



Alexandra Zarins, *Disagio's*, 2023. Oil on canvas, 170 cm x 190 cm.
Courtesy of the Artist and Elizabeth Xi Bauer Gallery, London.

Elizabeth Xi Bauer Presents:
Alexandra Zarins
Caught in the act of being ourselves

12th April – 11th May 2024
Private View: 11th April 2024

Elizabeth Xi Bauer is proud to announce **Alexandra Zarins'** debut solo exhibition, *Caught in the act of being ourselves*. The body of work on display showcases Zarins' evolving exploration into concepts surrounding intimacy, social interactions, personal closeness, and the emotional turbulence tethered within these moments. On large canvases, the artist's compositional techniques immerse the viewer within the paintings, calling the observer to become submerged as an active participant within the scenes.

Working from her imagination and lived experiences, Zarins conjures surreal moments brimming with pronounced intimacy. Composing the interplay between closeness with oneself and others, her works delve into nuanced and dynamic emotions. The apparent comfort and tranquillity are subverted by challenges such as unsettling critical over-analytical thoughts and self-consciousness. Zarins' use of a rich vivid colour palette with weighted underlayers of paint alludes to the manifestation of these conflicts. Something inviting on the surface has undertones of something more sinister creeping in. The artist often presents a blend of unconventional viewpoints which serve to amplify the sense of intimacy. Zarins explains, 'Pushing the viewpoint right up into the viewer's space—not allowing any release from the subject that I'm presenting—is an attempt to fully realise that sense of closeness.'

Elizabeth Xi Bauer previously exhibited Zarins' work in the group exhibitions *Rolling with the Homies* (February 2023) and *The moon between my teeth* (June 2023). In the latter exhibition, the artist's work *Disagio's* (2023), an Italian word for discomfort, depicts a crowded party scene from a top-down perspective, immersing the viewer among tightly packed bodies evoking a sense of claustrophobia. The composition compels both viewers and subjects to scrutinise their own hands and limbs from a hyper-critical and hyper-self-aware point of view.

In the upcoming exhibition, a diptych, *Wish you were here x*, depicts a social gathering, a party, where Zarins explores the anxiety around a text message being sent. The diptych format allows the artist to explore the subtle differences between what the receiver of the text message perceives and what the sender feels. Moreover, we see the idealised perception of the social scene by someone who is not there versus the internal anguish within the sender, highlighting the loss of depth in communication. 'They will not—cannot—know how you agonised over whether to send that message. Nor how isolated you might be feeling, despite the surrounding bedlam,' explains Zarins.

In another new work, a triptych, Zarins pushes the boundaries of her practice further. For this piece, the artist painted much of the work with the canvases flat on the ground, allowing her to work in a looser manner and enabling layers to build up quickly. Despite its large scale, the piece intentionally lacks information by way of detail or description. Rather, Zarins has steadily built the paint up, creating an intriguing variety in texture beneath the image. The large-scale format gives the artist the freedom to work with life-size figures across the crowd scene enhancing the relatability with the viewer's own body. 'The figures being life-size allows the viewer to "get inside" the painting more easily', the artist explains.

The exhibition will be curated by Maria do Carmo M. P. de Pontes.

Notes to Editors

Alexandra Zarins (born 1993, London, UK) lives and works in London.

Zarins studied Fine Art at the University of Edinburgh before her passion for portraiture drew her to Florence and the Charles H. Cecil studios. In 2021, the artist completed her MFA in Painting at the New York Academy of Art.

This year, Elizabeth Xi Bauer exhibited works by Alexandra Zarins in the 2024 edition of London Art Fair. In 2023, Elizabeth Xi Bauer exhibited Zarins' work in the group exhibition *Rolling with the Homies*. The same year, Elizabeth Xi Bauer presented *The moon between my teeth*, an exhibition of new works by Gokula Stoffel and Alexandra Zarins.

In 2021, her works were presented at Miart International Art Fair, Milan, Italy, by Galleria Mimmo Scognamiglio. In 2020 and 2021, Zarins' artwork was displayed and auctioned during The New York Academy of Art's annual *Take Home a Nude* event at the Tribeca Ball. This auction, conducted in collaboration with Sotheby's and The New York Academy of Art, raises funds for public programming and scholarships at the Academy, contributing to the support of the next generation of artists.

In 2019, Zarins' works were exhibited as part of The Moncrieff-Bray Summer Show at Moncrieff-Bray Gallery, Egdean, UK. Zarins' work is in the collection of The Royal Geographical Society, London, as well as private collections.

Elizabeth Xi Bauer presents *Alexandra Zarins: Caught in the act of being ourselves*, which will run from 12th April – 11th May 2024, open Wednesday through to Saturday, 12 – 6 pm or by appointment. A Private View will be held on 11th April 2024, 6 – 8 pm in the presence of the artist. The artist will be available for interviews.

Press contact: Paige Ashley paige@lizxib.com
Address: Fuel Tank, 8-12 Creekside, London, SE8 3DX

Image credit: Alexandra Zarins, *Disagio's*, 2023. Oil on canvas, 170 cm x 190 cm. Courtesy of the Artist and Elizabeth Xi Bauer Gallery, London.