

FRIDMAN GALLERY

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE - January 19, 2016



Lucid Dreaming

Dasha Shishkin, Kelly McRaven, Vera Iliatova

January 29 – March 4, 2016

Opening reception: Friday, January 29, 6-8pm.

Fridman Gallery is pleased to present *Lucid Dreaming*, a selection of work by three painters of one generation working in New York. For the past 10 years (in the throes of a painting scene mostly dominated by abstraction), these artists have developed in-depth bodies of work that ignite the more traditional genres of painting – figuration, still life, landscape or domestic interiors – with a sense of contemporary urgency. Each subverts outright representation by adjusting values of luminosity and scale to varying degrees. As a result, we are faced with a mode of supposed reality closer to a lucid dream state or 'false awakening', than to one deriving from observation.

Dasha Shishkin's dense drawings on Mylar depict social life through an insistent impressionistic atmosphere that is both enlivening and obfuscating. Her figures seem submerged in the miasma of subconscious activity simultaneous to daily interactions. Harkening back to the antics of artists such as Toulouse Lautrec, wherein excesses of nightlife and social life spill over into caricature, Shishkin's highly colorized scenes hover between past and present / real and liminal spaces. The characters grin, as if to confirm that we are in on the secret – the scene is not real and everything is possible.

The focus of Kelly McRaven's work has been the very immediate environment of her living space and her studio, and relaying the same stillness to landscapes. Through her deft use of light and outline, she imbues quotidian moments or domestic scenes with a subtle presence of awe. Manet's insistent, inky blacks occasionally come through McRaven's work in a way that grounds it squarely in the space of the psyche. In one of her most recent paintings, we can trail the protagonist entering a vast forest, as if we were behind a camera trained on our own projection of a lucid dream.

Vera Iliatova creates ambiguous narrative scenes with figures in pictorial landscapes reminiscent of the early Soviet painters Alexander Deineka and Yuri Pimenov. Yet her treatment of scale and choice of framing derail the viewer's expectations and veer towards a more disorienting sense of time and place. Flowers and fauna, in this particular body of work, take center stage, and like a metaphoric 'time-keeper' are degrading at a faster pace than the rest of the scene allows. By contrast, the distant planes are like layers of subconscious memories, indelibly faded into the background.

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Dasha Shishkin earned an MFA from Columbia University (2006) and a BFA from the New School for Social Research (2001). Solo exhibitions include the Museum of Contemporary Art, Santa Barbara, CA; Griffelkunst, Hamburg, Germany; and Contemporary Arts Center, Cincinnati, OH. She is represented by Susanne Velmetter, Los Angeles, CA, and Gio Marconi Gallery, Milan, Italy. Shishkin lives and works in Brooklyn, NY.

Kelly McRaven received an MFA in Painting from Tyler School of Art in 2005 and a BFA in Painting from Ohio University in 1999. She was awarded several prestigious residencies and grants, including by the Skowhegan School of Painting and Sculpture, the Joann Mitchell Foundation and the Atlantic Center for the Arts. Her work has been shown in solo and group exhibitions. McRaven lives and works in Brooklyn, NY.

Vera Iliatova earned an MFA in Painting/Printmaking from Yale University in 2001 and a BA from Brandeis University in 1997. She studied at the Sorbonne University and completed a residency at the Skowhegan School of Art in Maine. Her work has been exhibited internationally. She is represented by Tibor de Nagy Gallery, NY and Monya Rowe Gallery, Saint Augustine, FL. Iliatova lives and works in Brooklyn, NY.

Special thanks to Regine Basha