

# NATALIE FRANK

## THE RAVEN AND THE LION TAMER

8 JUNE - 22 JULY 2023  
520 WEST 21ST STREET

**NEW YORK – MILES McENERY GALLERY** is pleased to present *The Raven And The Lion Tamer*, an exhibition of paintings and drawings by Natalie Frank, on view 8 June through 22 July 2023 at 520 West 21st Street. Accompanying the exhibition is a fully illustrated digital catalogue featuring an essay by Jonathan Rider, Director of FLAG Art Foundation. The exhibition brings together two series by the artist that examine women as conjurors, in the form of lion tamers, and as bodies that have been conjured in Edgar Allan Poe's tale of lost love.

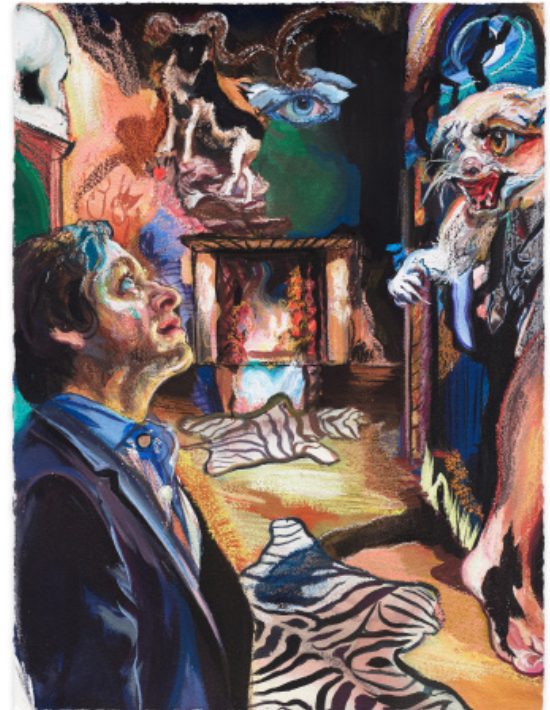
*The Raven* consists of seven gouache and pastel chalk drawings created for a new artist book with Arion Press on the collected works of Edgar Allan Poe. Frank's drawings center on Lenore, the narrator's departed inamorata, for the first time in history. Lenore appears across the dreamscapes in many forms—from saturated goddess to anthropomorphic raven—all lending themselves towards the narrator's hallucinatory grapple with swelling grief and love lost.

Frank's drawings are shown atop an expansive wall vinyl that the artist created in collaboration with designer Marian Bantjes and Flavorpaper. Expanding drawing through space continues Frank's work in performance design—most recently realized through the opera *Jarful of Bees* (PBS), and *Grimm's Tales*, a newly commissioned ballet with Ballet Austin, for which Frank served as Artistic Director.

The publication with Arion Press marks Frank's sixth book on literature, following her prior drawings based on the unsanitized Grimm's Tales; "The Sorcerer's Apprentice;" *Story of O*; the tales of Madame d'Aulnoy; and the stories of E.T.A. Hoffman. Her recent survey of drawings at the Kemper Museum of Art presented works from these literary suites.

Presented in tandem with Frank's *The Raven* drawings, *The Lion Tamer* series depict theatrical scenes of women and lions. Rendered in mixed media, Frank turns the typical man-versus-beast complex on its head in that their female heroines control docile cats. Lions submissively slumber in the background, gaze into the eyes of the tamer, and lick the cheeks of their counterpart. Yet, despite their blasé dispositions, one cannot shake the lingering fear that their innate nature will overpower.

"*The Raven* and *Lion Tamers* series explore the possibilities of losing and commanding control," writes Rider, "Operating within tense psychological spaces—a mourner's chamber or a ring at the center of a circus—Frank's fantastical images both complicate and exaggerate already heightened emotional states and circumstances... What Frank brings to light through these bodies of work is the glory and tumult, the messiness and complex vulnerability of attempting to maintain the illusion of control."



**NATALIE FRANK** (b. 1980 in Austin, TX) received her Master of Fine Arts in 2006 from Columbia University, New York, NY and her Bachelor of Arts in 2002 from Yale University, New Haven, CT. In 2004, Frank was awarded a Fulbright Scholarship to the National Academy of Fine Art, Oslo, Norway.

Frank has been the subject of recent solo exhibitions at the Kemper Museum of Contemporary Art, Kansas City, MO; Brattleboro Museum & Art Center, Brattleboro, VT; Madison Museum of Contemporary Art, Madison, WI; Salon 94, New York, NY; Lyles & King, New York, NY; Half Gallery, New York, NY; Lora Reynolds Gallery, Austin, TX; Rhona Hoffman Gallery, Chicago, IL; University of Kentucky Art Museum, Lexington, KY; ACME., Los Angeles, CA; Galleria Marie-Laure Fleisch, Rome, Italy; and the Blanton Museum of Art, University of Texas, Austin, TX.

She has been included in group exhibitions at numerous international institutions including the Bowdoin College Museum of Art, Brunswick, ME; The Corcoran, Washington, D.C.; FLAG Art Foundation, New York, NY; London Museum of Design, London, United Kingdom; The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, NY; Modern Art Museum of Fort Worth, Fort Worth, TX; National Academy Museum, New York, NY; New York Academy of Art, New York, NY; Wellin Museum of Art, Hamilton College, Clinton, NY; Tang Teaching Museum, Saratoga Springs, NY; Weatherspoon Art Museum, Greensboro, NC; and the Yale University Art Gallery, New Haven, CT, among others.

Her work may be found in the collections of the Art Institute of Chicago, Chicago, IL; Blanton Museum of Art, University of Texas, Austin, TX; Bowdoin College Museum of Art, Brunswick, ME; Brooklyn Museum, Brooklyn, NY; The Bunker, Beth Rudin DeWoody Collection, Palm Beach, FL; Everson Museum of Art, Syracuse, NY; Tang Teaching Museum, Saratoga Springs, NY; Kemper Art Museum, St. Louis, MO; Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts, Philadelphia, PA; Weatherspoon Art Museum, Greensboro, NC; Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, NY; Williams College Museum of Art, Williamstown, MA; the Yale University Art Gallery, New Haven, CT, and elsewhere.

The artist lives and works in Brooklyn, NY.

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Image: *Raven II*, 2022, Gouache and chalk pastel on paper, 30 x 22 inches, 76.2 x 55.9 cm