



PRESS RELEASE

Barbara Wesółowska
Father

January 5 - February 3, 2024
Opening Reception: Friday, January 5, 6-8pm

Silke Lindner is pleased to announce *Father*, the first U.S. solo exhibition with London-based, Polish-born painter Barbara Wesółowska.

Barbara Wesółowska's deeply personal paintings conceal, layer, erase and uncover in a process that she describes as "solving a problem", as "correcting errors in a series of accidents". The heavily textured oil paintings emerge from abstract spills and layers, rubbed and sanded down, painted over again and finished when Wesółowska is met with a redeeming feeling of acceptance, with a sense of ease. Throughout a turbulent process of acting and reacting, the paintings reveal a multitude of human faces which Wesółowska 'finds' within the density of the paint, merely pronouncing what's already there. Their facial expressions are indistinct, their identities and relationships to one another and the painter unknown. They seem to arise from places deep within, like a sunken memory that's rising to the surface, like the unconscious is taking shape and wandering through the mind.

Raised in a strictly religious family in Poland on an island owned by the Catholic church, Barbara Wesółowska's upbringing has been formative to her painting process. In her early exposure to medieval paintings, figurines and saints, Christian iconography, rituals and an austere order of the Catholic calendar, guilt laid at the core of everyday life - a feeling that pervades Wesółowska's memories and paintings in the many voices that murmur underneath their surface. Her ritualistic and intuitive practice, in which she applies paint directly to the canvas without sketches or previous planning, reflects her interest in compulsion, drive and the unknown.

Much like Wesółowska's interest in the construction of the memory and theories of Freudian psychoanalysis, her paintings read like an analogy of memory itself: fragmented and abstract, their images are vague and their emotions pronounced. The figures that she uncovers transcend into psychological and spiritual spheres that contain opposites in multitudes: mother and daughter, judge and accused, sinner and saint. In Wesółowska's paintings they live side by side, they battle and guard one another, and become one in the ambivalence of the human psyche.

Barbara Wesółowska (b. 1984) is originally from Poland and lives and works in London. She graduated from the Slade School of Fine Art, London in 2013 and the Royal College of Art, London in 2015. Recent solo exhibitions include 'The feeling in oneself and voice of someone else' at Stereo Warsaw, and 'counter-song' at east contemporary, Milan. She has been included in various group exhibitions, most recently in 'Machines for Seeing With...' at Brunette Coleman, London, 'Malediction and Prayer', at Modern Art, London, 'Nothing but murmuring', Imlabor, Tokyo, 'Apple in the Dark' at Harkawik, New York, and 'The Vapours' at Kunstverein Bamberg, Germany.

For more information, please contact Silke Lindner at silke@silkelindner.com