

'A CAGE IN SEARCH OF A BIRD'

Dominique Cheminais
Exhibited at Kalashnikovv, Cape Town
02.10.24 – 02.11.24

An opening.
-like the haunting creak of a book spine unveiling a concealed, dark hallway to universes/ parts of self, unexplored.

A mined shadow, illuminating a raw/ feminine/ grotesque/ embodied surrender to the sweet sweet rage... the siren song... the crazy (justified?).

A mirror to the contorting, brightly broken, whimpering yet devilish grin echoing in us all;

-the warping, seductive cage of the mind.

Claimed by artist/ author/ muse with bold, graphic swipes of her name emblazoned- growing in size and confidence... the empowered joy of taking up space- an audacity of howls, rising toward a witches moon.

As the characters from *Many Shallows* fill the confines of their canvases/ imposed cages, this exhibition sparks conversation on all that we compress, contort or shrink to fit. Our own painful metamorphosis mirrored as they transform, breaking apart to break through/ free.

The accompanying exhibition text reimagines Kafka's cage in search of a bird as a lure for inspiration/ creativity/ imagination and brings to mind a poem that hung in my family home whilst growing up. A few lines by Wilfrid Gibson that read: *'For all my cunning art, I who would house a singing bird, have caged a broken heart.'* And then a personal favourite, Maya Angelou, who wrote *'the caged bird sings of freedom'*.

Cheminais trusts the possibilities of the open cage: painting and writing fluttering to visit interchangeably, informing each other with each return.

And, as seen in this showcase,
-singing with freedom.



Imagery: Jade Avigayil Staples, 3 October 2024, Artist Walkabout, Kalashnikovv, Cape Town.

Pictured Above: Dominique Cheminais (artist) and Keely Shinnars (artist).