

JULIA BELIAEVA

SIREN AND SIRENS

KÖNIG TELEGRAPHENAMT | MONBIJOUSTRASSE
1 MAY – 31 MAY 2024

KÖNIG TELEGRAPHENAMT is pleased to present SIREN AND SIRENS, a solo exhibition by Ukrainian artist Julia Beliaeva. It is her first show with the gallery and will present an extensive body of work reflecting on the gruesome reality of war through the lens of classical mythology and folktales.

For the duration of the exhibition, KÖNIG TELEGRAPHENAMT will resemble the sculpture halls of classical museums: strong, dignified bodies captured for eternity in the tremendous beauty of either triumph or torment. However, don't be deceived, this resemblance is a trick. While the exquisite figures of antiquity were crafted to radiate pure beauty, and thus be admired in silent awe, Beliaeva's sculptures serve a different purpose. Echoing their historical predecessors, they are not here to be merely gazed upon; they are here to lure you into listening to songs that are anything but comforting.

The allure of a graceful, resting body may recall the Roman marble of Hermaphroditus, serenely asleep, yet in Beliaeva's work, it sings of restlessness—the fear of never waking up. Through figures and narratives that feel intimately familiar, Beliaeva channels the weight of reality. Do we recognize Saint Sebastian, his body arched in near defeat, still finding the strength to condemn the emperor? Does the mermaid, betrayed and humiliated, have the right to be angry? Does she deserve justice, or is she simply destined for endless punishment without cause? How did the Siren's song, a symbol of allure and mystery, become a harbinger of danger?

This exhibition speaks of injustice, the kind that twists fate and breeds monsters, or wounds that never fully heal. It portrays the goddesses who stand at the crossroads of destruction, sacrifice, and creation, figures who embody both power and vulnerability. Through these narratives, the show reflects on how myths and folklore serve as mirrors to present-day struggles, transforming timeless stories into unsettling commentaries on resistance. It reminds us that even the promise of peace can betray us, becoming something unrecognizable, something menacing, like a flock of mad birds circling overhead, turning the vast, open sky into just another source of fear.

KÖNIG TELEGRAPHENAMT

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OPENING TIMES
Thursday – Sunday 11 am – 6 pm
and by appointment

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