

NORA TURATO

the next big thing is YOU

**JUNE 8, 2024 – JULY 20, 2024
GALERIE GREGOR STAIGER, ZURICH**





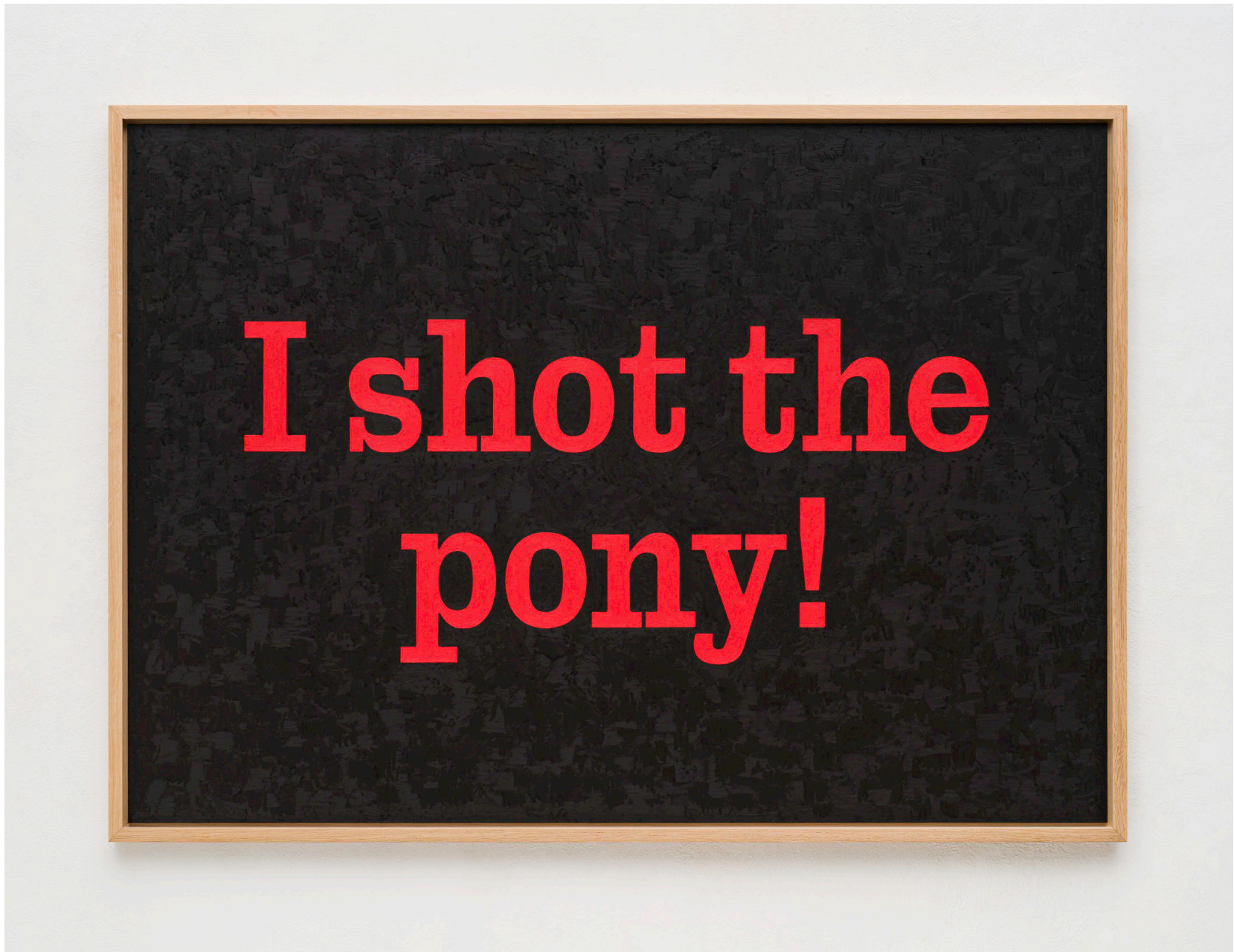
Nora Turato, *the next big thing is YOU*, 2024
Exhibition view, Galerie Gregor Staiger, Zurich



