

Dara Maillard PORTFOLIO_____

Artist Statement

"To know our history is to begin to see how to take up the struggle again."

Silvia Federici, *Caliban and the Witch*

Using art history as an iconographic treasure trove, rethinking it anachronistically, and reflecting on the history of painting are key elements of my practice. Culture, legacies, history, and tradition function as a fountain of vitality, an energetic spring that we drink as a source of symbols and meaning. I am drawn to subject matters which can be read as the pillars of civilization: rites and tradition, systems of belief and religion, conceptions of good and evil just as the forms in which they are passed down, including myths, folklore, poetry. Eastern and Western European legacies such as Greco-Roman mythology, Christian-orthodox iconography and biblical re-imaginings, historical paintings, and depictions of female figures are constituent parts of my visual language.

Through re-appropriating archetypes like the muse, the goddess, the mother, the temptress, and the witch, my works illustrate and reclaim female power within its long history of oppression. This allows an exploration into the passed-down heritage that shapes the European present-day female collective psyche.

A further interest that can be found in my practice is the obsessive relationship between art and beauty. Within my work, vulnerability becomes a catalyst for liberation, allowing motifs and ideas of beauty to transcend their oppressive origins.

Combining various timelines and cultural contexts in the form of figurative painting is the underpinning of my artistic practice. My painterly language consists of a complex web of art historical references such as Fauvism, Feminist art, Symbolism, Renaissance painting, and Christian-orthodox icon making. I also merge painting with sculpture, installation, photography, and etching. Some of my pieces are for instance made out of delicate materials such as ungrounded fabrics, thin papers, and by using experimental methods of applying textures and pigments. Others are created using time-resistant techniques such as oxidizing and engraving brass.

Through the use of techniques inspired by classical and modern approaches, the art historical female figure is bewitched and bestowed with a new form of meaning.



How can you doubt me now?, 2023
Triptych, engraved and oxidized brass
30 x 30 cm each



How can you doubt me now?, 2023
Details





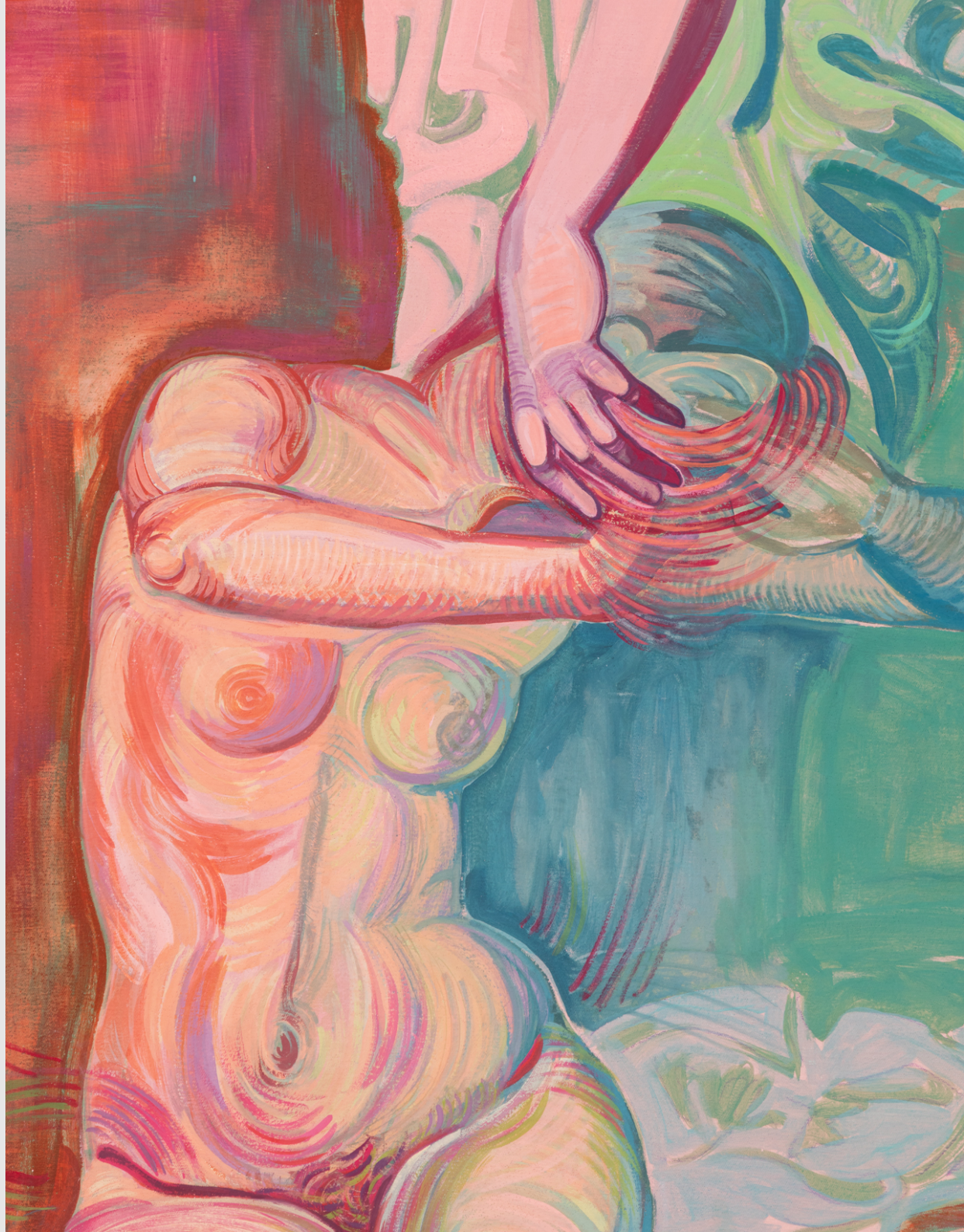
The Severed Heads, 2023
Pentptych, oil on canvas
130 x 365 cm

