

Anna Navasardian: Black and White

February 20—March 22, 2014

Claire Oliver Gallery is proud to announce *Black and White*, the premier solo exhibition with the gallery for Anna Navasardian. With tongue firmly planted in cheek, the title makes reference to the complexity of the human condition. The Artist's signature style portraits explore life's small moments, looking to expose to the world that which we wish to hide from view. Poking and prodding, the Artist strives to communicate the intangibles: the depths of intimacy and the basic human desire for connection with another. Fear, pain, grief, love, longing - all are constants in our lives. Navasardian lays bare the complexities of human emotion, on the canvas, for all to see.



Nude II
acrylic and charcoal on canvas
60 x 48 in. | 2014

Using both live models and Soviet era photographs brought to the US by her Armenian family, Navasardian's studio practice involves both charcoal drawings and acrylic paintings. Working in strong contrasts of light and shade, mass and void and angular slashing brushstrokes, the Artist's paintings pulsate with angst and frustration. Navasardian points to the German Expressionists working at the turn of the 20th century—Max Beckmann and Ernst Ludwig Kirchner—as major influences. These artists are known for their examination of the human condition in works that range from the piercingly frank to the precariously bleak. Navasardian finds herself naturally drawn to "the immediacy, the rawness" created in these darker works.

In *Black and White*, the Artist explores the idea of conflicting realities: the tension between how her subjects exist in reality, their faults and ambitions on their sleeves, and how they imagine themselves or want to appear in society. In turn amusing, awkward, and empathetic, Navasardian incorporates multiple subjects culled from different sources, giving the groupings the sense of each subject's "alone and separateness" even in a social setting. Setting up conflict and moving away from "posed" subjects, she speaks to contrived versus perceived and how reality can become a performance beyond the moment.

Navasardian asserts that Warhol's '15 minutes of fame' theory has been accelerated even further with the advent of social media's instantaneous dissemination. The now common sentiment of spectacle and humanity's increasingly discordant relationship with the world sets a perfect foil for introspection. Spectacles are meant to be indulged and consumed; the Artist questions what it means when we subscribe to become spectacles, to offer ourselves to be indulged and then ultimately consumed.



Dinner II
charcoal on paper
44 x 77 in. | 2014

Recently named one of the top 25 artists under twenty-five by Complex Magazine, Navasardian graduated from Carnegie Mellon with a Bachelor of Fine Arts in painting in 2010. While in attendance, she was awarded the John L Porter Art Award for outstanding students two years in a row.

Contact the gallery for images or more information:
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