

**Sascha Braunig: *Cauldron***

**March 12–April 25, 2026**

**Levels One and Two**

Magenta Plains is pleased to present *Cauldron*, an exhibition of new paintings by Sascha Braunig.

*My Death* is a novella by Lisa Tuttle, an American-born fantasy writer. In the story, an unnamed protagonist, a writer who is experiencing creative block after the death of her husband, comes across a dusty old memoir in a used bookstore. It's by Helen Ralston, a semi-forgotten author and artist who rubbed shoulders with the greats of 20th century literature. The protagonist becomes obsessed with the idea of writing Ralston's biography. Her editor is pleased with the idea and brings her to the home of a collector who owns a watercolor painting made by Ralston, entitled *My Death*. The painting at first seems only to depict a barren, rocky island landscape, but as she looks, she becomes aware that in the middle of the painting is a nude woman, exposing herself: "all the life of the painting was concentrated there," in the "pink slash" of the figure's painted vulva. The unnamed writer meets and interviews the very elderly Ralston and, during their visits, discovers a number of uncanny alignments between their lives. Events draw the narrator and Helen Ralston closer and closer to the island depicted in Ralston's painting *My Death* — a real place off the remote Scottish coast. In this place, where all of life is concentrated, Death becomes creative rebirth; becomes creative cannibalism; and becomes a second chance for both characters.

The novella's structure is an ouroboros, but content exceeds form. As art historian Spyros Papapetros, writing about snake motifs in archaic Greek pottery, observes: "It is as if the elastic tube of the snake's body carries within it an energy surpassing the capabilities of its diameter... Instead of being a figure enclosed inside a frame, the snake itself became an expansive frame enclosing all other figures... it could not be seen, but it was "all around." It could not be grasped because everything was inside it. Anywhere you stood, you could be stepping on a serpent's tail."

The paintings in *Cauldron* circle closer and closer to the painter's biography. The painter, who has enrobed her work in language for many years, now admits the possibility that painting is real, on its own terms. Painting is also a snake - the snake's body enclosing writers and painters who pass creative life back and forth along its length as it circulates endlessly, without feet.

Sascha Braunig (b. 1983, Qualicum Beach, BC) devotes her critical focus to the capaciousness and limitations of the feminine form under duress. Braunig's figures teeter towards overextension—waists are pinched to extremity; appendages are restricted or decked in barbs; phantom silhouettes sinuously negotiate and adapt to the contours of their technicolor environments. Drawing on feminist artistic discourse, Braunig's imaginaries engage the ways that gender performance and systems of power are replicated. Training, fitting, and reinforcement are recurring motifs in the severe and sometimes sinister crucibles which Braunig's figures endure. Cast in vibrant complementary palettes and anchored through Braunig's graphic, tensile formal vocabulary, her images recapitulate and usurp foundational codes of gendered visuality to create surreal and unequivocally emblematic scenes.

Braunig holds a BFA from Cooper Union and an MFA in painting from Yale University, and has been awarded residencies at MacDowell, the Sharpe-Walentas Studio Program, and Surf Point. Selected solo exhibitions include François Ghebaly, New York and Los Angeles, USA; Oakville Galleries, Ontario, Canada; Magenta Plains, New York, USA; Office Baroque, Brussels, Belgium; Atlanta Contemporary, Atlanta, USA; and MoMA PS1, New York, USA. Her work has been featured in institutional exhibitions including the Quebec City Biennial; Oakville Galleries, Ontario, Canada; the Portland Museum of Art, Portland, USA; National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne, Australia; Aishti Foundation, Beirut, Lebanon; Museum of Contemporary Art Cleveland, Cleveland, USA; and the New Museum Triennial, New York, USA. Braunig has forthcoming solo exhibitions at Magenta Plains, New York and the Portland Museum of Art, Maine. Braunig lives and works in Portland, ME.