

RODRIGO LUFF

AFTERGLOW

June 29 - July 20, 2019

(Los Angeles, CA) - Thinkspace is pleased to present new paintings and works on paper by Rodrigo Luff in *Afterglow*, the artist's fifth solo exhibition with the gallery to date. Luff's personally inflected figurative works blend realism and fantasy, recombining the edges of the probable with the incandescence of daydream. Expressing the imagined and impossible through the contours of a physically plausible world, Luff stages ambiguous borders between the spiritual and material, allowing the internal and emotive external expression through nature. This tension between the manifest and invisible haunts Luff's intensely contrasting and vibrantly hued imagery, while a state of perpetual atmospheric dusk hosts these ghostly apparitions, both human and animal, hemmed by the fiction of otherworldly light. With edges cast in acidic, dayglow gleam, Luff levitates their edges in buoyant, fluorescent halos.

Luff's fluorescent fairytales feature dryadic women surrounded by woodland creatures, mystic owls, and sentient birds; their powerful animateness and knowing conveyed through the chiaroscuro intensity of the work - as though the imagery itself is emanating from some ultimate interior. The light feels immaterial and increasingly hallucinatory as the works seem to burst forth from beneath. Through dynamic compositions that seem within moments of action and revelation, the artist keeps the viewer suspended in this trance of potential. With dreamy scenarios and suggestive harmonizations - the artist has often likened his process to musical composition in its balance of individual parts unified cohesively in the impression of the whole - this Narnian world powerfully channels metaphor and the stirrings of spiritual transcendence.

Luff is inspired by diverse influences, which he has synthesized into his unique aesthetic. Everything from the anime master Miyazaki and the romance of the Pre Raphaelites and their oil glazing techniques, to the otherworldly cast and contrast of the aurora borealis and the ornate art nouveau stylization of Alphonse Mucha, are cited among Luff's sources. He has taken these inspirations and combined them into a romantically modern universe with moments of dissonance, sorrow, melancholy, and transportive nostalgia.

JACUB GAGNON
DREAM WORLD

June 29 - July 20, 2019

(Los Angeles, CA) - Thinkspace is pleased to present new works by Canadian, Toronto-based artist Jacob Gagnon in *Dream World*. An artist known for the meticulous detail and realism of his luminous acrylic paintings, Gagnon creates a world in which nature and fantasy collide. Exploring unlikely combinations of flora and fauna in imaginative scenarios with human objects and props, Gagnon proposes playful, though symbolic amalgams, reminding us of the ultimate fragility of the balances sustaining the natural world. His works are often set against dark black or stark white backgrounds and deploy contrasting light and dark hues to significant effect. By using minute brushes, Gagnon's surfaces have an illustrative clarity and precision, while the imagery's technical realism, usually shrouded in contexts of black, negative space, contributes to the surreal impact of these poetic visual puns.

With an interest in play and the freedom of the absurd, Gagnon creates imagistic connections to explore the intersection of human and natural elements. These ideas of interconnectivity and associative interpretation are vital to the artist's philosophical approach. By connecting unlikely and disparate parts, new readings, possibilities, and realizations are woven and drawn from known elements, more often than not desensitized in our acclimated reception of the familiar. Gagnon revitalizes our reading of nature and inspires us to look again - stirring a sense of wonder in this temporary suspension of disbelief. The natural world is cast in artificial light and pushed to the point of the implausibly surreal.

Narrative plays a significant role in Gagnon's work, as he is often drawing inspiration from language, turns of phrase, and puns to visualize the latency of new meanings and associations - a natural world freed from the restrictions of natural law produces unlikely poetry. In this space of disconnection and re-imagination, the artist proposes new morphologies, collusions, losses, and fictions in an endlessly potentiate space of transformation and renewal.

KATHY AGER
GOLDEN AGE

June 29 - July 20, 2019

Thinkspace is pleased to present *Golden Age*, featuring new works by Kathy Ager in the project room; the Vancouver-based artist's debut solo exhibition. Ager creates detailed, still lifes that feel simultaneously Baroque and acerbically modern. Inspired by the 17th-Century Golden Age of Dutch and Spanish painting, her imagery uses historical visual rhetoric to deliver intensely personal and emotively charged themes. A professional graphic designer-turned painter, this is Ager's first complete body of work to date and will include ten new paintings.

Ager begins her process with language - an idea or expression often gleaned from music, a book, or some other source that resonates personally. She then endeavors to resolve the concept visually through objects and composition, assembling a patchwork of references - some collective and shared from pop culture, others steeped in the idiosyncrasies of the personal. Both poetic and revelatory, Ager's works feel charged with the simultaneous misery and beauty of contemporary appropriation - and express the current world through the formal repositories of the past to create anachronistic moments of resonance and delivery. Ever present amidst moments of undeniably expressed disappointment and disillusionment are redemptive linings, beautifully poignant discoveries, and playful, irreverent mirth.

The seductive darkness with which Ager reveals universal human longings is both disarming and consuming. Broken hearts are offered up as organs in a bowl, skeletal memento mori abound, and dating feels about as abject in the modern world as butchery; books are stacked with suggestive spines, and flowers wither while fruit threatens to decay. The abattoir is never far from the transcendent ambitions of classical statuary in Ager's world, while beauty is embroiled in the vulnerability of intimacy and self-exposure.