

DOLBY CHADWICK GALLERY

Alex Kanevsky

The Fox and the Hedgehog

February 7–March 2, 2013

Alex Kanevsky's sixth solo show at the Dolby Chadwick Gallery, "The Fox and the Hedgehog," is an allusion to the aphorism "the fox knows many little things, but the hedgehog knows one big thing," commonly attributed to the Greek poet Archilochus. Though its precise meaning is largely disputed, this cryptic line gains traction in the context of Kanevsky's art, which allows the viewer to see the world through the eyes of both the fox and the hedgehog. To the skittish fox, who knows many little things, each painting is a snapshot of a moment in time. In opposition to the fox's linear way of knowing—where cognition unfolds chronologically as a series of single frames—it is also possible to absorb the contents of each painting in a more synchronic manner, like the hedgehog would.

From the perspective of the hedgehog, Kanevsky's paintings collapse past, present, and future. We not only see a woman lounging on the floor through a pair of French doors in *Interior (Exterior)*, we see her readjusting her dress as she combs her fingers through splayed hair, we see the doors swinging in the wind, the cool air circulating, and the low sun creeping across flesh and floorboards. The collapse of space is also achieved through perspective and allusion. Featuring a woman clad in a kimono-esque robe sitting atop a dramatically tilted table, *JFH with painting* assumes many of the characteristics of Japanese ukiyo-e—a style known for its multiple competing perspectives. The shallow space of *JFH with painting* is furthermore abutted by a flat, boldly-patterned background (ostensibly the painting in the title) reminiscent of abstract Japanese cherry blossoms.

Paintings like these successfully capture "that one big thing" that transcends the limitations of linearity. That one big thing can also be interpreted more literally. Many of the works in this exhibition, especially a collection of 18- by 18-inch works on board, feature a single subject. Such a narrow focus allows Kanevsky to study a given subject deeply and exhaustively, with the result that the viewer comes away feeling as if she's glimpsed something so full that it necessarily exceeds the sum of its parts.

Despite the paintings' conceptual sympathies with early schools of modernism that used multiple, often fragmenting perspectives to reveal different truths about a subject, Kanevsky's loose brushstrokes and use of color are more closely aligned with those painters who reacted against the traditional rules of the 19th century French academy.

DOLBY CHADWICK GALLERY

Though *Monet in his Garden* serves as an affirmation of this affinity, the painting is more an exploration of reality—or lack thereof—than an homage to the great French painter. Another one of Kanevsky's small, square works, this painting is inspired by little-known footage from 1915 showing Claude Monet in his garden at Giverny. Kanevsky explains how he was struck by the film's light—which is eerily similar to the light in many of Monet's paintings—its grainy black and white quality, and the way Monet's shadowed face and bright white coat mimic a photographic negative. So moved by the footage, Kanevsky set out to re-imagine its reality by mapping colors across its basic coordinates.

The footage also presents a rare glimpse of a man at work in his private space. As our personal environments exert significant impacts on our individual realities, the spaces we occupy are particularly important to Kanevsky:

My models' life experiences are shaped by their environments and they, of course, in turn shape their environments. Questions of private and public space come up. Your bedroom is your private space. The painting you are in is a public space. What is it when your bedroom is in a painting? Placing a person in their environment on a painting elicits the question of including or excluding the viewer in that environment. That ultimately shapes your experience with the painting, as a viewer.

-- Alex Kanevsky

What then does it mean for us to be privy to Monet's garden? How is the garden an extension of both the subject and the viewer? How can we think about the private spaces depicted in *Red Apartment* and the eerily empty *Four Doors*? How do these concerns reflect the enigmatic fragment about the fox and the hedgehog, if at all? The beauty of such questions lies in their resistance to resolution. Kanevsky explains: "All of these paintings are sort of representational Rorschach blots. It is not what object is in the picture that matters, but what emotional response the painting triggers. So if I have any reality in these paintings, it is only for that reason."

Alex Kanevsky was born in 1963 in Rostov-na-Donu, Russia and studied at the Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts. He has been the recipient of numerous fellowships and awards, including the Pew Fellowship for painting in 1997 and, most recently, a residency at the Lux Art Institute in San Diego. In addition to exhibiting across North America and Europe, his art can be found in the permanent collection of the Achenbach Collection, San Francisco Museum of Fine Arts. He has been reviewed in *Art in America*, the *San Francisco Chronicle*, the *LA Times*, *The New York Observer*, and *The Philadelphia Inquirer*. In 2011, his painting "Big Head" was included in the Dolby Chadwick exhibition *HEADS*, curated by Peter Selz.