Nora Turato, AAH OUCH CAREFUL PLEASE! I'm very FRAGILE Thank you! :), 2024
Oil pastel on paper and dibond, oak frame
201 × 141 cm | 79 1/8 × 55 1/2 in; TURA/WM 76



Nora Turato, *the next big thing is YOU*, 2024
Exhibition view, Galerie Gregor Staiger, Zurich



Nora Turato, I shot the pony!, 2024
Oil pastel on paper and dibond, oak frame
100 × 140 cm | 39 3/8 × 55 1/8 in; TURA/WM 77



I shot the pony!, 2024
Detail



Nora Turato, *the next big thing is YOU*, 2024
Exhibition view, Galerie Gregor Staiger, Zurich



Nora Turato, *the next big thing is YOU*, 2024
Exhibition view, Galerie Gregor Staiger, Zurich



Nora Turato, I'll keep amazing you!, 2024
Oil pastel on paper and dibond, oak frame
100 × 140 cm | 39 3/8 × 55 1/8 in; TURA/WM 81



I'll keep amazing you!, 2024
Detail



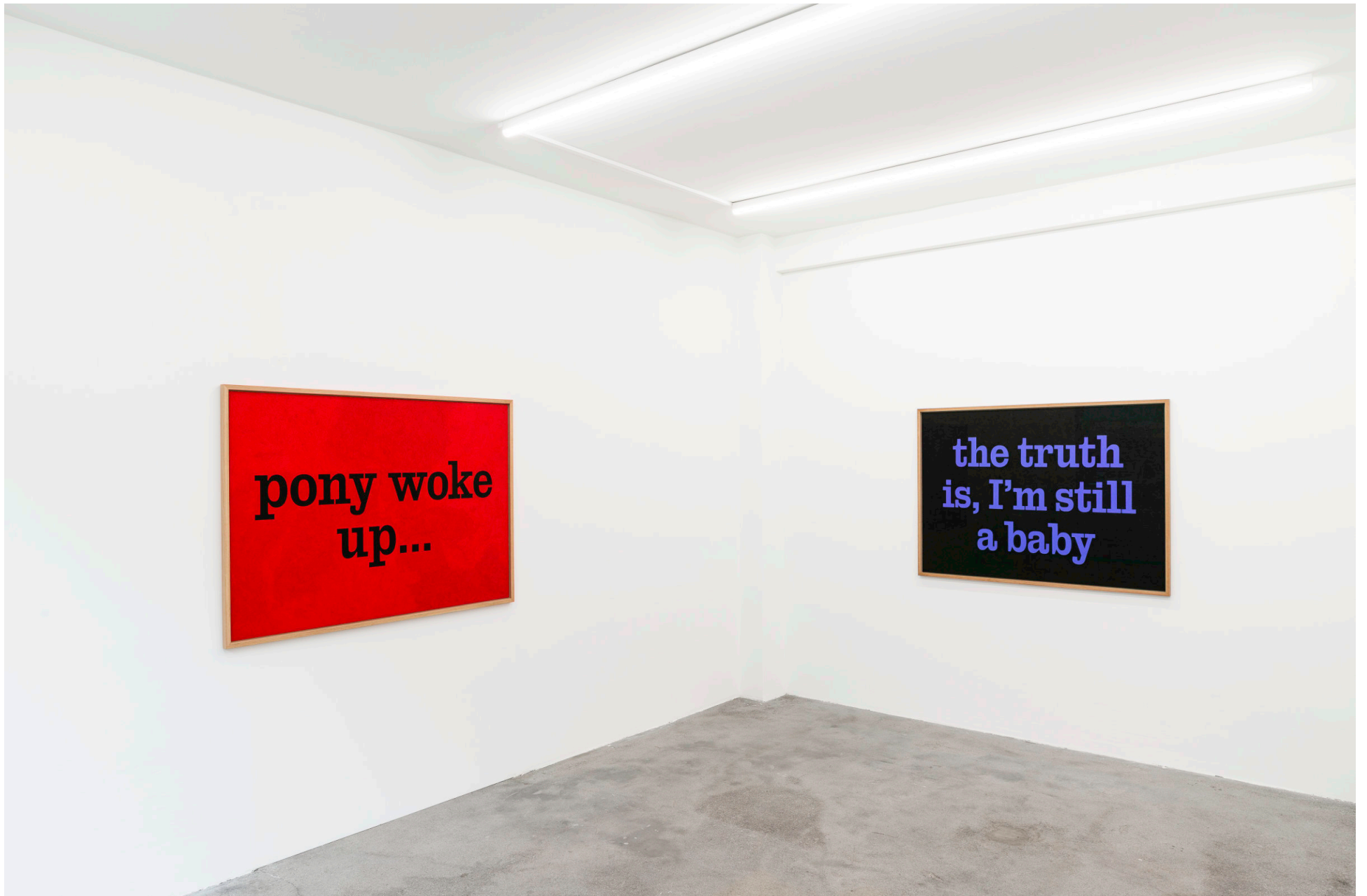
Nora Turato, *the next big thing is YOU*, 2024
Exhibition view, Galerie Gregor Staiger, Zurich



