

For immediate release:

## MONIKA WEISS

### *KOIMAN II – Years Without Summers (24 Nocturnes)*

ONLINE VIEWING ROOM EXCLUSIVE

Silas Von Morisse Gallery is pleased to present MONIKA WEISS *KOIMAN II - Years Without Summers (24 Nocturnes)*, an online Viewing Room Exclusive of celebrated Polish artist MONIKA WEISS.

Monika Weiss' ***Koiman II – Years Without Summers (24 Nocturnes)*** is a single-channel, digital 4K film projection with sound, comprising of 24 short films and sound compositions, accompanied by a series of 24 related charcoal and graphite drawings.

This work—inspired by *Winterreise (Winter Journey)*, a cycle of 24 songs for voice and piano composed in 1828 by Franz Schubert— is dedicated to the artist's late mother, pianist Gabriela Weiss, and to current refugees and migrants around the world.

In 1815, the eruption of the Mt. Tambora volcano in Indonesia caused a globally migrating ash cloud, resulting in dramatic cooling in Europe and the northern United States. The unusually cold and dark summer of 1816, often referred to as the "year without summer" was characterized by persistent rain, snow and frost, which triggered agricultural disaster, famine and migration and potentially inspired a number of works by artists, composers and writers at the time, including *Winterreise*. The accounts by travellers at sea following the explosion describe dark days where it was impossible "to see your hand outstretched." Weiss chose the musical and painterly form of the nocturne as a metaphor for the darkness of the *year without summer* and the current time in which our culture and civilization today truly cannot see its own future beyond "the hand outstretched."

*"Two hundred years later, the world appears to me as if shrouded in a symbolic ash cloud resulting from global climate change, the current refugee crisis and the gradual global move towards fascist ideologies,"* says the artist. *"Koiman II is meant to evoke this notion of darkness, coldness and clouding, yet it also offers filmic and sonic poetry and beauty, as a form of hope and a place of refuge."*

***Koiman II*** presents Weiss' vision of our current period of "dark summers" through her film, drawing and musical composition and performance. Her' silent films depict gradually unfolding scenes shot from a stationary camera, suggesting a contemplative viewing akin to painting or drawing. Each of the 24 "still-films" shows an anonymous female protagonist (performed by the artist in wintry landscapes) wearing a veil and long black dress; the silent, slow gestures evoke a mournful lamentation. The scenes are choreographed, filmed and edited by the artist, who uses superimposition and reversed sequences to create a sense of suspended time, with no clear beginning or end. Weiss wrote vocal and instrumental music for each of the films and worked with opera vocalists to perform her compositions. She edited and recomposed the recordings into unique, polyphonic environments for each film. All of the drawings in the exhibition appear as superimposed images in the films while existing as individual, stand-alone works.

*"The whole of this work is dedicated to my late mother, pianist Gabriela Weiss who died in April 2017, and to all currently displaced refugees and migrants trying to find shelter. As a child I listened daily to my mother practicing Chopin's Nocturnes. Forever scarred by World War II, my mother barely escaped a hunt systematically exercised by both Soviet and German occupants in Poland, surviving as a refugee in her mother's arms."* (Monika Weiss)

To date this project has received generous support from **Harvestworks Digital Media Arts Center**, New York City, **BRIC Arts Media**, Brooklyn, NY, and **Yaddo Artists' Colony**, Saratoga Springs, NY.

Please contact the gallery for studio visits, inquiries, images and interview [info@silasvonmorisse.com](mailto:info@silasvonmorisse.com)