DOLBY CHADWICK GALLERY

Alex Kanevsky

b. Rostvo-na-Donu, Russia 1963

EDUCATION

- 1989-1993 Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts, Philadelphia, PA
1980-1983 Vilnius University, Vilnius, Lithuania

SOLO EXHIBITIONS

- 2013 *The Fox and The Hedgehog*, Dolby Chadwick Gallery, San Francisco, CA
2012 Lux Art Institute, San Diego, CA
2011 *Heroes and Animals*, J. Cacciola Gallery, New York, NY
2010 *Heroes and Animals*, Dolby Chadwick Gallery, San Francisco, CA
2009 *Proserpine*, J. Cacciola Gallery, New York, NY
2008 *Waves & X-Rays*, Rosenfeld Gallery, Philadelphia, PA
2008 *Visitations*, Dolby Chadwick Gallery, San Francisco, CA
2007 *Parlor Games*, J. Cacciola Gallery, New York, NY
2006 *Paintings*, Gallerie de Bellefeuille, Montreal, Canada
2005 *Instances of Stillness*, Dolby Chadwick Gallery, San Francisco, CA
 New Paintings, J. Cacciola Gallery, New York, NY
2004 *Photographs*, Rosenfeld Gallery, Philadelphia, PA
 Short Focus Paintings, Somerville Manning Gallery, Greenville, DE
2003 *Short Focus Paintings*, Dolby Chadwick Gallery, San Francisco, CA
 Mediated Pleasures, J. Cacciola Galleries, New York, NY
2002 Rosenfeld Gallery, Philadelphia, PA
2001 Dolby Chadwick Gallery, San Francisco, CA
 J. Cacciola Galleries, New York, NY
2000 *Overwhelmed Portraiture*, Philadelphia Art Alliance
 Rosenfeld Gallery, Philadelphia, PA
1999 *Strong Light Paintings*, Somerville Manning Gallery, Greenville, DE
1998 Rosenfeld Gallery, Philadelphia, PA
1997 *Motion Paintings*, Merrimack College, Andover, MA
 Somerville Manning Gallery, Greenville, DE
1996 Rosenfeld Gallery, Philadelphia, PA
1995 Rosenfeld Gallery, Philadelphia, PA

SELECTED GROUP SHOWS

- 2011 *Accumulations*, J. Cacciola, New York, NY,
2010 *Remnants*, Fuse Gallery, New York, NY
 Visual Voices, Stedman Gallery, Rutgers University

DOLBY CHADWICK GALLERY

- 2009 *Fine Artists of Accomplishment*, Somerville Manning Gallery
- 2008 *Into Your Head*, Hopkinson House Gallery of Contemporary Art, Haddon Township, NJ
Painterly Painting: The Next Level, The Art Museum of Los Gatos, CA
Edwards Art Gallery, Holderness School, Plymouth, N.H.
- 2007 *10 Year Anniversary*, Dolby Chadwick Gallery, San Francisco, CA
Finding a Form – Influences in Figurative Painting Tower Gallery, Philadelphia, PA
True Love Always, curated by Rebecca Campbell, Angles Gallery, Santa Monica, CA
- 2006 *Bader Fund, The First Three Years*, Brady Art Gallery, G. Washington University, Washington, D.C.
Art 212 New York, NY
- 2005 *Very Early Pictures*, Arcadia University Art Gallery, Glenside, PA
Figura, Gallerie de Bellefeuille, Montreal, Canada
- 2004 *Pittura e fotografia dal punto di vista dell'occhio moderno*, Castell Welsperg, Italy
Works on Paper 2004, Arcadia University Art Gallery, Glenside, PA
Paintings & Photographs (together with Jon Redmond) J. Cacciola Gallery, New York, NY
- 2003 *Mostra di Opere in Formato Piccolo*, Casa Wassermann, Villabassa, Italy
- 2001 *Form & Figure*, J. Cacciola Galleries, New York
- 1999 *The Edge of Vision, The Edge of Sight*, Montserrat College of Art, Beverly, MA
- 1998 *Pertaining to Philadelphia*, Mulligan-Shanoski Gallery, San Francisco, CA
Through The Heart Of The City, Art Alliance, Philadelphia, PA
- 1997 *Contemporary Landscape*, Berman Museum of Art - Ursinus College, Bucknell University
- 1994 *Double Exposure*, curated by Dore Ashton, Pleiades Gallery, New York, NY

PUBLICATIONS

- Peter Selz, *Alex Kanevsky*, Art in America, January 2011
- Kenneth Baker, *Kanevsky at Dolby Chadwick Gallery*, San Francisco Chronicle, October 2010
- Polish Rider 2*, Subaltern Magazine (cover), Nr1, Sweden, 2010
- ALS with Movement*, Versal 7 (cover), Amsterdam, Netherlands, 2009
- Mario Navse, *Alex Kanevsky, -- Prosperine*, City Arts, NYC, May 2009
- Alexandra Bourre, *Alex Kanevsky*, Vernissages, France, January 2009
- Alex Kanevsky, 13 paintings*, Guernica, Magazine of Art & Politics, January 2009
- Peter Campion, *Painterly Painting: The Next Level*, exhibition catalog at The Art Museum of Los Gatos, 2008
- Al Gury, *Alla Prima Painting*, Watson & Gupil, NY 2008