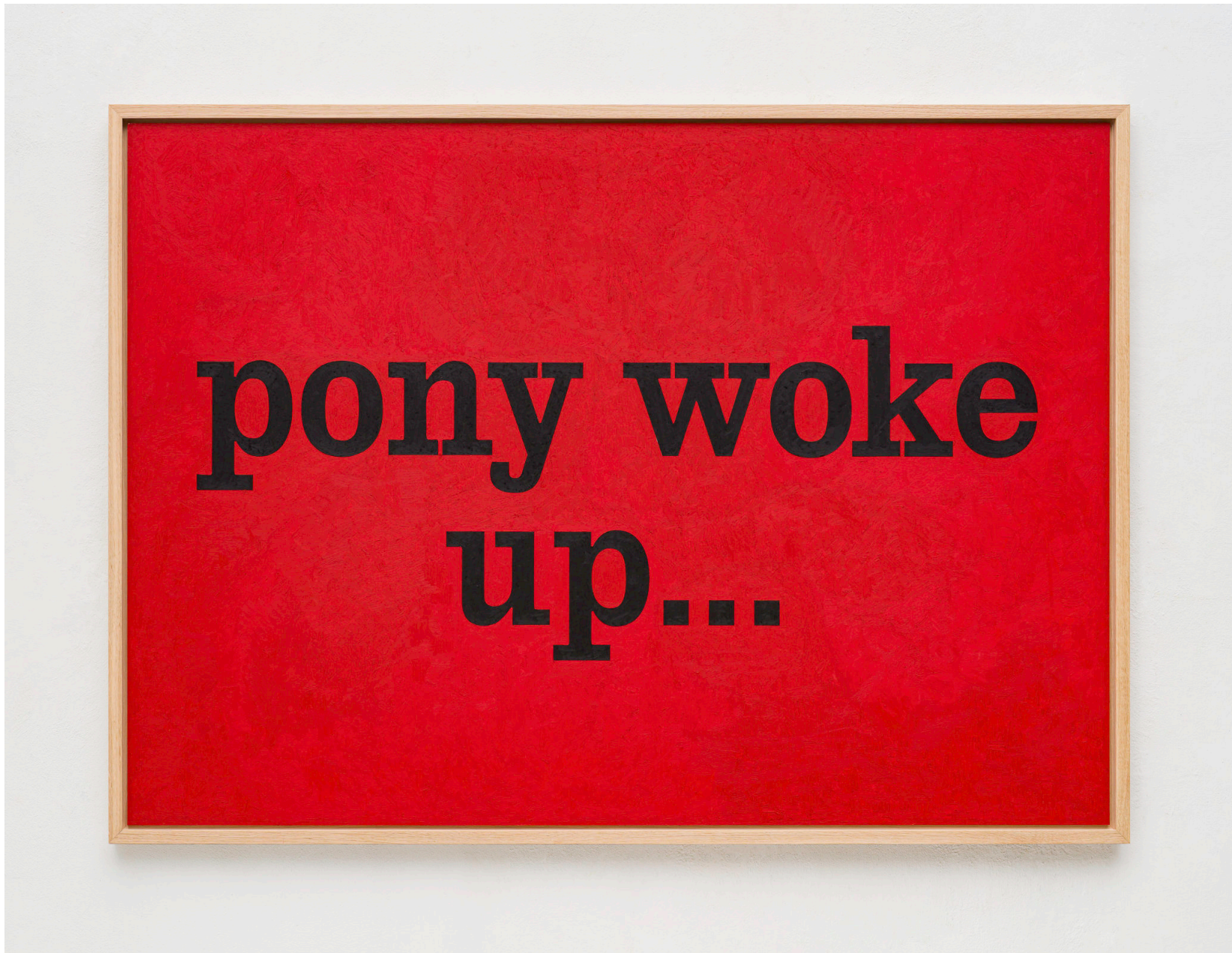
Nora Turato, ahaha GREAT!, 2024
Oil pastel on paper and dibond, oak frame
100 × 140 cm | 39 3/8 × 55 1/8 in; TURA/WM 79