The Severed Heads, 2023
Details





The Severed Heads, 2023
Details





The Severed Heads, 2023
Details





Les Péchés Gloutons, 2022

Triptych, acrylic paint on translucent cotton, paper towels
and liquid glue
150 x 500 cm



Les Péchés Gloutons, 2022

Details

Through depicting a biblical re-imagining of the Original Sin, the work ironically hints at the common belief that men's sexual appetite is by nature fiercer than those of women and therefore condones occurring sexual violence.





Les Péchés Gloutons, 2022
Details





Femtrails, 2023

Triptych, dried pastel and pencil on paper, perforations
100 x 63 cm each



Mes Mères, 2022

Photo transfer and acrylic paint on canvas, metal powder, oxidation mediums, translucent varnish, solidified fabrics, gold leaves, wax
40x130 cm

Based on Christian orthodox iconography, the work aims to alchemize and reframe the traditional Western archetype of the mother. The image crosses the boundaries between the defined and the blurred, the two- and three-dimensional, the spiritual and earthly sphere.





Mes Mères, 2022

Photo transfer and acrylic paint on canvas, metal powder,
oxidation mediums, translucent varnish, solidified fabrics
55x100 cm



Filles du Calvaire, 2022

Photo transfer and acrylic paint
on ungrounded cotton, rope,
burned wood
155 x 200 cm

A revolt from within the canvas,
the work denounces the eternal
female punishment which is the
act of musification*. It also
commemorates the long period
of the witch purges in Europe
(1450-1750). It highlights how
this dark chapter of history
shapes our views on female
sexuality and empowerment. It
manifests itself as a casting spell
that moves towards liberation.

