

## PRESS RELEASE

### **SEW DENTS ON EVERY SKYLINE, The First Solo Exhibition of Marina Zumi in India**

- First Solo Exhibition of Street Artist, Marina Zumi (b. 1983 in Argentina; now based in Berlin) in India
- The exhibition opens on Saturday, October 5, 2024 at 6:30 pm at Gallery XXL
- The curation of **SEW DENTS ON EVERY SKYLINE** delves into the artist's engagement with canvases, color and light as well as different images that reflect on her journey as a woman artist who has occupied the streets and different art institutions alike

Gallery XXL is pleased to present **SEW DENTS ON EVERY SKYLINE**, the first solo exhibition of **Marina Zumi (b. 1983 in Argentina and now based in Berlin)**, an artist who has traveled through streets of **London, Miami, São Paulo and Buenos Aires**, and now presents a new body of work in the city of Mumbai, India. Opening on Saturday, October 5, 2024 at Gallery XXL with the artist in residence, the exhibition presents **canvases, found objects and installations** that incorporate paper, wood and neon wires; created from the years 2022 to 2024 in **Berlin and Mumbai**.

Following XXL's first solo exhibition **Follow the Bunny** – presenting works of Japanese-American artist AIKO – **SEW DENTS ON EVERY SKYLINE** furthers the gallery's attempt in creating a space-time for international artists to showcase their works in India. With a vision to foster cross-cultural exchanges – specifically expanding them through research and experimentation of multidisciplinary practices that have emerged from the urban contemporary and post-graffiti movements, this solo exhibition of Marina breaks open connections in between the public, the private and the human condition.

Marina's works that travel from an inquiry into void and darkness – inspired from the skies and cosmos as well as sacred geometry and nocturnal scenes she has encountered on streets – to a foregrounding of lighter and darker hues of colours to the white space, is accomplice to mediums that range from spray paint on walls to canvases. Extending her processes from embroidering neon lights and sculptural pieces in a moment of suspension, the works with a visible mathematical symmetry sink and flow through weaving objects and images. In addition, gradients that point at the direction of greatest change of scalar function, emerge as a visual that reflect on the journey of one entity and through Marina, many who *hold up half the sky* – in a desire to sew dents on every skyline.

While walking in the lanes of different cities into neo-muralism, then new technologies, the artist extends personal leanings that present questions on creating art in moments of conflict while simultaneously delving into experiences of love, injury and recovery, with the context of these works created during the isolations that came as a result of the global pandemic. In shifting basis – from open streets to private enclosures – Marina combines her style of mural painting with the act of mark making which is accomplished through the act of sewing images. Crafting submersive, site-specific installations that play with scale and perspective, often incorporating neon lights to compose a spectacle that brings the invisible entanglements between entities to the forefront, the artist also presents disintegrations of architectural images that hold gates to a dual push: of ascension and descension of fallen/falling pieces.

*The opening of the exhibition will be preceded by a prayer meeting for Hanif Kureshi, the Co-Founder, Artistic Director and Artist of Gallery XXL, XXL Collective, St+art India Foundation and Guerrilla Art & Design. The prayer meeting will commemorate the life and legacy of Hanif, who was instrumental in shaping the street art movement in India. His contributions towards democratising the arts through the streets has left an indelible mark. The XXL, St+Art and Guerrilla family mourns the loss of a friend, a mentor, a collaborator and an artist. The service will be held on **Saturday, October 5, 2024 from 11am to 1pm at Antisocial located in Lower Parel, Mumbai.** Following the service, the public opening of **SEW DENTS ON EVERY SKYLINE** will begin at 6:30 pm with a note/eulogy from the founders of Gallery XXL and St+art India Foundation.*

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## **About Marina Zumi**

Born in 1983 in Buenos Aires, Argentina, Marina Zumi is a multi-interdisciplinary artist based in Berlin since 2018.

Marina enrolled in the Fashion Design curriculum at the University of Buenos Aires, and although did not complete the degree, she had already started working at an established fashion brand. At the age of 20, while working in fashion and designing her own accessories, she was introduced to the South American neo-muralism scenes on the street where artists would paint large-scale murals around the city, especially exploring the relationship between colour and form.

She started practicing in the streets with friends who she would paint with over the weekends, taking time out from work. However, the financial crisis of 2008 gravely affected South America, and the rising inflation led Marina to leave Argentina and start painting in the streets of Brazil. After her move, she began experimenting with techniques of spray painting and got acquainted with local artists with whom she went on to co-found an artistic house called 'Colectivo 132' which later transformed into the gallery A7MA.

Eager to study oceanography as a child, Marina's fascination with nature and bioluminescence materialized in her visual practice portraying nocturnal environments within the noises of the city. While her murals were charged with colours, her works in the studio were layered with pigments of black. This dichotomy of painting light-ness in the streets and darkness in the studio resulted in her impressive interpretation of painting sunrises, sunsets and horizons.

