

PRESS RELEASE

RICHARD  
TAITTINGER  
GALLERY

# MARIA QAMAR

## **BLOODY PHOOL**

MAY 3<sup>RD</sup> - MAY 28<sup>TH</sup> 2023

OPENING RECEPTION: WEDNESDAY MAY 3<sup>RD</sup> 6-9 PM

154 LUDLOW STREET NEW YORK, NY 10002  
TUESDAY - SUNDAY 11 AM - 7PM

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CHOTA DIMAAG, 2023, ACRYLIC AND INK ON CANVAS, 49 X 49 IN (124.46 X 124.46 CM)

RICHARD TAITTINGER GALLERY is thrilled to announce the exclusive representation of **MARIA QAMAR (@hatecopy)** in both the United States and the United Kingdom. We are pleased to present her exciting new solo exhibition **"BLOODY PHOOL"** on view at 154 Ludlow Street from May 3<sup>rd</sup> through May 28<sup>th</sup>.

Maria Qamar was born in 1991 to an Indian mother and a Bangladeshi father. Right before her teenage years, she moved with her family to Toronto, Canada where she faced relentless bullying in the aftermath of 9/11. In 2017, Qamar started her breakthrough career with social media and the publication of her book **"TRUST NO AUNTY"**.

Qamar broke into the New York art world with her first physical solo exhibition **"FRAAAAANDSHIP!"** at Richard Taittinger Gallery in August of 2019, which boasted an attendance of over 4,000 people on the opening night. New York Times Journalist, Alisha Gupta, described Qamar and her first show as a **"Colorful, politically engaged Instagram feed brought to life."**

Her second New York show, scheduled for Spring 2020 was canceled due to the Covid-19 Pandemic. Richard Taittinger Gallery adapted to hold the **"ME, MERASELF, AND I"** exhibition online via a 3D platform opening on July 9th in 4 different countries (New York at 9 a.m., London at 3 p.m., Mumbai at 6:30 p.m., and Tokyo at 10 p.m.). This pioneering approach to viewing art installations helped Qamar engage with more audiences across the world. Sarika Sharma, from The Tribune India, described her work as **"straight out**

**of comic books"** and detailed how relatable her approach was not just to a Desi audience, but an international one.

In March 2022, Qamar had her first museum show at MOCA Toronto titled, **"DHAMAKEDAR SUPERSTAR!"**. Qamar has not taken a break from her craft and has continued to be featured in a variety of museums, festivals, auctions, and exhibitions. Known for her defiant and bold art style, she has made a career through mural painting and a dynamic social media presents. She has been featured in a variety of locations including: Muralfest, MOCA, and the Harbourfront Center.

**"BLOODY PHOOL"** translates in Hindi as "Bloody Flower" and phonetically in English as "Bloody Fool". This exhibit primarily focuses on betrayal, feminine rage, PTSD, and psychedelics. For her new solo exhibition, Qamar explores the imposed role of female protagonists in Bollywood traditions, as well as the idealized view of womanhood presented within them. Drawing inspiration from the Bollywood industry that Qamar grew up on and identifies with, the exhibition showcases collages with various Bollywood DVD covers and posters generously donated by fans.

Building on her heritage and childhood, Qamar explores an awareness and understanding of the complex depiction of femininity and sexuality within Indian art forms. The inclusion of her works in tandem with Bollywood imagery reveals a tension between the fantasy and the reality. Thus, forming a rift between perceptions of women in relationships and the outcomes of deception and feminine rage.



BLOODY PHOOL, 2023, ACRYLIC AND INK ON CANVAS, 49 X 49 IN (124.46H X 124.46W CM)

Each piece tells a different story of deception and lies that Qamar feels her audience can relate to. In typical fashion, she has elected to transform the actual gallery into a completely immersive space that allows the viewer to completely immerse themselves in the rage-fueled narrative of red walls, a color indicative of celebration, violence, or sometimes – in Qamar’s words – both.

With the experience of working with artists like Shepard Fairey, Jingyi Wang, and more, Qamar has continued to make a name for herself and proven her style is highly sought after and here to stay. Catching the attention of talents and celebrities like Mindy Kaling and Naomi Osaka, Qamar has demonstrated that there is an interest in her unique take on South Asian standards and artforms. She has elevated her artwork and notoriety while still holding true to her Desi roots, playful colors, and pop-artesque feel.

“BLOODY PHOOL” is on display at Richard Taittinger Gallery through May 28<sup>th</sup> at 154 Ludlow Street. Select artworks and merchandise are available online for purchase at [richardtaittinger.com](http://richardtaittinger.com).



BHOOT, 2023, ACRYLIC ON CANVAS, 79 X 49 IN (200.7 X 124.5 CM)



## MARIA QAMAR

**Maria Qamar (b. 1991)** is a first-generation Canadian from a traditional South Asian family. She moved to Canada at the age of 9 in 2001 and endured bullying and racism as a young girl in a post 9/11 Toronto. Qamar found her artistic voice through Instagram where her illustrations resonated with the Desi community, particularly the second generation. Art became a means for her to handle realities of being brown and South Asian in an early-2000s North American context. Her work is collected by Mindy Kaling and was featured on *The Mindy Project*. She is an Instagram sensation and the author of *TRUST NO AUNTY* published in 2017. In 2019, she received a breakthrough show at Richard Taittinger Gallery titled “*FRAAANDSHIP!*”. Her first virtual show “*ME, MERASELF, AND I*” was held during the Covid-19 Pandemic. In 2022, her first Museum appearance was hosted at Moca and was titled “*DHAMAKEDAR SUPERSTAR!*”. Her artwork has been shown in the AGO in Toronto, Mumbai Comicon, and the Oxo Tower Wharf in London, England. She has also been a part of exhibits at Mural Festival, and Saatchi Gallery. She has been featured on NPR, CBC, HarpersBAZAAR.com, and in *The Toronto Star*, *FLARE Magazine*, *Bon Appetit* and several other publications. Maria currently lives and works in Toronto, Canada.

Richard Taittinger Gallery will organize Maria Qamar’s first solo show in the United Kingdom in London in Spring of 2024.

## RICHARD TAITTINGER GALLERY

Founded in 2014 by Richard Frerejean Taittinger, **Richard Taittinger Gallery** is a 3 level, 6,000 sq ft space designed by studioMDA. A pioneer of New York City’s Lower East Side art scene, today RTG is surrounded by cultural institutions including the New Museum, the International Center for Photography, and the Brant Foundation.

RTG represents a diverse roster of leading international artists at various stages of their careers covering every medium and photography. Working closely with museum curators, RTG has successfully placed works by our artists in over 25 prestigious museum collections.

RTG advocates for price transparency and democratization of the art world, showing artists who are outside of the traditional art world system. It is a gallery that supports artists attuned to ethical values, human rights, diversity, feminism, and environmental issues. In July 2019, RTG launched a print program, and in June 2021 launched its NFT program offering affordable works to encourage collecting.