

EDWYNN HOUK GALLERY

PRESS RELEASE



The Girl who Never Died, 2022

VALÉRIE BELIN:

Heroes & Modern Royals **20 April – 17 June 2023**

Edwynn Houk Gallery is proud to present the Global Premiere of Valerie Belin's latest series *Heroes* (2022). The exhibition will feature seven large-scale color photographs from *Heroes* (2022) presented along-side three large-scale color photographs from the *Modern Royals* series (2020), offering a unique opportunity to witness the development of Belin's imaginative portraiture over time. The exhibition will be on view from 20 April through 17 June 2023.

Expanding upon the distinction between the real and the imaginary, *Heroes* consists of portraits of young models wearing make up in a style inspired by the codes of theatrical representation and mime. The models are placed in front of digitally composed backdrops that draw from American thriller culture by evoking the worlds of cinema, entertainment, and nightlife. The make-up, worked out and drawn on paper before being applied, draws attention to the artificiality and mask-like nature of the models' faces through its over-signification. The graphic and pictorial motifs of the make-up resonate with the narrative elements of the background, making the characters protagonists of the scenes around them.

Presented alongside *Heroes* are three photographs from Belin's *Modern Royals* series. Inspired by the aesthetic vernacular used for the covers of fashion and news magazines, *Modern Royals* presents a series of portraits of a single model embodying a multiplicity of personalities. Through variations in her dress, pose or demeanor, each portrait assumes an individual persona posed in front of a backdrop of neon signage and motifs appropriated from American comic books. The resulting effect is a paradoxical impression of personal individuality amongst collective similarity.

The exhibition offers a rare opportunity to explore the development of Valerie Belin's work, as she continues to explore the boundaries between the real and the imaginary. For more information and press images, please contact [Julie Castellano](#).