



ELKA LEONARD

PRESS KIT



FRAMED OUTSIDE CONVENTIONS

The style

Like Gustave Courbet, Elka Leonard does not wish to belong to any school, to any Academy, and especially to any regime, except the regime of Freedom. However, if one were to bring her work closer to an artistic current, she would interfere at the intersection of surrealism and free representation.

Her compositions reflect a radical rejection of the rational world, a world between dream and reality, a kind of surreality, to quote André Breton (*Manifeste du surréalisme*, 1924). Painting is not there to be a mirror that reproduces the appearances of the world, but to arrange its areas at will and impose on them a logic that can contradict the laws of ordinary perception.

Elka seeks to represent her inner image, her subjects, all encircled in black, belong to the world of advertising, comics, mythology and art history.

The balance of her pictorial constructions, the vivacity of her acrylics, and the way in which she uses the entire canvas characterise her work.



LIVING THE GREAT ADVENTURE OF BEING YOURSELF

The subject

With her painting, Elka Leonard intends to make the observer reflect on the man of the 21st century. This one, prisoner of a multitude of alienating injunctions, comes to more away from himself. On the level of the thought, this is the time for laziness and passivity, which are manifested by the acceptance of ideas without prior questioning or personal reflection, by submission to something external to oneself which governs the individual at his or her expense, which encroaches on his or her free will. What place is left for inner silence, the emergence of ideas and thought? How can one regain one's free will?

Self-knowledge and the quest for freedom thus become the guiding thread of all her work. Elka seeks to awaken the mind and lead it on the path of thought and its questions. As a painter of ideas, she combines everyday objects, cultural history, and philosophical ideals in a resolutely positive approach, using her gaze as a false mirror, combining the visible and the readable.

Her performers, the Women, seek to rediscover their singularity. Epicureans, they let their aspirations and thoughts guide their choices. Desire becomes one of the means to reconnect with oneself. A new way of seeing the world then takes shape.





THE WOMAN, A SOVEREIGN SENSUALITY

The interpreter

Her work is a tribute to femininity: the woman, the women, the Creator, the one who gives life not only through birth but also through thought. Like the image of Eve who makes the first gesture of freedom, tasting the apple, and who, curious, goes towards knowledge, and opens the way to free will.

The woman emerges as a symbol, a representation of power, unaware of the pleasure she arouses. Both sensual and distant, she imposes herself on us with superb arrogance. Misfortune to the man who exhibits the slightest weakness!

Like Oscar Wilde, «capable of resisting anything but temptation», she does not content to just exist, she wants to live the great adventure of being herself.





REMEMBERING FOUNDING MYTHS

The settings

Elka puts the rich tradition of traditional craftsmanship at the service of her work.

Her characters evolve in distinctive universes, full of history and references, depositories of a French culture that is both retro and very contemporary. Elka Leonard dares to borrow from all eras, with the Roaring Twenties as her favourite period. The new desire for freedom and joie de vivre, the great cultural and intellectual effervescence of this period, marked by creativity and exuberance, are close to her personality. Paris, which for some became the centre of pleasures and ostentatious luxury, could be the setting for her women's lives.

Numerous details sowed with malice invite the spectator to imagine the unsaid, the implied, the censored.





CINEMATOGRAPHIC PAINTING

The synopsis

Elka paints timeless tales. The characters play out scenes with a very precise dramaturgy, in which the artist creates shadowy areas and offers everyone the opportunity to recognise themselves and to choose their own interpretation.

Her artworks thus have a cinematic air in which the temporal planes are intertwined: on one hand the current representation of a provocative personality, on the other hand a retrospective look at the past, which is none other than the experience gained.



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