

KALLISTÉ

NAZANIN POUYANDEH

Nazanin Pouyandeh

Born in 1981 in Téhéran
Lives and works in Paris

exhibition

From 6th November 2022
to 6th January 2023

opening

Sunday 6th November
2pm-6pm
Komunuma openings

galerie Sator Komunuma

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opening hours

Wednesday-Saturday
10am-6pm

and by appointment

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Nazanin Pouyandeh's new exhibition is largely based on a residency that the artist participated in in Corsica (Casell'arte Fabrica Culturale, in the village of Venaco) that had a profound effect on her.

Firstly, because of the stunning landscapes in which the models pose. She was literally hypnotised by nature in the same way that we sometimes stop in front of an old painting; this feeling usually catches us when we are not expecting it at all. In *L'Étang de Diane*, Pouyandeh is seen sitting between two paintings of two women in vines overlooking a stretch of water. They are successively clothed and naked in the same setting. Like Hamlet, they each hold up a skull. The artist seems torn, hesitating between one version and the other, which have led to numerous details and tableaux hanging on the wall. Indeed, some of the paintings in this exhibition seem to stem from this, such as these two female faces seen against the light. The idea of female confrontation or sisterhood (it is not always clear whether it is a question of tension or of friendship) is quite present, especially



in *La Mort de Cléopâtre*, painted after a work by Guido Cagnacci. In Pouyandeh's painting, the Egyptian queen echoes another sleeping beauty in *Le Repos*. Her body is covered in transparent silk, her heavy sleep inspired by a work by Ilya Repine.

Corsica is also present through the depiction of strange ceremonies, worthy of Raymond Roussel's *Impressions d'Afrique*. In *L'Alliance*, two women and a man start a round around a curious stone ring, which we do not know if it is an ancient sheepfold oculus or a megalithic vestige. In *Venaco*, all the participants in the residence pose for an obscure purification rite. In general, religious painting is never far away, as can be seen in the *Agonie dans le Jardin des oliviers*. For Pouyandeh, painting is almost a sacred thing. Resurrection re-enacts the eponymous fresco by Piero della Francesca, but always in an atheistic manner, which increases the dimension of strangeness by widening the gap between the religious and the pagan. *Kallisté* (the most beautiful) is the name the Greeks would have given to Corsica during their maritime incursions into the Mediterranean basin. All the paintings in this exhibition, from Cleopatra to Tuscan art, evoke this ancient Mediterranean culture. *Kallisté* is still Corsica, a symbolic goddess, but also painting, and one can imagine that the women painted by Pouyandeh are very beautiful, all Venuses, not from glossy magazines, but strong women who lead the boat under a burning sun.



(p1) *LE REPOS* - oil on canvas, 92 x 73 cm, 2022 © Grégory Copitet

(p2) *LA MORT DE CLÉOPATRE* - oil on canvas, 73 x 92 cm, 2022 © Grégory Copitet