



Von Buren Contemporary presents

DARK NECESSITY

the solo exhibition of

MATTIA BARBALACO

Vernissage

Saturday October 26 and Sunday October 27 2024
6 p.m. – 9.30 p.m.

Presentation text: **Anna Gasperini**

the exhibition will remain on show until November 21
Opening hours: 11:00-13:30 and 16:00-19:30; Sunday and Monday by appointment

Von Buren Contemporary
Via Giulia 13, 00186 Rome

How can I be substantial if I do not cast a shadow? I must have a dark side also if I am to be whole...

Carl Jung

Von Buren Contemporary is proud to present ***DARK NECESSITY***, the solo exhibition of exciting young figurative painter **Mattia Barbalaco**.

For his first one-man show with Von Buren Contemporary, the 25-year-old Italian artist has created a world of psychologically charged images, filled with enigmatic details and disquieting tension, in which the term 'dark necessity' takes on many meanings.

An idiosyncratic storyteller of unquestionable technical prowess, Barbalaco immerses the viewer in a narrative where multiple strands mysteriously unfold. The action can sometimes seem baffling but there is always the sense that, however disturbing, complex or sexually-laden the atmosphere, viewers can always recognise the emotions at play.

Barbalaco's childhood interests provide clues to the roots of his remarkable imagination. An accomplished puppeteer, his paintings often seem like theatre sets for his figures, complete with props, animals and birds. Cockatoos in particular are a recurring and much-loved subject for the artist, who grew up with these birds in his home.

This new series is permeated with other influences ranging from Magical Realism and symbolism to the imagery of artists such as Otto Dix and Paula Rego. But it is the exploration of the subconscious mind that supplies the backbone, reflecting Barbalaco's longstanding interest in Jungian thought and theories. Carl Jung's philosophy about the shadow, a concept coined by the Swiss psychologist to describe the unknown aspects of the personality that one chooses to reject and repress, provides a key to deciphering the 'dark necessity' that Barbalaco has sought to transfer to canvas.

Mattia Barbalaco was born in Vibo Valentia in Calabria in 1999. In 2018 he moved to Rome to attend the city's Academy of Fine Arts, where he recently graduated in Painting with distinction. In 2022 he held his first two solo exhibitions, at the Blu Gallery in Bologna.