DOLBY CHADWICK GALLERY

Carina Chocanom, *Synecdoche*, NY, LA Times movie review, September 2008
Peggy's House, Harper's Magazine (Readings), September 2009
David Miklos, *La Hermana Falsa*, Tusquets Editores, Mexico, 2008
Kenneth Baker, *Kanevsky in his stride*, San Francisco Chronicle, May 10, 2008
Valerie Gladstone, *Alex Kanevsky / J.Cacciola Gallery*, Art News, reviews, September 2007
Holly Myers, *Considering affairs of the heart*, Los Angeles Times, 3.9.2007
Sharon Mizota, *Alex Kanevsky's paintings tell a story about how we capture time and truth*,
San Francisco Weekly, Dec 28, 2005
Mario Neves, exhibition review, The New York Observer 5.30.2005
Tyler Benedict, *Figura* – catalog of group exhibition at the Galleries de Bellefeuille,
Montreal, Canada
Victoria Donohoe, *Painter takes cues from camera*, Philadelphia Inquirer, 3.28.2004
Harper's Magazine. May 2004, *Fox Hunt*
Harper's Magazine. November 2003, *T.S. in Her Bath*
West Branch Magazine, December 2003, *Blue Horizon 3 - cover*
Robert Flynn Johnson, *Love Affair with Paint*, Dolby Chadwick Gallery catalog essay,
September 2003
New American Paintings, Number 45, May 2003
Tom Cszasz, *Observation of Time and Lived Moments: Paintings of Alex Kanevsky*, Cacciola
Gallery catalog essay, 2003
New American Paintings, Number 27 cover, May 2000
Edward J. Sozanski, *Raking Light*, Philadelphia Inquirer 5.26.2000
Catherine Quillman, *Review*, Philadelphia Inquirer, 10.21.99
Victoria Donohoe, *Review*, Philadelphia Inquirer, 10.17.99
Joshua Meyer, *Review*, Art New England, 4-5.99
Superfly Artists on the Verge – 25 Artists to Watch, Philadelphia Weekly 9.23.98
Gerard Brown, *Fast, Smearred and Out of Control*, Philadelphia Weekly 4.29.98
Ellen Andersen, *Motion paintings*, Haverhill Gazette, 1.15.98
Judith E. Stein, *Ars Longa, and It Keeps Changing*, Pew Fellowships in the Arts catalog, 1997
John Chambless, *Review*, Philadelphia Inquirer, 3.14.97
Tom Cszasz, *Alex Kanevsky - Rosenfeld Gallery*, New Art Examiner 5.1995

AWARDS

2008	Pennsylvania Council on the Arts, painting fellowship
2007	Eagle Hill Foundation, Steuben, ME, painting residency
2006	Pennsylvania Council on the Arts, painting fellowship
2004	Pennsylvania Council on the Arts, painting fellowship
2003	Frantz and Virginia Bader Fund, grant for painting
2003	The Ballinglen Arts Foundation, Ireland, residency fellowship
2002	Pennsylvania Council on the Arts, painting fellowship

DOLBY CHADWICK GALLERY

2000, 03	New American Paintings, 1999 and 2003 Open Studios Competitions (Volumes 27, cover and 45)
1997	Pew Fellowship in the Arts, painting fellowship
1994	Vermont Studio Center, Johnson, VT, painting fellowship
1993	Pennsylvania Governor's Award for Painting
1993	Mary Townsend & William Clarke Mason Memorial Prize in Sculpture
1992	William Emlen Cresson Memorial Travel Scholarship Mabel Wilson Woodrow Memorial Award Pearson Memorial Prize for Painting

SPECIAL PROJECTS AND COLLECTIONS

2010	Achenbach Collection, Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco, de Young & Legion of Honor, San Francisco, CA
2010	Woodmere Museum Collection, Philadelphia, PA
2008	<i>Synecdoche, NY</i> , film directed by Charlie Kaufman – paintings for the film
2007	<i>Vast Beautiful System (barely holding together)</i> , Jenny Jaskey Gallery (Tower), Philadelphia, PA –curating

TEACHING

2002–present	Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts, Philadelphia, Adjunct Painting Instructor
2005	Governor's Institutes on the Arts, Castleton, VT, Visiting artist
2004	Painting and Photography through the Contemporary Eye, Dobbiaco, Italy, Artist in Residence
2004	University of Delaware, Newark, DE, Visiting Artist/ Critic
2001 - 2003	Governor's Institutes on the Arts, Castleton, VT, Painting Teacher