ahaha GREAT!, 2024
Detail




Nora Turato, *the next big thing is YOU*, 2024
Exhibition view, Galerie Gregor Staiger, Zurich



Nora Turato, pony woke up..., 2024
Oil pastel on paper and dibond, oak frame
100 × 140 cm | 39 3/8 × 55 1/8 in; TURA/WM 83



Nora Turato, *the next big thing is YOU*, 2024
Exhibition view, Galerie Gregor Staiger, Zurich

The artwork consists of a square black panel with a thin, light-colored wooden frame. The text is written in a bold, blue, sans-serif font, centered on the black background. The text is arranged in three lines: 'the truth' on the first line, 'is, I'm still' on the second line, and 'a baby' on the third line. The overall composition is minimalist and focuses on the text itself.

the truth
is, I'm still
a baby

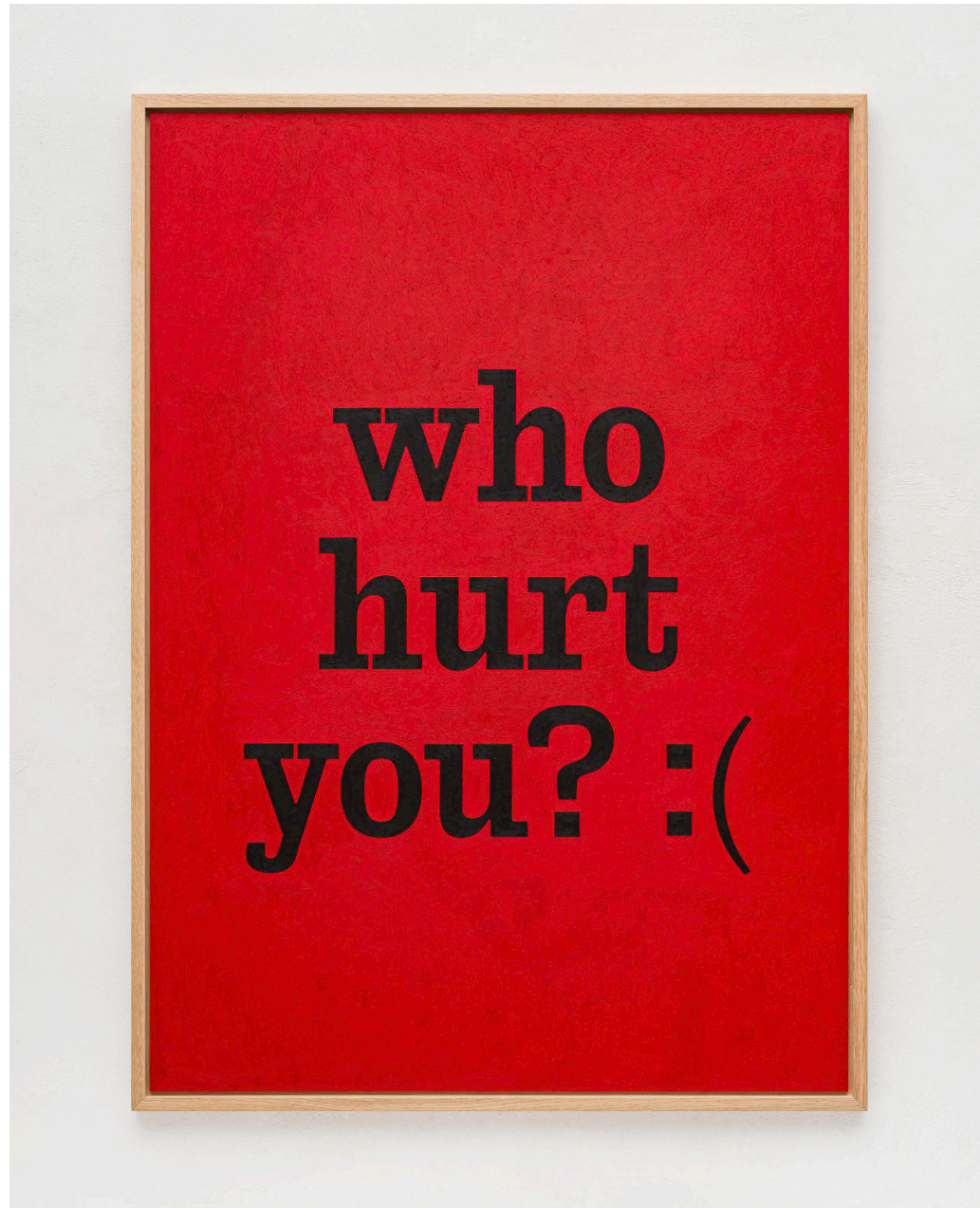
Nora Turato, the truth is, I'm still a baby, 2024
Oil pastel on paper and dibond, oak frame
100 × 140 cm | 39 3/8 × 55 1/8 in; TURA/WM 78



Nora Turato, the next big thing is YOU, 2024
Oil pastel on paper and dibond, oak frame
100 × 140 cm | 39 3/8 × 55 1/8 in; TURA/WM 80



Nora Turato, *the next big thing is YOU*, 2024