**musification - to turn a person or
figure into a muse*





Filles du Calvaire, 2022
Details



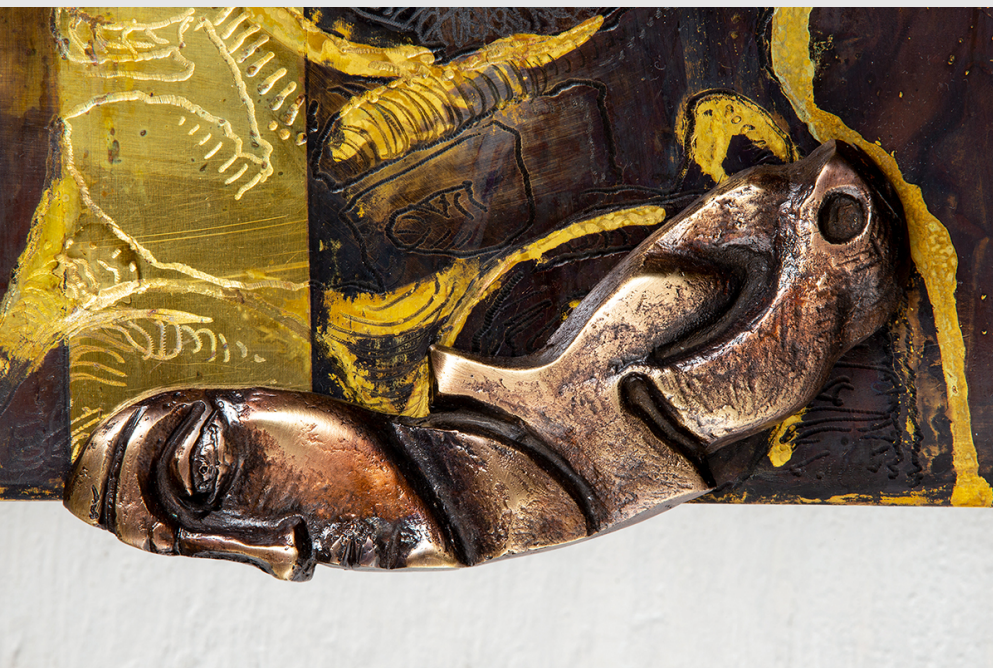


**It seeks my luster
Built from gold and ashes
and rises, and falls**

2022

Engraved and oxidized brass, bronze bas-relief, acrylic
paint on canvas
60x60 cm



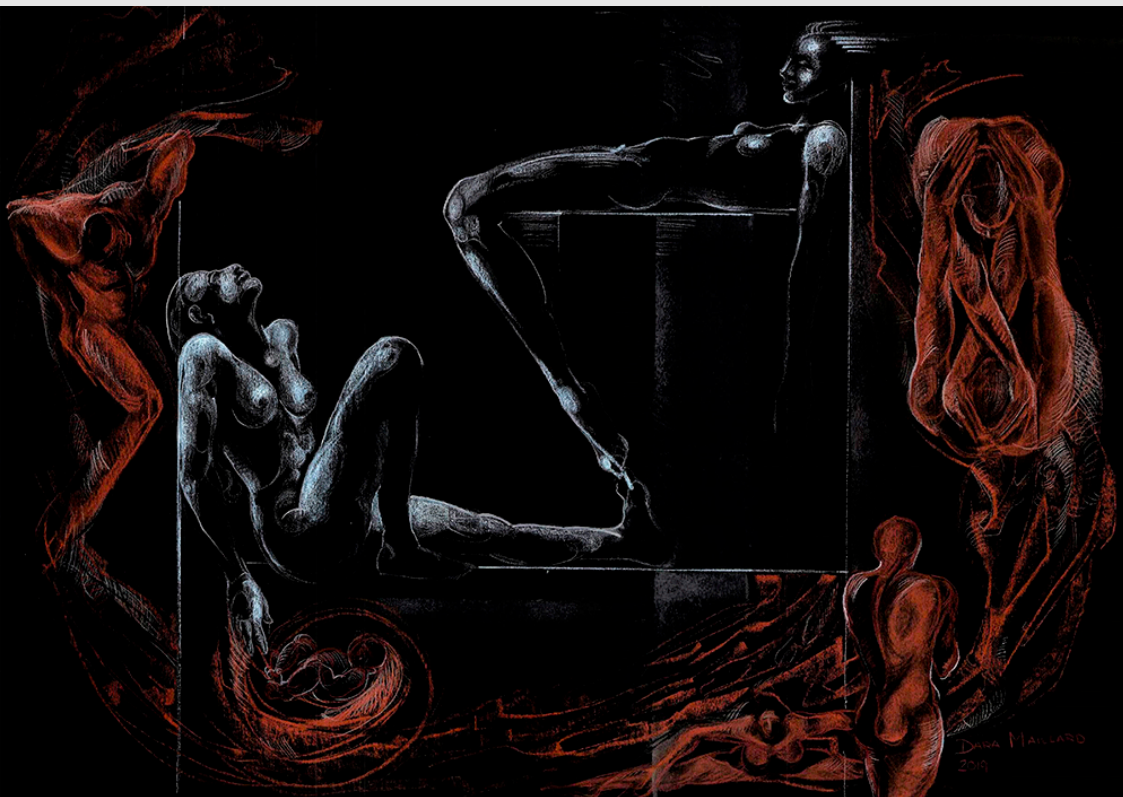


It seeks my luster
Built from gold and ashes
and rises, and falls
2022
Details

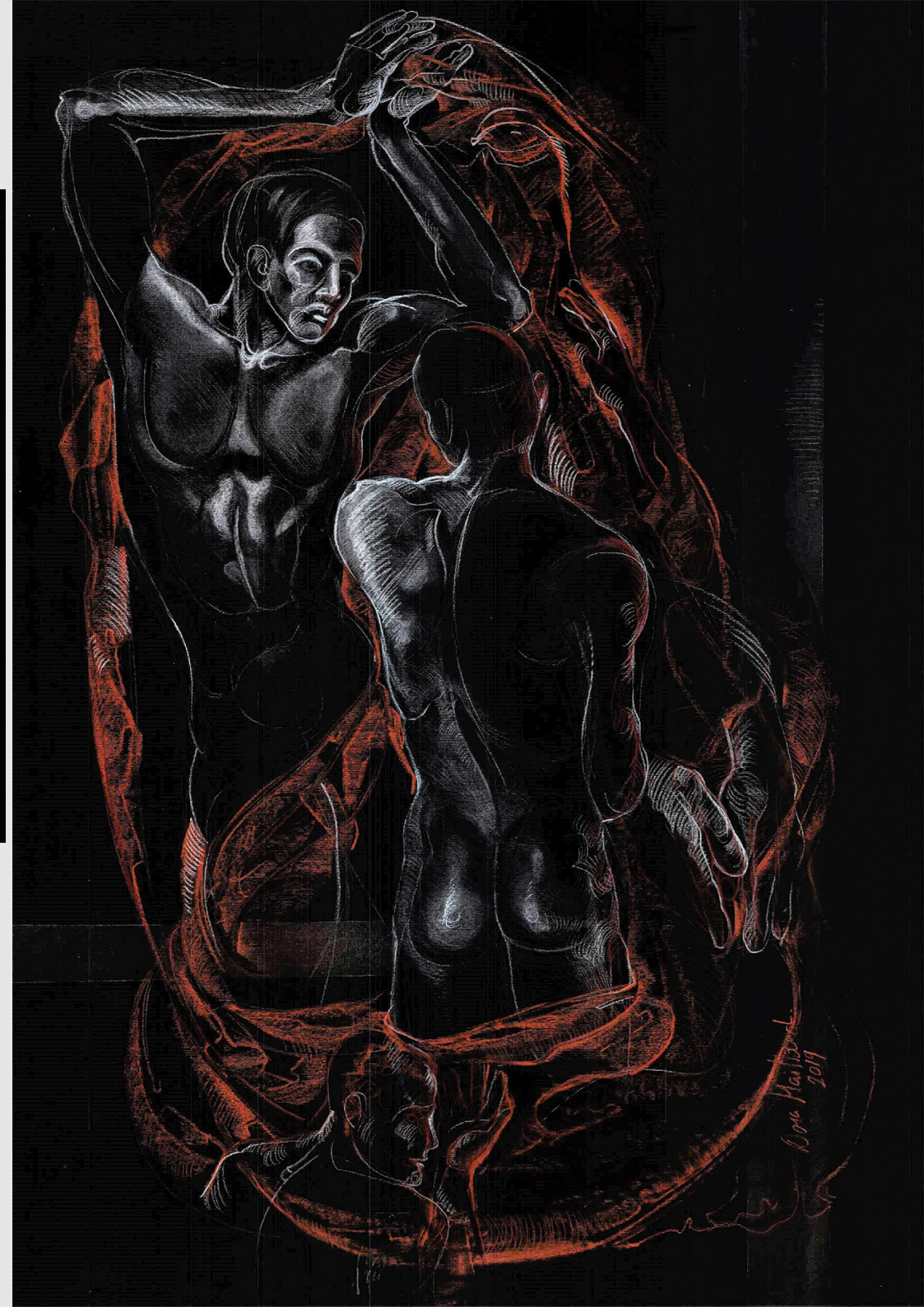


Little Women, 2020
Family portrait, oil on canvas
50 x 50 cm





Untitled series, 2018
Sanguine and pencil on black paper
50 x 70 cm



CV

2002

Born in Sofia, Bulgaria, lives and works in Zurich, Switzerland

Education

2023 - current Zürich Hochschule der Künste, MFA

2020 - 2023 Zürich Hochschule der Künste, BFA

Group Exhibitions

2022

RE:GENESIS, ALAG, Zürich

RAUSCH, Zentralwäscherei, Zürich

PURGATORY, Toxi Space, Zürich

THE FLOOD, Off-Site Exhibition, Zürich

DRAGON'S LAIR, Off-Site Exhibition, Küsnacht

2023

BFA DIPLOMA, Toni Areal, Zürich

2024 - upcoming

LIGHTHOUSE, Zürich

BAD RAGARTZ SCULPTURE TRIENNALE, Bad Ragaz

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