

# ARTFORUM



**Zoe Barcza, Polycule Cringe, 2021**, acrylic, vinyl paint, and collage on canvas, 48 x 40". Photo Jan Sondergaard. Courtesy the artist and Bianca D'Alessandro.

COPENHAGEN

## Zoe Barcza

BIANCA D'ALESSANDRO  
Frederiksholms Kanal 28A  
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Within the five canvasses that form the core of Zoe Barcza's solo show "Birth Refusal," the artist takes the piss out of our obsession with taste and manners through caricature and satire. Alongside airbrush and acrylic paint, the artist uses collage both as a technique and as a methodology, constructing layers of heavy-handed metaphors only to see them collapse under the weight of their own ciphers.

Text is an integral part of the artist's work, where it serves as both a clear signifier and thwarts any possibility of a univocal reading of the images. The bifurcated gaze between language and forms is reflected in the doubling up of images, a strategy Barcza has developed across previous bodies of work. A Satire (all works 2021) presents two versions of the artist's naked body, both wearing a pig snout.

One figure is on her hands and knees, suckling on the other's multiple breasts. Milk spills out to form the word NEUROSES, while three syringes, labeled OH, ME, and UNIQUE, prick the first woman's haunches. In Polycule Cringe, a female figure canoodles with two men (identified as TASTE and MANNERS), whose foreheads have been pasted over with images of a woman's eyes, conflating views of "self" and "other."

In another self-portrait, Subculture Beyotch, Barcza heightens the tension between her complicity with the commercialized art world and her identification with subculture as a space free from mainstream taste and norms. A caricature of the artist's seminaked body rides a motorbike over images of herself, her friends, and her gallerists, all clustered around a quote from a Frank Zappa album sleeve that is itself a satire of the Beatles' iconic Sgt. Pepper's cover: WE'RE ONLY IN IT FOR THE MONEY.

— *Francesca Astesani*