Exhibition view, Galerie Gregor Staiger, Zurich



Nora Turato, who hurt you? :(, 2024
Oil pastel on paper and dibond, oak frame
140 × 100 cm | 55 1/8 × 39 3/8 in; TURA/WM 86



who hurt you? :(, 2024
Detail



Nora Turato, *the next big thing is YOU*, 2024
Exhibition view, Galerie Gregor Staiger, Zurich



Nora Turato, you're GOOD!, 2024
Oil pastel on paper and dibond, oak frame
140 × 100 cm | 55 1/8 × 39 3/8 in; TURA/WM 84



Nora Turato, door knob, TURN!!, 2024
Oil pastel on paper and dibond, oak frame
140 × 100 cm | 55 1/8 × 39 3/8 in; TURA/WM 82



door knob, TURN!!, 2024
Detail



Nora Turato, *the next big thing is YOU*, 2024
Exhibition view, Galerie Gregor Staiger, Zurich



Nora Turato, *The age of the amateur*, 2024
5:52 min. audio, looped
TURA/I 1

the next big thing is YOU

June 8–July 20, 2024

Galerie Gregor Staiger, Zurich

Galerie Gregor Staiger is pleased to present the fourth solo exhibition with the gallery by Nora Turato. Comprising a new series of large format oil pastels, Turato additionally presents a sound piece specifically developed for the gallery's basement space.

