

ALEKSEY KALLIMA
PSY

29/01/2016 – 10/03/2016
OPENING: January 28, 19:00

Regina Gallery is pleased to present a new project from Aleksey Kallima called *Psy*. A spectacular installation of a massive scale – 500 x 5500 cm – will fill the walls of the gallery during the run time of the exhibition.

Paintings often delve deeper than a deep forest

Today it is inevitably necessary to introduce new formats of communicating with the viewer of visual art (and any other art for that matter). It is time to abandon the kingdom of omnipresent annotations and commentary and return to the conceptual framework of the language of art, to a meaningful object-based conversation about Form, Space, to a manmade participation of the artist in the creation of the Image. The limitless triumph of meta (*Greek Meta* – after, behind) strategies in the art world at the turn of the 1990s has ultimately weakened the trust of the viewer as accessory and co-creator of an art event. The desire to break the shackles that have subjected both the viewer and the artist to endless manipulations with no hope of finding Meaning and responsibility for direct speech caused the rehabilitation of the arch-themes today: Formalism, Painting, Plasticism. Aleksey Kallima is at the vanguard of this process.

At the beginning of this millennium the artist realized that the pictorial tradition saves from the entropy and lies of the «zeitgeist» trends, switches the conversation with the viewer to a domain that is universal and truly free for both parties. In the then conversation of Kallima's about the lacerated wounds of the Russian-Chechen history the artistic culture of the new time allowed to choose the right aesthetical and ethical angle: without schooling, without labeling, without preaching, make them think about the beauty of the world and the convulsions of the space caused by the politics that turn this beauty into a spasm. Today the artist moved on down the path of pulling closer together the autonomous world of the Viewer and the autonomous space of the Painting. The work Aleksey Kallima is presenting at Regina Gallery has fully abandoned any narrative, any political, social and other zeitgeist. The work painted by rolling-on on the 50 x 5 m wall is done in acrylic paint on vinyl (banner fabric). It is called PSY. This is the 23rd letter of the Greek alphabet. It is a part of the root of such words as 'psychology', 'psycho', 'psychiatry'. It is a part of the name Psyche. That is, this letter is responsible for the soul department.

The name Psy is matched by a 50-meter work depicting a deep deep forest. It is not based on a visually pleasing perspective. It does not depict sun lit meadows. Squirrels and bears are not frolicing in a pine wood. Carvel pines surround you from all sides in an imminent and adamant manner. There are only hordes of tree trunks at the eye level. Emerald-violet palette is echoed by some hallucinatory visions. Kallima claims that if he hadn't become an artist he would end up a botanist. He is still upset about the outrageous attitude Russians show towards nature. Indeed, Russian forest is a die-hard down-and-outer compared to European forest. You want to get it out of your mind – but it's always in your face. Kallima is forcing us to face this forest square. Perhaps, we are its prisoners?

The most beaten path of interpretation of such a plot is to remember the forest themes in the history of art, in psychoanalysis. Fill the thick fog with stories about the chthonic, the archetype of forest in the world of romanticism, symbolism and even of the conceptualists of KD (Collective Actions) in the versions of «Journey to the country». But Kallima is rejecting all these connotations. He desires freedom from commentary and references. He wants to converse eye to eye. He wants the viewer to forego any guidance and arrange his own relationship with pictorial art. He is both the prisoner of the deep forest and the creator of meanings. A part of the composition and its creator – co-creator of the artist. Aleksey Kallima calls this a recursive method of communication. The object is described in its own terms, is a part of itself. The image is directed at its own self and is creating meanings from itself.

That is when we find ourselves in the dreadful forest, we quite often become a part of the deep forest ourselves. And no one can help us untangle from this except ourselves. Culture codes can't help here. Purism and ascetism in this face-to-face confrontation of the Painting and the Viewer set new psychological parameters of interaction. Let's consider the case of a relatively recent work *Painting and Viewers* by Erik Bulatov. The depiction of the backs and hind heads of the museum visitors standing in front of *The Appearance of Christ before the People* by Alexander Ivanov presents an interaction of space layers of the image itself, of its surface and the viewer's space, that can also reproduce itself in a recursive way. In the case of the group stand by Vladimir Logutov that was recently exhibited at Regina, we were presented the simulativity of subject-object relations of the viewer and space. Not willing to put up with the established classics and Favorsky rules of space coordinates, the suit of works from the Logutov's painted exhibition was willing to skip the conditional first circle (of the painted viewers) and materialize straight into our non-conditional world. Kallima shifts the subject of the communication between the Painting and the Viewer from the domain of visual adventures to a sort of intrasubject psychical problem that cannot be plastically fixated.

Only you by yourself can create the rules of interaction with this total, all-out pictorial art surrounding you, imprisoning you. On top of it all, done in one sitting and having characteristic features of non finito (being unfinished). It is at the territory of abandoning the narrative, at the territory of purism and asksis that the inevitable irony is created. The position of the viewer in relation to his state of being included in the painting can be formulated now not so much plastically as verbally, by referring to the oral practice on the subject of «what I felt and understood». And this rhymes perfectly with the experience of Collective Actions (KD) and their archives created as impressions of the participants of the «journeys to the country». It is logical that in relation to the method of his new pictorial works Aleksey Kallima uses the notion of «psychological realism». And this notion was known from the second half of the 1990s namely in the circle of the young conceptualists, in particular, from the releases of another artist from Regina – Pavel Pepperstein.

Sergey Khachaturov

Aleksey Kallima graduated from the pictorial art department of Krasnodar Art School. Participant of Venice Biennale (1995, 2009), special projects of the 1st, 2nd, 4th Moscow Biennale, Evropalia festival (2005), first prize winner of the contemporary art award Innovation. Personal exhibitions of Aleksey Kallima took place in Russia, Europe and USA, including Distance, Tretyakov Gallery, Moscow (2002); Sky Patrol. Galerie Anne de Villepoix, Paris (2007); Chechen Women's Team of Parachute Jumping and Its Virtual Fans. Lehmann Maupin Gallery, New York (2008); All for sale. Regina London (2012). Aleksey Kallima currently lives and works in Moscow.

For additional information refer to: +7(495) 228 1330 or Ekaterina Chuvashova at +7 (926) 660 2553, e-mail: katerina@regina.ru