

Dear God | I'll be your stag | And I will stab | The anima | And I'll hunt It |
 With the Hell hounds | And I'll be | (the) anima mundi | With a deer god | A
 wreath of thorns | An idol deer | *Sine lumine [perimus]...*



Tomboy (2012). Acrylic, oil, soft lead pencil and collage on canvas, 116x89 cm

CLARA DÉsirÉ
 AT HIONAS GALLERY
 04TH TO 27TH OCTOBER 2012

WHILE DREAMING, SOUNDS MY
 LOUD AND WILD CRY

Clara Désiré: *While Dreaming, Sounds My Loud and Wild Cry*
 October 4-27, 2012
 Opening Thursday, Oct. 4, 6-8 PM

New York, NY (September 19, 2012) – Hionas Gallery is pleased to present the first New York solo exhibition from French artist **Clara Désiré: *While Dreaming, Sounds My Loud and Wild Cry***, which will run from **October 4-27, 2012**. Surely to be a feast for the eyes, with this series of new mixed-media paintings, drawings and artist notebooks—made using acrylic, oil, soft lead pencil, felt tip pen, and Indian ink, among other media—Désiré explores themes of feral animality, feminism, heartbreak, and death, all while channeling the primitivist visual style of Jean-Michel Basquiat.

Several years back, while abroad in Tokyo, Désiré was approached on the street by a man who was donning Mickey Mouse ears and a t-shirt that read, *Lucha libre* (“free fight”). This stranger then scribbled the word “tar” on a cigarette and handed it to her. Almost immediately the work of Basquiat flashed through the artist’s mind. This random encounter, as simple as it was bizarre, is what drew Désiré to painting, and she hasn’t looked back since.

Each of Désiré’s works acts like some nightmarish yet fantastic storyboard, wherein the viewer may experience terror and captivation upon a single glimpse. To be fearful at all is essentially to fear ourselves, of what we—all being just instinctual animals—are capable of thinking, saying and doing. And yet, Désiré is not without a sense of empathy and tenderness. “Cauz we are soldiers in the frenzy to love”, “Never let you go”, and “Keep calm and carry on” are just some examples of the artist’s use of text in her work, suggesting that amidst the visual chaos and violence the artist is simply searching for some stability.

Faces play a pivotal role in Désiré's work, yet her subjects' eyes, with a few exceptions, are empty; voids that recede into a human skull, an animal mask, a cartoon character, or a robot head. Perhaps this is to remind us of our humanity or lack thereof, or inversely, the inescapability of our animalistic nature.

Her canvases, which often employ visceral brushwork coupled with a romantic etherealness, tell the story of our truest and most base desires unleashed, if only in our subconscious. In the collage painting *Tomboy* (2012), the artist creates a color field of heated tones, surrounded by utter darkness and scribbled text. The journey provided within is in many respects a trip back to that street in Tokyo, when the abstract character with Mickey ears and cigarette in hand entered the artist's world and consequently changed it forever.

There will be an **opening reception** for *While Dreaming, Sounds My Loud and Wild Cry* on **Thursday, October 4, from 6:00 to 8:00 PM**. The artist will be present.

About the Artist:



Clara Désiré (b. 1978) has been exhibiting internationally since 2006. Shortly after earning her BFA in France, she settled in Tokyo, from 2001 to '03, and in the ensuing years she has shown her work in venues and fairs as varied as GUY SAVOY, Paris; Galerie SHO, Tokyo; Art Osaka at Dojima Hotel, Osaka; 101 Art Fair, Tokyo; KIAF, Seoul; and Art-Platform, Los Angeles, among others. She is also a former illustrator for *ELLE France* and *ELLE India* magazines. This is Désiré's first exhibition at Hionas Gallery. She lives and works in Paris.

About Hionas Gallery:

Hionas Gallery is a 500 sf. exhibition space located at 89 Franklin Street in a classic TriBeCa storefront. The gallery invites contemporary and emerging artists, working in all variety of media, to participate in monthly solo exhibitions to showcase their latest work and artistic vision. The gallery space resides in the storefront of the personal fitness studio, Peter Anthony Fitness, also owned and operated by Peter Hionas. Gallery owners Peter and Maria Hionas officially opened the gallery in June 2011. "We have been avid collectors of contemporary art since 1991," says Peter Hionas. "It's a modest storefront we have here, but also really spacious and versatile. I see us as operating in the tradition of the old Betty Parsons Gallery in midtown, or the original White Cube in St. James's; small spaces that just show great art."

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For more information contact Maria Hionas at info@hionasgallery.com or visit www.hionasgallery.com

Media Contact:
Justin R. Wolf
M: (617) 416-7908
E: justin@justinwolf.com

Hionas Gallery
89 Franklin Street
New York, NY 10013
T: (212) 274-9003