Over the last few years, Nora Turato has engaged in a variety of therapeutic methods: psychedelic assisted therapy, neurofeedback and, quite regularly, holotropic breath-work. Holotropic breath-work is the practice of controlling one's breath and accelerating its pattern to induce an altered state – mentally, emotionally and physically. The activity is purported to aid in unlocking areas of the participants' minds and memories, with many practitioners utilising it as a form of self-healing or as a means to reach higher consciousness. Following the breath-work sessions, participants are encouraged to draw in an effort to reintegrate the right and left hemispheres. It also functions as an expression of their experience. No guidelines are given, no limitations. When it came to the drawing stage, Turato would say she felt stuck. She didn't know what to do with the oil pastel supplied, and the idea of free-form drawing was confounding. Surely it shouldn't be an issue, if considering her line of work – some innate ability or understanding must be present there? Following a few sessions, she did eventually let go and she did loosen up, but the momentary confrontation with the exercise piqued an interest.

Coincidentally, oil pastel is the medium of Turato's new series of framed works, one with a curious history. Sennelier, the renowned art supplies brand, boasts that it developed the first oil pastel for Picasso in 1949, when the founder's grandson was approached by the artist. Picasso requested a tool which yielded vibrant colours and was easily applicable to any surface without the need for priming or preparation (full disclosure, some sources say Sennelier was approached by the artist's friend in the role of a middle man, but it makes for a less romantic story). The Sennelier name and the anecdotal history involving Picasso carry a certain pedigree of a trusted material, a confirmation of a real artist's choice. An alternate history of oil pastels, though, can be seen to shortly predate this, having been invented in Japan in the mid 1920's. Kanae Yamamoto, the artist and arts educator, recognised that schoolchildren's capacity for expression was stagnated by the repetitive exercises assigned in schools (which at the time heavily favoured learning by imitation). Inspired by Yamamoto's call for a more creative learning approach for children, two teachers would go on to produce the first oil pastel for this very purpose and would shortly after that found the brand Cray-Pas.

Turato's practice regularly considers the dynamic between her material choice to her

subject matter. Her wall-hung steel panels nod to street signage in their use of enamel on the surface, a material traditionally used for address plaques or signposts in thanks to its durability. From afar, her wallpaintings betray no trace of their method, appearing almost printed or digital – upon closer inspection, they reveal the labour of the painstaking, handmade process. It is then of no coincidence that a material of such duality, as is the oil pastel, interests Turato. It evokes at once a serious product of quality, while it is just as synonymous with a playful and free form of expression. Letters, which form the phrases on the works' surfaces, are cut out by hand with meticulous precision, both its cutout letter and back are coloured in with thick layers of oil pastel before being slotted back in together – after copious amounts of layers, the curves of the letters appear softened by the material, they almost begin to look appealingly figurative. Turato looks to subvert the use of the 'expressive' textural qualities of the pastel by her methodological application.

"the next big thing is YOU", the exhibition's titular piece, enthusiastically confirms your potential. You can be the next big thing, you are equipped with it, it's really in your hands! You just need to access it. And conveniently, there are many products and persuasions that can help you construct your most optimal self. The phrase itself is lifted from a Samsung Galaxy commercial, insisting a smartphone can open the infinite possibilities within you. It boldly declares "you're an artist!" - you can build your own world and fantasy, entirely aided by the AI function on the phone. Divorced from their original context, the texts across the works read like isolated affirmations echoing to each other throughout the gallery. Turato explores the anxiety inextricably tied with the commodification of our personalities. The new series pulls considerably from the language of advertising, with a focus on the marketing trope of authenticity. It taps into the desire which resonates universally – most of us want to be the ultimate version of ourselves. So we are told "you're GOOD!", and we want to believe it. Craft, nature, food, culture are now all parts that can be obtained and had to make up the larger constellation of you as an authentic, salt of the earth person. Everything you cook and bake – it's done the right way, from scratch. We are in the the glory days of the amateur - skill is a mere YouTube tutorial away, or more conveniently, with the light assistance of AI.