Since 2011, Marina had been developing the series titled *Flux of Energy* as a study of dandelions made of geometric lines that would connect seven dots representing the space and time which tied her to her grandparents who lived across Argentina while she was growing up. She observed the dramatization of geometry and the kinetics of painting a line which urged her to use silver and golden metallic threads onto canvases produced with different textures, materials, densities, and formations of black.

With this allurements of highlighting luminosity through mediums, she started creating light-based installations in 2017 and in two years, conceptualized site-specific neon installations across multiple countries. Approaching light with an intention to evoke emotional sensibilities that are not technologically advanced, the light, for Marina, ultimately exudes a foresight for the future while reminiscing the past.

She remembers watching her grandmother embroider patches for her backpack. Her grandmother who used to sew clothes for dolls, after the birth of her children, gave it up to later weave tapestries of untold stories of her desires for the home. Marina taught herself how to sew and through that wove a relationship with her family who lived miles away. The process of sewing and eventually sewing with neon wires signified a union of care and endearment.

Following her textile experimentations at the studio, she progressed to a self-taught hand-embroidery technique where mathematical and sacred geometry would sink and flow through surfaces. She says, "Either with textile or neon threads, I want to sew the invisible entanglement in between entities, theories, feelings, atoms in the universe; merging in a single point for tapping into sub-cognitive connection." Her current body of work displays an atmospheric radiance that has transgressed the early darker toned works. The amorous colour waves of the skies and cosmos are pierced with hand-embroidered objects and settings that, many a times, are in a moment of suspension, ascension, dissension, and also disintegration.

Marina's colour spectacles are painted as murals around the world and have now become a tangible reality as the artist continues to explore analog and digital media with new technologies. She continues to work on independent and collaborative projects on the streets and in galleries generating immersive light installations and other mixed media artworks.

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Marina has painted walls in more than 35 countries and 4 continents, taking her from Argentina to Russia, the United States of America, China, Kazakhstan to many other countries. Her notable solo exhibitions are “Techno Poetry” held at Urban Spree, Berlin, Germany, in 2019 and “That Place,” Juxtapoz, held at the Mana Contemporary, Miami, USA in 2018. Some of her recent projects and group exhibitions where her works have been showcased include “Sun Rise – Sun Set,” Tahiti, French Polynesia, 2023; 0010 Exhibitions, “Vapor Wave,” Berlin, Germany, 2022; Swab Art Fair, MM Gallery, Barcelona, Spain, 2020; and “Imago,” MUCA Museum, Munic, Germany in 2018. After five years, the artist has returned to producing solo exhibitions starting with “Lil Pocket - Tiny Waist” hosted at the AS-EM Space in Leipzig, Germany and “SEW DENTS ON EVERY SKYLINE” at Gallery XXL, Mumbai, India.

Her works have been acquired by the Urban Nation Museum, The Pirelli Collection, The Montana State University, and The Argentina Metro Public Collection, and are spread across many private collections around Argentina, the United States of America, Germany, Brazil, Italy, Turkey, England, Kazakhstan, Belgium, China and Uruguay. Furthermore, her work has been published in various publications such as Juxtapoz Mag, USA, Arte IT, Cosmopolitan Spain and Rolling Stone Magazine BR.

### **About the Gallery**

Established in 2023, Gallery XXL is an urban contemporary art gallery based in Mumbai, India. The gallery represents and showcases a roster of Indian and international artists whose practices are rooted in a variety of disciplines that broaden the understanding of established categories and catalyse diverse exchanges through processual exhibitions, treating the gallery as a fluid institution which presents dynamic negotiations to the idea of a ‘white cube.’

With its name echoing Jean-Michel Basquiat’s city walk from Downtown 81 (Dir. Edo Bertoglio,) when he described his medium as “extra large,” Gallery XXL extends a desire for imaginations to be XXL, an abbreviation for ‘extra, extra, large’ and brings it to the city of Mumbai in order to examine the ambitious scale of visuals and conversations prevalent in urban art.

Arjun Bahl, Giulia Ambrogi, Thanish Thomas and the late Hanif Kureshi, the founders of St+Art India Foundation joined hands with Joe Cyril (Director, Gallery XXL) to start the space-time for Gallery XXL. Founded in 2014, St+Art India has been supporting street art in the country through public art projects. With the experience of creating artistic interventions in public as well as private spaces coalescing in order to widen engagement with urban art, aesthetics and culture work in the Indian context, St+art extends its vision to facilitate institutional representation for urban contemporary artists through exhibitions at Gallery XXL.

### **Team**

Giulia Ambrogi, Arjun Bahl, Thanish Thomas, Joe Cyril, Vidur Sethi, Sarah Malik, Faraz Khan, Akhil Kattamanchil, Guru Pednekar, and Babu Gundanoor.

### **Annexures**

The attached annexure includes the artist’s portraits, artwork captions and the drive consists of the invite and high resolution images of the artworks. For any more information, please contact [sarah@galleryxxl.com](mailto:sarah@galleryxxl.com).

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