

# VENUS OVER MANHATTAN

Press Release

## **ANASTASIA BAY: MAESTRA LACRYMAE ACTE V**

Meridians at Art Basel Miami Beach  
December 4 - 8, 2024  
Stand M17

Miami Beach Convention Center  
1901 Convention Center Drive  
Miami Beach, FL 33139



(Miami, FL) – For the **Meridians Sector** of the 2024 edition of **Art Basel Miami Beach**, **Venus Over Manhattan** is delighted to present a multidimensional installation by Paris-born, Brussels-based artist **Anastasia Bay**, titled **Maestra Lacrymae Acte V**. This ambitious new work, created specifically for Art Basel, represents an evolution and continuation of Bay's recent solo exhibition *Maestra Lacrymae*, which fused painting, opera, and historical myth. Featuring three monumentally scaled works on canvas and a giant Harlequin puppet, *Maestra Lacrymae Acte V* will be on view from **December 4 – 8** at **Stand M17** at the **Miami Beach Convention Center**.

## VENUS OVER MANHATTAN



Bay's installation features a suite of three large paintings on uniquely shaped panels and a monumental Harlequin puppet, a character first introduced and explored in *Maestra Lacrymae*. Bay's three large paintings depict vibrant, bustling crowds engaged in various actions—from brandishing masks to pointing spears—in a manner that is both collective and individuated. The color palette incorporates earthier tones, grounding the scenes in a naturalistic and somber context.

The panels are arranged on the wall behind a sculpture, creating an architectural volume where the negative spaces between the paintings form column-like shapes. The rhythmic composition both unites and separates the paintings. At the center of this architectural volume rests a larger-than-life, monumentally scaled puppet of the Harlequin, one of five key characters from *Maestra Lacrymae*. This figure, nearly five meters long, lies in repose. The scale references the giant puppets on stilts commonly seen in festivals like the Nord Carnival in Belgium, where they tower over crowds, much as they do in Bay's paintings. With its complex, multifaceted nature, the Harlequin symbolizes rebellion, truth-speaking, and the interplay of good and evil. For Bay, the character connects historical myth and contemporary identity, embodying themes of transformation and resistance.

Bay conceived *Maestra Lacrymae* as an opera—complete with music, costumes, and a libretto—that wove together various modes of working to assemble a complete vision. Central to the opera were five characters: Golem, Artemis, Dibutades, Penelope, and the Harlequin, to whom

## VENUS OVER MANHATTAN

Bay has returned for Meridians. A significant reference point that Bay continues to draw upon is James Ensor's "Christ's Entry into Brussels in 1889," which captures the chaotic and vibrant nature of a carnival procession. Bay's paintings, echoing this work, suggest a massive tide of change and the viewer's inescapable involvement in it. The panels feature distorted human figures in a riotous yet benevolent parade, blurring the interpretations of the scene as a protest or a celebration.

### ABOUT ANASTASIA BAY

Anastasia Bay (b. 1988, Paris, France) creates paintings that draw upon mythological and art historical sources, blending ancient figurative traditions with contemporary culture. Her works articulate a universally resonant visual language that is striking and cross-culturally rich. Through her unique perspective, Bay transforms this shared visual history into an artistic idiom that feels both immediate and timeless, often set against opaque, minimalistic backgrounds.

*Maestra Lacrymae*, her most ambitious exhibition project to date, was conceived as an opera—complete with music, costumes, and a libretto—that combined various artistic modes to present a unified vision. Central to the project were five key characters: Golem, Artemis, Dibatades, Penelope, and the Harlequin, archetypal characters to whom she returns frequently in her painting and sculpture.

A graduate of the École Nationale Supérieure des Beaux-Arts in Paris (2012), Bay's recent exhibitions include *The Stumbler's Parade*, Venus Over Manhattan, New York; *Maestra Lacrymae*, Sorry We're Closed, Brussels; *The Awakening of the Cariatids*, Galerie Derouillon, Paris; *Allez Allez*, Centre Wallonie Bruxelles, Paris; *LEAF*, Fondation Boghossian, Villa Empain, Brussels; *One Hundred Ghost Stories*, Sorry We're Closed, Brussels; and *Zillions Forefathers*, The White House Gallery, Lovenjoel. Bay's work can be found in the permanent collection of numerous public institutions, including the Musée d'Art Moderne de la Ville de Paris; Fondation Lafayette Anticipations / Guillaume Houzé, Paris; ICA Miami; X Museum, Beijing; and Zuzeum, Riga.

### ABOUT VENUS OVER MANHATTAN

Venus Over Manhattan is dedicated to illuminating the work of a diverse range of historical and contemporary artists through dynamic rotating exhibitions and scholarly publications. Since it was founded by Adam Lindemann in 2012, the gallery has been responsible for revitalizing and establishing commercial, scholarly, and public interest for artists such as Peter Saul, Richard Mayhew, and Joan Brown. Venus Over Manhattan operates from two locations on Great Jones Street and its distinct exhibitions program, which has recently featured works by Claude Lawrence, Peter Saul, Richard Mayhew, Chéri Samba, Keiichi Tanaami, and Joan Brown, attracts a

## VENUS OVER MANHATTAN

broad spectrum of collectors, curators, writers, and arts enthusiasts. As art world trends continue to shift, Venus Over Manhattan remains steadfast in its focus on the discovery of artists across generations, geographies, and cultures and to expanding the depth of artists celebrated across global institutions, by audiences, and within the art market.

For additional information about the presentation and availability,, please contact the gallery at [info@venusovermanhattan.com](mailto:info@venusovermanhattan.com)

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### IMAGE CREDITS

Rendering of Anastasia Bay, *Maestra Lacrymae Acte V*, 2024. Comprising: *Maestra Lacrymae Acte V Set 1*, 2024; *Maestra Lacrymae Acte V Set 2*, 2024; *Maestra Lacrymae Acte V Set 3*, 2024. Each: Acrylic and pastel on canvas; 102 ¼ × 137 ¾ in (260 × 350 cm). *Maestra Lacrymae, De Reuze Arlequin*, 2024. Mixed media, wood, pastel, and acrylic on cotton; 52 ⅜ × 29 ½ × 189 in (133 × 75 × 480 cm).

Images of all works by Anastasia Bay: courtesy the artist and Venus Over Manhattan, New York.