In the second space, Turato's voice leads into the gallery's basement. Reassuring calls reiterate "it's okay" and "it's safe", as the audio beckons to descend further down the stairs into near complete darkness. The opening of the track is constructed from methods using inner child work, a form of therapy which employs language and verbalisation to address childhood experiences – the practice of returning to comfort one's younger self to heal past traumas. As Turato continues the positive assertions, the relationship and reference to the pastel works becomes apparent, as she transitions into repeating the aforementioned Samsung Galaxy smartphone commercial almost verbatim and telling you what YOU are. The language of marketing and the language of validation become almost interchangeable. In the work's final stage, a strange and soothing lullaby is sung by Turato – it is the song of Jigglypuff, a Pokemon with the skill to disarm their opponents by lulling them to sleep with its melody. Jigglypuff is also characterised by its child-like impulses and need for attention. Angered by the outcome, Jigglypuff, in a rage, draws

across the faces of the slumbering opponents as retribution for falling asleep during its performance. Players of the game at times deploy this tactic -Jigglypuff's song and outburst – weaponising its vulnerability. Perhaps it is not too dissimilar to how our need for recognition is capitalised on. The Pokemon desperately wants to be seen and heard by an engaged audience. Jigglypuff is, after all, perpetually performing and striving to “keep amazing you”.

Nora Turato (*1991 in Zagreb) lives and works in Amsterdam. Selected solo exhibitions include the 'next big thing is YOU', Galerie Gregor Staiger, Zurich (2024); 'pool 6', Art Institute, Chicago (2024); 'THIS IS A TEST OF SEVERANCE. can you let go?', ART on the MART, Chicago (2024); 'it's not true!!! stop lying!', Sprüth Magers, Los Angeles (2024); 'NOT YOUR USUAL SELF', Sprüth Magers, Berlin (2023); 'pool 5', MoMA, New York (2022); 'govern me harder', 52 Walker, New York (2022); 'ri-mEm-buhr THuh mUHn- ee', Secession, Vienna (2021); 'That's the only way I can come', MASI, Lugano (2020); 'Eto Ti Na', MGLC, Ljubljana (2020); 'MOVE2020', (curated by Caroline Ferreira), Centre Pompidou, Paris (2020); 'what do you make of this? did you make this up?', Philara Collection, Düsseldorf (2020); 'Someone Ought to Tell You What It's Really All About', Serralves Museum of Contemporary Art, Porto (2019); 'warp and woof', Galerie Gregor Staiger, Zurich (2019); 'Explained Away', Kunstmuseum Liechtenstein, Vaduz (2019); 'Diffusion Line', Beursschouwburg, Brussels (2019). Turato has been featured in group exhibitions at Performa Biennial, New York; Astrup Fearnley Museet, Oslo; Kunsthau Hamburg; MUDAM, Luxembourg; Kunsthalle Basel; 58th October Salon, Belgrade Biennale; Cincinnati Contemporary Art Center and Kunstraum Kreuzberg/Bethanien, Berlin; DAAD Gallery, Berlin; Luma Foundation, Zurich; Museum of Contemporary Art, Zagreb; Museum of Contemporary Art Detroit; Manifesta 12, Palermo; Bielefelder Kunstverein; 'Klassentreffen, Werke aus der Sammlung Gaby und Wilhelm Schürmann', mumok, Vienna and others.