

BEST FRIENDS FOR NEVER

Adrian Norvid & Marcela Szwarc

January 18, 2024

- March 2, 2024



Adrian Norvid, *The Cadaver Cafe (detail)*, 2023

McBride Contemporain is pleased to present *Best Friends for Never*, a duo exhibition featuring the work of Montreal-based artists Adrian Norvid and Marcela Szwarc. Well-known to Montreal audiences, Norvid has been exhibiting his unique brand of sensitively caustic humour and sharply delineated, graphic-in-every-sense drawings and objects for many years, and continues to find fresh subjects to train his tongue-in-cheek eye upon, particularly in his massive, labour-intensive drawings. More than a newcomer, this is the very talented and expressive Szwarc's first ever gallery exhibition, coming near the end of their MFA in Painting and Drawing at Concordia University. Szwarc is a multi-disciplinary artist, excelling at the kind of beautifully raw painting and drawing they will be exhibiting in this show, but also at sculpture and performance, creating large and unique puppet objects for anarchic performances and embracing collaboration in all its forms.

Adrian Norvid's contribution to the exhibition is a new monumental drawing entitled *The Cadaver Cafe*, like a depopulated noir set, possibly his bleakest work yet, but also a contender for most fascinating and compelling. The usual zany punning and overstimulating but productive visual stresses are here, alongside the more darkly apocalyptic than usual potential that, maybe all of the figures are not merely off set but off world, for one reason or another.

Szwarc's works, on both canvas and paper, combine the best aspects of art movements such as Bad Painting and Naive art with a kind of gutsy and direct primal spirituality. Their paintings depict giant, goddess-like figures, seeming to do things that are both mythic and monotonous, ambiguously sexualized, calling our attention to the figures' nudity and suggestive movements. The artist's world proposes an animistic reality in which the supposed binary between nature and human beings is dissolved. These are highly enjoyable works, that seem to recklessly declare themselves, only to then require a good amount of thought from the viewer to understand.

Best Friends for Never is a thought experiment, as well as a sharply delineated exhibition of copacetic artworks. It proposes the compatibility, even the collaboration of two artists who don't personally know each other, but who have similar influences, and in some respects, complimentary attitudes. These two artists ultimately have a great deal in common, despite obvious differences, that in close proximity gels them together like particles in the nucleus of an unstable atom.