

For Immediate Release:

KOKI DOKTORI - ETERNAL APHRODITE

ARTIST TALK: Koki Doktori in Conversation with Claudia Calirman
TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 27 from 6 - 8 PM

EXHIBITION DATES: November 7 - December 2, 2018

Press Release:

Please join Lichtundfire, in collaboration with **Mark Gallery**, for an ARTIST TALK by **Koki Doktori** in conversation with art historian, curator and author **Claudia Calirman** on the occasion of his exhibition ETERNAL APHRODITE. The exhibition, an artist curated salon/studio-style installation of a multitude of paintings and drawings in various media marks the artist's first solo show at Lichtundfire and his fourth appearance at the gallery.

APHRODITE (Roman Venus), according to Greek mythology (Homer/ Iliad), was the love child of the philandering god Zeus and the Titan Goddess Dione; and in a different description of her origins (Hesiod/Theogony), was born out of the foam of the sea- fathered by the Greek god Uranus, grandfather of Zeus.

Aphrodite foremost a synonym for love, beauty, sexual pleasure, promiscuity, and procreation, thus had a lasting association with the sea and with maritime life- most commonly known as the Roman 'Venus on a Sea Shell' in Botticelli's *Birth of Venus*, however ubiquitous in slight disguise as mermaid or figurehead, protector of sailors and the prostitutes alike.

In this solo exhibition, Aphrodite's, female nudity and sexuality are at front and center: Doktori creates an environment of paintings and drawings with the abstracted female form- a direct gaze at what we associate with the female or parts of the female.

A deliberate repetitive theme in Doktori's work is the pose of a reclining nude without features, seen from the back, intentionally collapsing the traditional distinctions between subject and object- and ultimately blurring the boundaries between figuration and abstraction. Rooted in 19th Century German Romanticism, the technique of conscientiously portraying 'the figure from the back' was used to help viewers to 'step into the artwork', therefor allowing a vicarious experience of the figure's perspective and his or her emotional state.

Spanning from the beautiful to the evil, sexualized and deliberately grotesquely de-sexualized, Aphrodite, synonymous for all aspects attributed to the FEMALE, has captured our imagination- as virgin, prostitute, lover and mother, and as the source of life, equally empowered and revered as persecuted and denied of power to her death.

In Greek mythology, the role of Aphrodite, as one of the three goddesses, alongside Hera and Athena, even though triumphant, in the judgment of Paris, where she emerges as the standard bearer/ beacon for beauty, seems preconceived. Aphrodite, a most potent woman, per one theory in western mythology, was conceived without mother, like Eve - albeit not created from the ribs of Adam, but out of the sea- conjured out of Uranus' castrated testicles and a mysterious 'foam'.

It's been said that her origins reach much further, her name originating from the dialects of Semitic tribes, her ethnic origins, at least unclear. She has been remarkably notably referred to as the AFRO- DEITY, often depicted with Nubian hair style, her image- at a later date- reduced and streamlined to a Northern Mediterranean model of beauty and virtue.

Doktori's discourse with the female, expressed with simple marks by palette knife or with vigorous lines in predominantly prime colors, bold and abstract, alike melodic, jazzy sequences, blankets the walls from floor to ceiling. A powerful installation that leaves not only more to the imagination than the obvious- ACKNOWLEDGING the FORCE behind/ in the depicted that made the artist draw and paint - mesmerized by the enduring powers of what lies beneath the form while simultaneously excavating countless layers of reference and connotations of our collective unconscious.

Koki Doktori's Solo Exhibition is on view at Lichtundfire Wed through Sat, noon - 6 pm, & Sun 1 - 6 pm.

For more information and images of ETERNAL APHRODITE, and on the ARTIST TALK please contact Priska Juschka at info@lichtundfire.com, 917-675-7835, or visit www.lichtundfire.com; or Arielle Mark at mark-gallery@optonline.net, 201.978-9196, or visit mark-gallery.com.

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General Gallery Hours: Wednesday to Saturday 12 pm to 6 pm, Sunday 1pm to 6pm
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