

# B L U M

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**Agata Słowak and Aleksandra Waliszewska**  
***A Marriage of Heaven and Hell***  
Curated by Alison M. Gingeras

**BLUM Tokyo**  
**March 23–May 2, 2024**  
**Opening Reception: Saturday, March 23, 5–7pm**



Agata Słowak, *Your Own Personal* (detail), 2023



Aleksandra Waliszewska, *Untitled*, 2023

“Without contraries is no progression. Attraction and repulsion, reason and energy, love and hate, are necessary to human existence.”

—William Blake, *The Marriage of Heaven and Hell* (1790)

Tokyo, Japan, February 7, 2024—BLUM Tokyo is pleased to announce its debut exhibition with Agata Słowak and Aleksandra Waliszewska, *A Marriage of Heaven and Hell*. Opening on March 23, 2024, it will be both artists’ first exhibition in Asia and has been organized by curator Alison M. Gingeras.

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Agata Słowak, *Autoportret z jakimś ścierwem* / *Autoportrait with Some Carcass*, 2023

Riffing on the title of William Blake’s visionary poem, this exhibition presents a metaphorical “marriage” between the work of two artists whose paintings are steeped in apocalyptic imagery and conjure radical evocations of the human condition. Echoing Blake’s questioning of received ideas about the opposition of good and evil and the extolling of the vital interconnectedness of both forces, Słowak and Waliszewska create transgressive visual narrations that foreground strong female protagonists who navigate highly symbolic scenarios. Their heroines are almost always toggled between conflicting pulsions—sex and death, love and anxiety, repulsion and desire—as if trapped in some amoral fairytale. Animals and monsters often populate their tableaux, taking on anthropomorphic qualities rooted in Old Master iconographies, including the vivid engravings that Blake himself made to illustrate his verse.

Despite hailing from different generations, both artists who live and work in Warsaw base their practice on their art historical erudition as well as a deep commitment to figurative painting and traditional techniques. The Tokyo exhibition will include a selection of new oil paintings by both artists as well as a suite of gouache-on-paper works by Waliszewska.



Aleksandra Waliszewska, *Untitled*, 2023

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## About BLUM

BLUM represents more than sixty artists and estates from sixteen countries worldwide, nurturing a diverse roster of artists at all stages of their practices with a range of global perspectives. Originally opened as Blum & Poe in Santa Monica in 1994, the gallery has been a pioneer in its early commitment to Los Angeles as an international arts capital.

The gallery has been acclaimed for its groundbreaking work in championing international artists of postwar and contemporary movements, such as CoBrA, Dansaekhwa, Mono-ha, and Superflat, and for organizing museum-caliber solo presentations and historical survey exhibitions across its spaces in Los Angeles, Tokyo, and New York. Often partnering with celebrated curators and scholars such as Cecilia Alemani, Alison M. Gingeras, Sofia Gotti, Joan Kee, and Mika Yoshitake, the gallery has produced large-scale exhibitions focusing on the Japanese Mono-ha school (2012); the Korean Dansaekhwa monochrome painters (2014); the European postwar movement CoBrA (2015); Japanese art of the 1980s and 1990s (2019); a rereading of Brazilian Modernism (2019); a revisionist take on the 1959 MoMA exhibition, *New Images of Man* (2020); and a survey of portraiture through a democratic and humanist lens (2023); among others.

BLUM's wide-reaching program includes exhibitions, lectures, performance series, screenings, video series, and an annual art book fair at its base in Los Angeles. BLUM Books, the gallery's publishing division, democratically circulates its program through original scholarship and accessible media ranging from academic monographs, audio series, magazines, to artists' books.

Across the three global locations, BLUM prioritizes environmental and community stewardship in all operations. In 2015, it was certified as an Arts:Earth Partnership (AEP) green art gallery in Los Angeles and consequently became one of the first green certified galleries in the United States. The gallery is also a member of the Gallery Climate Coalition, which works to facilitate a more sustainable commercial art world and reduce the industry's collective carbon footprint. BLUM is committed to fostering inclusive and equitable communities both in its physical and online spaces and believes that everybody should have equal access to creating and engaging with contemporary art.

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