

IO4 GALERIE

Alex Kanevsky The Battle of Shahbarghan

April 6th (Sat.)-May 11th (Sat.) 2024

Opening Reception: 19:00-21:00 on April 5th (Fri.) 2024

104GALERIE (Nakameguro, Tokyo) is holding a solo exhibition by Alex Kanevsky (1963-, Tamworth, New Hampshire, US) *The Battle of Shahbarghan* from April 6th (Sat.) to May 11th (Sat.) 2024. Kanevsky was previously introduced in a group show held by the gallery in 2022. This solo show, his first in Japan, will feature 10 painting pieces of his latest work.

At the time of Covid pandemic we couldn't go anywhere near other people. It wasn't difficult because I live in a very rural place, the mountains of New Hampshire. There are not many people here. Forests, lakes, and mountains.

To get out of the house I wanted to have a project outside, away from people. I started working on a painting of a mountain not far from my home. I wanted to do a big painting outdoors, something heroic in scale. Something that would be larger than human size to envelop myself and any potential viewer of my painting. The landscape that you experience from within, as it surrounds you.

I stretched a large canvas and mounted a heavy easel on the trailer that I would bring behind my car to a big field next to the mountain. Everything had to be heavy and tied to the trailer with straps; a painting is likely to fly away with sudden gusts of wind that happen often there.

I would spend entire days on this field looking at the mountain and slowly progressing with the painting. The depth, the light, the colors changed all the time. There were many things happening in my life at the time, both good and bad. Everything in the world, in my life and in the landscape around the mountain felt to be in flux. But the mountain was the same as it has always been before I came there and the same as it will be after I am gone. Gradually I began thinking of it as the center of the universe (my universe anyway), like a stationary axis around which everything spins. So instead of capturing a moment, as painters do, I was looking at something for which the moments didn't matter. It was very calm.

This is how the three paintings of the mountains in this exhibition came about. The other paintings have their own stories. I honestly believe that what makes a conversation boring, makes painting exciting. What people can express in words has no business being in painting. And conversely, what I love about painting is something that cannot be explained in words.

This makes writing art statements difficult. The only thing I can describe in words are the circumstances of the painting's creation. To me these paintings are simple. They don't tell stories, they don't reflect philosophy or political views. I told the story of how I painted that mountain. What is in that painting can only be accessed by looking.

- Alex Kanevsky

The exhibition title, *The Battle of Shahbarghan*, refers to a little known battle during the Mughal period in India. A beautiful small painting remains to tell us about it, sitting in the Metropolitan Museum in New York.

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Kanevsky comments that the phrase, “Everyone we meet is fighting a battle unknown to us”, describes humanity well. The ten paintings in this exhibition bear no relation to one another, and the subjects depicted are all different. Each of them contains twists and turns, and struggles that can never be known from the outside.

One of the works is based on the Mughal painting in the Metropolitan Museum. Kanevsky’s work in itself is, just like that small painting, far more attractive than the background stories behind it. We are excited to present you with an opportunity to view the latest work by Alex Kanevsky.

Alex Kanevsky was born in Russia in 1963.

He studied mathematics at Vilnius University in Lithuania before coming to the United States. After his arrival to Philadelphia in 1983 he worked as Russian translator, illustrator at the Psychiatric Nursing Magazine and drew pictures for the telephone book advertisements. After attending PAFA (1989-93) and winning a Pew Fellowship (1997) he devoted himself to painting full time. Alex Kanevsky lives and works in New Hampshire. He has exhibited his work in the United States, Canada, Italy, UK, France, Spain and Ireland. His work is represented by Hollis Taggart in New York and Dolby Chadwick Gallery in San Francisco.US).

Along with the exhibition, limited copies of the latest book by the artist will be available for purchase.



Art book *Alex Kanevsky*

2023

200+ pages, hard cover

Publication: DOLBY CHADWICK GALLERY

Price (incl. tax) ¥17,600

Limited to 30 copies, First-come-first-served basis.

【Contact】

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Hours : 11:00 - 17:00

Closed on Sunday, public holidays



Chocorua Sleeper
2023
Oil on wood
101 x 152 cm
©Alex Kanevsky



Model with Painting and Mirror
2024
Oil on wood
61 x 61 cm
©Alex Kanevsky