech, Paris; Allouche-Benias Gallery, Athens; and the International Print Center, New York. Benaroya's work is held in the permanent collections of many public institutions, including the Institute of Contemporary Art, Miami; the High Museum of Art, Atlanta, the Pérez Art Museum, Miami; and Zuzeum Art Center, Riga, among others.

For further information about the exhibition and availability, please contact the gallery at info@venusovermanhattan.com

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55 Great Jones Street
New York, NY 10012

GALLERY HOURS

Tuesday – Saturday
10:00 am – 6:00 pm

PRESS CONTACT

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IMAGE CREDITS

There Were Never Such Devoted Sisters, 2021.
Spray paint, acrylic paint, and oil paint on canvas; 40 x 47 in (101.6 x 119.4 cm)
The Breaststroke, 2021. Marker and India ink on archival Bristol board; 15 x 20 in (38.1 x 50.8 cm)
Venus with a Mirror, 2021. Marker and India ink on archival Bristol board; 20 x 30 in (50.8 x 76.2 cm)

All images of works by Ana Benaroya, courtesy the artist and Venus Over Manhattan, New York.