

ILONA SZALAY

Arusha Gallery | info@arushagallery.com | 0131 557 1412

BIOGRAPHY

Born in Beirut in 1975, Ilona Szalay completed an English Literature degree at the University of Oxford in 1997, before undertaking further studies at Central St Martins (Byam Shaw School of Art) from which she graduated in 2002 with an MFA. She's the recipient of the ORA Contemporary Art Prize (Italy), a finalist for the prestigious Threadneedle Prize (UK), and with an exhibition history that includes the Royal Academy, the British Painter's Association and the Barbican; her work has been extensively exhibited in cities including Milan, London, Miami, Basel, Rome, Zurich, Toronto and New York.

Through a range of media from canvas to tracing paper, LED light to glass, Szalay engages the multitudinous dichotomies that make up both collective and individual subjective experience in restrained, poetic visual language. It is in liminal space – that between sites of dominance and submission, or power and vulnerability – that the figures in her work encounter one another.

The contrast between the subject she paints and how it is painted is never sharp or demanding; the heavy, looping strokes and soft lines made by her brush point towards something much more ingenious and intuitive. These are contrasts that are gestured at, never insisted upon, and allow for a kind of dialectic with the viewer: a set of techniques more native to the literary arts than to the visual medium in which she works.

EDUCATION

2001-2002

Byam Shaw School of Art, University of the Arts, MA Fine Art with Distinction MA thesis

1999-2000

Byam Shaw School of Art, University of the Arts, Post Graduate Diploma

1998-1999

Central St Martin's College of Art and Design, Foundation Diploma

1994-1997

Brasenose College, Oxford University, BA English Literature, 2.1

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SELECTED

SOLO

EXHIBITIONS

2022

Chronic Fantasies, Arusha Gallery, London

The Witch's House, Arusha Gallery, Edinburgh

2021

Delirium, Arusha Gallery, Edinburgh

2020

Some are born to sweet delight, some are born to endless night, Arusha Gallery, Edinburgh

2019

Oracle, Arusha Gallery, Edinburgh

2016

Milk Smoke & Bones, Arusha Gallery, Edinburgh

2014

Mermaid, Solo exhibition, Tart Gallery, Zurich

2010

Naked, Whitfield Fine Art, London

SELECTED GROUP

EXHIBITIONS

2023

The Coordinate Plane, Arusha Gallery Summer Series, New York

2021

Safe as Milk, Arusha Gallery, London

2020

London Art Fair, with Arusha Gallery, Islington, London

2019

Pulse Art Fair, with Arusha Gallery, Miami

2018

Otto/Accessorize With a Tiger/From The Heart, group show, Arusha Gallery, Edinburgh

L.A. Summer: The Lights Are Much Brighter, group show, Arusha

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Gallery, Edinburgh
Volta 14, Elsasserstrasse, Switzerland

2017

The Armorist, group show, Arusha Gallery, Edinburgh

2015

London Art Fair, Islington, London

2014

Terra Incognita, the Project Gallery, Arundel

Undercurrents, Arusha Gallery, Edinburgh

Royal Academy Summer Exhibition, London

AAF New York City, Metropolitan Pavilion

UP&COMING, Exhibition organised by Kids of Dada, Hoxton
Gallery, London

AAF Milan, Superstudio Piu

Art 14 London, Olympia, London

AWARDS AND RESIDENCIES

2014

Anthology, Charlie Smith, long list

2013

The Threadneedle Prize, finalist

ORA Prize, Italy, winner

2012

2rd Annual Call, Beers Lambert, long list

2011

I am solitary, Beers Lambert, long list