

DOLBY CHADWICK GALLERY

Alex Kanevsky *Scrambling for Grace*

Dolby Chadwick Gallery is pleased to announce *Scrambling for Grace*, an exhibition of new work by Alex Kanevsky.

Kanevsky's paintings resound with a fluid, sensual energy. Bodies often appear suspended in space, fractured and glimmering, as they converge and intersect with their surroundings. Forms move through each other, as if all matter were malleable, even immaterial. Interiors pulsate as walls and floors bend and shift, while lush landscapes ripple and expand. Even the quieter, more tonal settings that are typically inhabited by nudes teem with the energy of his exuberant marks and experiments with light. The works hold multitudes, capturing innumerable moments that overlap and spill over as they fill the canvas.

The language of the paintings is wholly visual, Kanevsky observes; by resisting the verbal, they resist systems of order and meaning that rely on naming and schematic structures. The works can instead be understood as offering views of the world that are unfiltered and unhampered by our preconceptions. What we grasp is rather visual data in a state of flux, mirroring the vibrations of our eye, which must constantly move, albeit imperceptibly, in order to reconstruct a scene.

The works reveal how things appear to us at the most basic level—they foreground sensory experiences and their visceral impact—rather than our ideas of those things. *Breakfast on the Grass* (2020) may initially fit our concept of the famed outdoor *déjeuner sur l'herbe*, but it quickly pushes beyond these confines as we scan the painting, taking in unexpected, even enigmatic, shadows, forms, omissions, additions, and interactions. As this and Kanevsky's other works demonstrate, a translation between the visual and verbal can be effected, but much will be lost along the way. Close looking and attending to relationships between color, light, form, and motion, on the other hand, allow for fuller communion with the paintings.

If the subjects thwart our preconceptions—even the artist's own—how, then, does Kanevsky choose what to paint? Why these images and not others? Just as the images confuse the brain's attempts to make meaning, their selection, too, resists rationalization. "I just try to respond sensitively and honestly to the images that my life throws at me. They all have something directly to do with my life," Kanevsky explains. "What actually goes on in these pictures, their literal content, as it were, is beside the point. They mean something else, and that something can only be expressed in visual terms."

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Alex Kanevsky was born in 1963, in Rostov-na-Donu, Russia, and studied at the Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts in Philadelphia, where he has also taught. He cites a range of influences, from Velásquez to Joseph Beuys, James Joyce to Cormac McCarthy, and Tarkovsky to Kaurismäki. His work has been included in exhibitions across North America and Europe, and can be found in the Achenbach Collection at the Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco, among other collections. Kanevsky is the recipient of numerous fellowships and awards, including the Pew Fellowship for painting. *Art in America*, *Harper's Magazine*, *the San Francisco Chronicle*, the *Philadelphia Inquirer*, and *Squarecylinder*, among others, have featured his work. This will be his tenth solo exhibition at the Dolby Chadwick Gallery.