

# FOSCA

## Dear Moon...

Critical essay by Flavia Matitti

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30 May — 20 July 2024

*Dear Moon, I know that you can speak  
and answer questions like a human being,  
for I have heard so  
from many of the poets.*

GIACOMO LEOPARDI, "Operette morali", 1824  
Translation by Charles Edwardes (1882)

**Maja Arte Contemporanea** is delighted to present the gallery's first collaboration with the artist **Fosca**. Opening **Thursday May 30 2024** at 6 pm in **via di Monserrato 30 (Rome)**, the exhibition is entitled "**Cara Luna...**" ("Dear Moon...").

Born to a Venetian Mother and a Dutch Father, Fosca is returning to Italy after her debut exhibit at the Correr Museum in Venice in 2015. The exhibition showcases a previously **unseen body of works** on which she has been working since 2018.

**Eleven paintings and thirteen drawings** carry the viewer along an imaginative journey: moving from constellation to constellation by following a thread whose unravelling traces the stars' paths, the viewer explores an **imaginary map of the stars**, enlivened by **anthropomorphic figures** portraying **ancient myths**. In reinventing these, the artist gives them new life by imbuing them with her original interpretation, culminating, at times, in an unusual happy ending.

"There's a memory I carry with me wherever I go; it comes from a time when I spent months living at sea when the rocking of the waves became my territory, my source of balance. One night, while we were sleeping at anchor, I lay down to watch the sky; carefree, I was surprised when I caught the stars moving above me, as if someone were rocking the celestial sphere. I was still; the sky was moving. I did not try to identify the constellations, and yet I found mine, as if my memory were projected upon the shards of light. Thus I began to draw a **diary**, so as to sew together fragments of memory and feelings. **Each of these works is a letter to the night sky**, to the celestial vault."

As **Flavia Matitti** writes in her critical essay published in the exhibition catalogue: "These are the words with which Fosca retraces the experience which, a few years after that night, led her to create a cycle of works **dedicated to the constellations**. The eleven paintings and the series of drawings in the cycle are here on display for the first time; they are the fruit of intense,



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passionate, and meticulous work. Fosca began the cycle six years ago, in 2018, and is still in full creative thrust. As she states herself, the theme emerged as a kind of epiphany she had while she was observing the firmament from a boat. It is, perhaps, for this reason that in looking at her starry skies one often has the impression of being before a **vast sea crested with waves**, a visionary universe belonging to the realm of dreams and to the unconscious.

Indeed, Fosca's fascination with the stars does not consist in the mere retracing of astronomical phenomena or traditional astrological figures; rather, it uses the celestial vault as a backdrop (in this, she is perhaps inspired by her maternal grandfather, a set designer, one might wonder) on which hopes, memories, fears, dreams, and desires can be projected. Fosca's constellations are charged with **autobiographical echoes** and, as such, can be considered psychographs of her states of mind. Her unique personifications of celestial bodies are symbolic images that delicately and ironically allude to lived experiences. At the same time, however, the stars lead into an alternative dimension to reality. This is an occult dimension, one which invites dreams and introspection, yielding an uncovering of the self and of a path to its actualization.

And is this not, after all, what humankind has done since time immemorial: observed the starry sky to find within it a direction and thus divine the future? Across the hemispheres, stars and planets have morphed into gods and heroes, **becoming the protagonists of myths and legends**. In different places and across cultures, the constellations have changed names and shapes, continually metamorphosing in the unravelling of time.

[...] These works reflect tremendous technical prowess and a profound knowledge of mythology, as well as Fosca's inexhaustible imagination. In this light, it is always delightful to listen to her narrate the tales of her characters. The lesson that ultimately emerges from this cluster of stories and celestial beings, who stand proud as fluid and wonderfully queer creatures, is to continue to hope and wonder. The stars are the light dream that paves the way."

## ABOUT THE ARTIST

Born to a Venetian mother and a Dutch father, Fosca studied visual arts in Paris. She attended at the Met de Penninghen Academy for five years, while she simultaneously attended anatomy courses at the Fine Arts Academy. She then moved to Venice where she trained at Bottega del Tintoretto for two years, learning traditional engraving techniques. She currently lives between Paris and Rio de Janeiro.

### Exhibitions

2014 – *The Fantastic World of Fosca*, Marciana National Library, Venice [Solo show]

2015 – Venice Biennale, Museo Correr, Venice [Solo show]

2016 – *Roberto Cuoghi. Perla Pollina*, Centre d'Art Contemporain, Geneva

2017 – *Fauna*, Fabrica Behiring, Rio de Janeiro

2018 – *Animal Sapiens*, Casa Voa, Rio de Janeiro [Solo show]

2019 – ArtRio, Instituto Vida Livre, Rio de Janeiro

2020 – *Chama de Baleia*, Garimporio, Rio de Janeiro [Solo show]

2021 – *Casa Cor 30 anos*, Palacete Brando Barbosa, Rio de Janeiro

2023 – ArtRio, Instituto Vida Livre, Rio de Janeiro

2023 – *Revoada*, ArtRio, Casa Voa, Rio de Janeiro