

THE BREEDER

AMALIA VEKRI

After Dark

Curated by Andreas Angelidakis

8 June - 31 August 2023

The Breeder, Athens

“One day I started a painting. I began by applying silver whispers on the canvas: A young girl is sitting alone on the ground, her feelings evaporating from the earth forming a forest of protective fumes. The young girl looks pensive, but she is in fact ready: Her eyes have begun to sprout bat wings, and it looks like she has something in her mouth. Her new vampire teeth?

I hate you, I will destroy you, I cannot be without you.”

-Amalia Vekri, fake quote

Amalia Vekri's paintings act like some weird hardcore psychoanalytic portraits of situations, like the drawings your cognitive behavioural analyst will ask you to make of your fantasy, and the words the fantasy whispers to you. In Amalia Vekri's paintings there is never text, never a clear description of what is exactly going on, and they look nothing like the drawings I mentioned. Sometimes the swirls are so strong that the figures drown in a foreground background ambiguity storm. You even have to squint to actually see what is going on inside the mesmerizing silver fumes of passion and lust.

In one of these situations, the fumes become female figures, with spooky eyes growing on body parts, arms become bat wings and now the female figures are passionately kissing. Amalia draws inspiration from horror / vampire movies like *Vamp*, starring Grace Jones as a vampire stripper seductress. For Vekri, the female vampire is a reversal of gender traditions because vampires make you their own when they prick your neck with their teeth, and by pricking we mean penetrating.

Vekri's figures are free from societal expectations, yet in a constant negotiation with their soul, imagining and even enjoying going as far as possible in every direction. Through scenography and lighting, the exhibition itself becomes one of the situations that Amalia paints about, blurring the line between visiting a show and briefly inhabiting Amalia's *After Dark* world.

-Andreas Angelidakis, 2023