

ANNA ZORINA GALLERY

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ANASTASIYA TARASENKO

Primordial Soup

April 16 - May 23, 2026

Opening Reception: Thursday, April 16th, 6-8PM

Anna Zorina Gallery is pleased to announce the Anastasiya Tarasenko solo exhibition, *Primordial Soup*. Through referring to the elemental conditions from which life is believed to have first emerged, Tarasenko's latest paintings portray a space where origin and undoing coincide. These latest works stem from the trauma following a near-death experience caused by an ectopic pregnancy. In the aftermath, the artist describes feeling estranged from her own body, unmoored and unstable, as if subject to forces beyond her control. These works trace the gradual reclamation of agency, identity, and embodiment.

Tarasenko presents the ocean as a central metaphor, evoking hormonal flux, emotional instability and the powerful capacity to both generate and destroy. Within this setting, a small female figure repeats across vast seascapes, riding waves, plunging into turbulent waters, or suspended between ascent and descent. This multiplication suggests both a loss of singular control and an unexpected expansion into something collective. The waves, constant and indifferent, echo the persistence of these internal states while also situating them within a longer human continuum. The artist conveys a recognition that this oscillation between autonomy and surrender, is not hers alone but something that binds her to others across time who have endured similar cycles of upheaval.

A persistent tension runs throughout the work between humor and brutality, using wild animals to symbolize humanity's primal instincts. Bodily functions, violence, and absurdity are present as figures, both human and animalistic, move through acts that range from tender to grotesque. Laughing, consuming, harming, and perishing, they coexist without a clear central protagonist. The work reflects that the raw truths of human existence also include base impulses of consumption, greed, power and domination, natures that we often try to escape or deny. The viewer is provided an omniscient perspective on these teeming and unstable environments that reflect the ambiguity of lived experience amongst the absence of fixed moral or narrative hierarchy. By confronting the darker dimensions of human behavior, Tarasenko situates contemporary experience within ongoing drives of desire, vulnerability, and survival.

ANASTASIYA TARASENKO (b. 1989, Kiev, Ukraine) received a MFA from the New York Academy of Art, NY and a BFA from the Fashion Institute of Technology (FIT), NY. She has participated in numerous residencies including Rabbit Island, Michigan; Palazzo Monti, Italy; PLOP residency (hosted by Oli Epp), London; and La Napoule Foundation (led by Will Cotton), France. She has had fellowships at Silver Arts Projects and The National Arts Club, both in New York City. The artist lives and works in Queens, NY.

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