



November 3—December 15, 2018

# NSFW

Ana Benaroya and Tina Lugo



Ana Benaroya, *Butting Heads*, spray paint, acrylic and oil on canvas, 2018

Postmasters Gallery is very aroused to announce **NSFW**, a two person exhibition of sexually explosive and explicit paintings by **ANA BENAROYA** and **TINA LUGO**.

Fearless, uninhibited, and in charge, both artists deliver a concentrated dose of female power, kink and erotic passion. Their vital painting energy throws off the constraints of prevailing gender identities, leaving humor and horror free to get it on. Not Safe For Work indeed.

Sex, bodies, and gender are in the air at this excruciating moment. This exhibition is coincident with a pair of table-turning shows currently on view in New York: Sarah Lucas delivering a smackdown to the hypocrisies of the patriarchy at the New Museum; and Hilma af Klint upending the established—and overbearingly male—historical arc of modernist abstraction at the Guggenheim. Though the timing is unplanned, these shows resonate with larger truths about women changing the narrative of art history and revivifying the sociopolitical dynamics of our turbulent time and place.



**ANA BENAROYA** is a young painter about to graduate from the MFA program at Yale University. Her color saturated, Fauve-like paintings are a blast of loaded narratives of female-dominant sexual play and control amidst the contested reality of pervasive gender inequality, misogyny and violence directed against women. Benaroya's figures, whether in solitude, congress, or conflict, seize and seduce the gaze in equal measure.

*When I create an image, I am funneling all the pent up anger I have about being a woman in this world. I extend, expand, and distort the human figure to my will to depict power dynamics that I believe are in play within society. The bodies I paint and draw are an extension of my own body. They are my alter-ego, my inner desires, fantasies, and nightmares. With each image I create, the aim is to make myself laugh, to feel better, it is a cathartic release.*

*The sex and violence that appear in my paintings are a reflection of American society—two things that I think control our everyday lives, but things we almost rarely discuss with any true honesty. I use humor in my work to take on these difficult subjects—as a means to lure the viewer in before they realize perhaps the full extent of what they are looking at.*

**TINA LUGO** is a Portland, Oregon-based painter, designer and a tattoo artist whose IG bio exhorts, "wear your kink proudly." Lugo's vividly colored figure paintings on glass evoke the Ero Guro Nansensu movement, a raucous and irreverent Japanese subculture whose name is a concatenation of the English words erotic, grotesque, and nonsense. The movement flays and flouts conventions of eroticism, sexual corruption, and decadence - all themes salient in Lugo's work. The viewer is drawn into Lugo's intricate works by their alluring colors and suggestive forms, only to find themselves implicated as the convoluted composition reveals their shocking, transgressive subjects.

*The work I've made for this show encapsulates the experiences I've had over the last year, becoming more acquainted with puppy play and kink positive situations, as well as the fears that tag alongside them - the constant battle between sexual urges and aligning a moral compass to them.*

*I want to show powerful women taking control of their sexual bodies. The core of my work is to express kink, desire, sexuality, sexualization, loss of innocence, and how and why we develop these fetishes. I try to have open dialogues with people to talk about kink and my work, as those who are more repressed usually don't see the men or women I paint as masters of their sexual journey, but instead as victims. It's important to educate people that we can enjoy many different types of sex and not be seen as "victims", that women can love rough sex and it's not from a deep rooted trauma.*