

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Reception: Saturday September 10, 5-7 pm
534 West 24th Street
212.243.3335

Nicole Klagsbrun PROJECT



EVAN GRUZIS

SHADOW WORK

SEPTEMBER 10- OCTOBER 15, 2011

Nicole Klagsbrun Project is pleased to present its inaugural solo exhibition *Shadow Work*, by Evan Gruzis.

This exhibition will be the first by the artist to focus on colorless works, and showcases Gruzis's unique mastery of India ink on watercolor paper. Since Gruzis began using this media in 2005, he has developed his own vocabulary of techniques that he employs in a variety of images. Text-based work, geometric abstraction, and hard representation are rendered with seamless washes, controlled splatters, and layered methods of masking that distinguish these works-on-paper as true "paintings."

Borrowing from the notion of the Jungian "shadow," *Shadow Work* features a body of work whose high contrast values intimate a literal interpretation of shadow, and whose semi-autobiographical themes embody – with a wink-and-nod – the psychic melodrama of dealing with one's shadow. These paintings seduce the eye with a theatrical depiction of light that often graduates completely from pitch black to white, but leave the overt meaning open to interpretation through the use of "broad" tropes and subject matter from the popular canon. The gestalt suggests a zone where luminescence is embattled by the deep black of India-ink, and images exist both as authentic representations of the object, and as hand-painted icons that float between photography, airbrush and digital technology.

Lude-Wig, for example, is a splattered and spectral, yet rote, portrait of the composer Beethoven materializing in front of a palm tree in what seems to be an expressionistic, tropical astral plane. *I Think She Can See Me* borrows the cinematic trope of cropping an image to indicate the viewer is looking through binoculars to frame a blurred image of Manet's *Le déjeuner sur l'herbe*. Here the viewer is unmistakably the voyeur, beholding an image that decimated by the hand of the artist; literally blotted and scratched into the surface of the paper. *Bouquet Shift No. 2* re-imagines a Dutch still-life in silhouette that appears sliced diagonally through the middle; bisected and offset by a the slash of a razor, or a precision cut by a graphic designer. One of Gruzis's hallmark still-lives, *Placement de Produit* features the unmistakable Coca-Cola bottle with pieces of tape covering the label, referencing a self-conscious acknowledgement of automatic brand recognition. *Shadow Work* continues to riff on commodity with a life-size nude mannequin made from marble and bronze, which stares up at the viewer and is glibly titled *Monument to Fashion*. Though seductive and laboriously crafted, Gruzis's work playfully edges toward the absurd thematically, weighing starkness against satire.

In conjunction with the exhibition, Gruzis will also present a solo show of new work at The Hole, 312 Bowery: *Exotic Beta* opens September 10th from 7-10PM and will be on view at The Hole through October 22nd. The gallery is open Tuesday – Saturday 11-7PM and Thursdays until 10PM.

A graduate of Hunter College, Evan Gruzis was born in Milwaukee, WI in 1979. He has had solo exhibitions at Deitch Projects (2008), DUVE Berlin (2008, 2010), and Andreas Melas Presents in Athens (2010). He has been in group shows at The Swiss Institute, NYC; The Deste Foundation, Athens; The Garage Center for Contemporary Art, Moscow; and MACRO Museum, Rome. His work is in the collection of the Whitney Museum of American Art. He lives and works in New York.