

KANTOR / FEUER GALLERY

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Exhibition dates: May 2 – June 16, 2007

Opening reception: May 2, 6-9pm

DASHA SHISHKIN

"First Sorrow"

For her first Los Angeles exhibition, New York based artist Dasha Shishkin presents a new group of drawings and prints under the title "First Sorrow," a riff on Franz Kafka's story of the same name. Shishkin refers specifically to that first loss of innocence: that sensation of rapture when certain realizations in our waking life set in.

Festering with contradiction and elegance, Shishkin's peculiar narrative elicits meditations on impotence, freedom and philanthropy. As doctors and nurses smoke cigarettes in a perpetual state of laconic emergency and footless gymnasts execute routines, a garish cast engages in a discourse of emotional limbo. They seem almost to be resting between acts, a notion not unlike the artist's own. "It's a concern with process over product...you don't ever see someone getting well in the drawings," says Shishkin.

Often lauded for her ability to transpose delicate lines over a range of scales, Shishkin reveals this capacity in both a new site-specific wall drawing as well as a suite of new etchings published by the LeRoy Neiman Center for Print Studies at Columbia University. Shishkin refers to some of her new pieces as "colorings," where hues are applied as if in a coloring book, often denying the original drawing a sense of a previous life. Disregarding any need for, or attempt at harmony, aggressive colors challenge and win over delicate lines.

Over-loaded and simultaneously washed of meaning, these works enrobe the viewer much the way a hypochondriac might delight in the fantasy of being overtaken by some horrible plague. Shishkin surrenders to very ordinary existential motifs while talking about events in the pictures. The surfeit of peculiarity gives the viewer much to think about and like any expressive body of work, leaves with more questions than answers.

Since 2004, Dasha Shishkin, born 1977 in Moscow, has participated in exhibitions at The Museum of Modern Art, New York; P.S. 1, New York; the Kunsthalle Hamburg; Grimm/Rosenfeld, Munich; and Ratio 3, San Francisco among others. Her work is included in the collections of the Whitney Museum of American Art, New York; the Pinakothek der Moderne, Munich; the German print organization, Griffelkunst; and The Museum of Modern Art, New York.

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Tuesday - Saturday 10 - 6 pm