



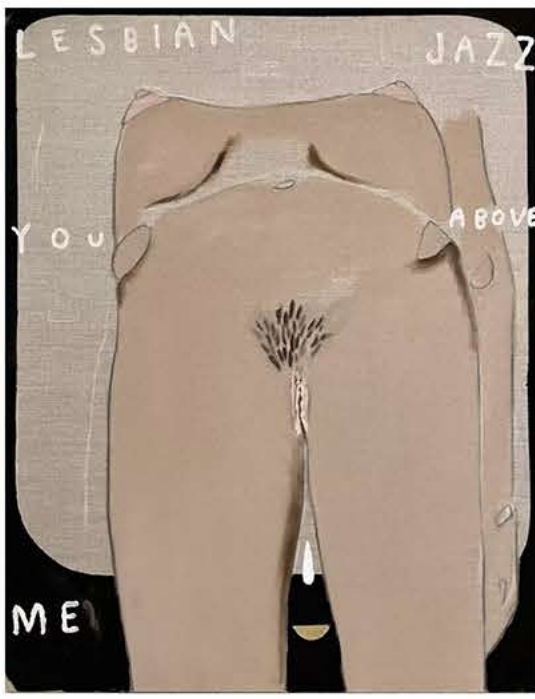
# Art Anouk Lamm Anouk's Sensual, Meditative Paintings Transcend Biography

Nadine Khalil

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Portrait of Anouk Lamm Anouk in their studio. Photo by Elsa Okazaki. Courtesy of Anouk Lamm Anouk



Anouk Lamm Anouk, *Lesbian Jazz N° 18*, 2022. Courtesy of the artist and Patricia Low Contemporary.

Anouk Lamm Anouk can often be found sporting sleek nightwear with their Yorkshire terrier, Sirius Grace Anouk, perched tenderly in their arms. "Ever since I was younger, I always felt more comfortable communicating with animals," said the 29-year-old Austrian artist. "They are pure in their intentions." Outlines of lambs, cats, and teddy bears are the main subjects of Anouk's early monochrome works on paper, an aesthetic that sparked the interest of institutions such as M+ in Hong Kong. "I understand now that it was connected to my autism and the need for a calm environment," added Anouk, who was diagnosed with the neurological and developmental disorder earlier this year.

At Patricia Low Contemporary—the Gstaad-based gallery where Anouk's solo exhibition "Lesbian Jazz: Meditating in the Alps" is on view through October 14th—Anouk spoke with Artsy about their art practice and gender fluidity. They first explored their nonbinary identity in 2014 through photographic self-portraits that they occasionally altered, a form Anouk has since completely moved away from. "My portraits helped me to cope because I had the experience as a girl and a woman in society, but I never felt like one," Anouk said. "When I could come into my true body, I realized I didn't need to take pictures anymore." With a hysterectomy already completed and a mastectomy planned, Anouk is getting closer to presenting outwardly the way they feel inside.



Anouk Lamm Anouk, *Lesbian Jazz N° 17*, 2022. Courtesy of the artist and Patricia Low Contemporary.



Anouk Lamm Anouk, *Lesbian Jazz N° 25*, 2022. Courtesy of the artist and Patricia Low Contemporary.

It is this subtle, internal sense of being that Anouk instinctively projects in their work, especially in the "Lesbian Jazz" series (2019–present), where feminine, hairless bodies are rendered in delicate lines, their powdery pink nipples and genitalia exposed in various states of arousal. A closer look, however, reveals undefined bodies, such as a headless woman or an erotically positioned couple with incomplete facial features. Painted on raw linen, which adds to the work's unfinished feeling, the figures are textural in quality.

Anouk has been garnering increased attention in Austria in the past few years. They were awarded the 2021 Strabag Artaward International, and for their subsequent exhibition, "Grace and Grave are only one Letter Apart," Anouk created a life-size horse out of canvas and a pair of interlocking human-bear hybrids out of shiny, quilted fabric. Although soft sculptures are part of Anouk's practice, their show at Gstaad directs more attention to the space within the work rather than how viewers move around it.



Portrait of Anouk Lamm Anouk in their studio. Photo by Léa Marijanovic. Courtesy of Anouk Lamm Anouk.



Anouk Lamm Anouk, *post/pre N° 19*, 2022. Courtesy of the artist and Patricia Low Contemporary.

In the abstract series "post/pre" (2019–present), there are empty circles and semi-circles, and elongated columns that trail off and disappear. "I wanted to create a lot with minimal lines," Anouk explained. "I found that the work becomes more complex that way." Sometimes, Anouk will incorporate a gold-filled sun, but predominantly, they intimate a sense of solidity within the void, a spherical oneness that contrasts with gestural clouds, shadows, and watery strokes. There is an element of dreamy, meditative transcendence.

"Abstraction was always there with the emptiness in everything that I don't show," Anouk said. "One day, I had this image of light and fog that I wanted to create on canvas, which became my portal into the world of abstraction." While these thick, curvilinear lines contrast with the fainter evocations of Anouk's figurative work, there is evidence of the abstract ethos of "post/pre" in the shadowy figures, halos, and chalky white globes of "Lesbian Jazz." The abstraction in the latter series might arise from a sense of restraint against making art out of their life. Anouk lives with their wife of two years and studio manager, Marleen Roubik, and the artist's work has been mistaken to be about the nature of this relationship.



Anouk Lamm Anouk, *Lesbian Jazz N° 27*, 2022. Courtesy of the artist and Patricia Low Contemporary.



Portrait of Anouk Lamm Anouk at work in their studio. Photo by Léa Marijanovic. Courtesy of Anouk Lamm Anouk.

"Post/pre" leaves more to the viewer's imagination, while the "Lesbian Jazz" series, through its title, narrows in on notions of lesbian desire. Even though the latter is positioned within the framework of jazz as a fluid, improvisational structure, the series seems to detract from alternative interpretations of eroticism. "I thought about nudes and lesbian identities, and from there, I started to combine and rearrange," the artist said. "It's freestyle in the sense that you don't know what's going to happen next." Through these modular compositions, Anouk complicates expressions of corporeal desire. But any jazz-driven visual rhythms seem barely perceptible, pointing attention to the fact that naming the form—in this case, jazz—doesn't make it entirely visible.

Still, the subject of the work sells. The paintings in "Lesbian Jazz: Meditating in the Alps" have already sold out—not bad for a debut in an Alpine environment where the culture of art collecting is more focused on blue-chip artists and a couple of mega-galleries, namely Hauser & Wirth and Gagosian, the latter of which just opened their Gstaad outpost earlier this year. With another solo exhibition already scheduled for 2023 at Berlin's powerhouse König Galerie, Anouk and their work are destined to go even further. ■

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