

ARNDT

ENA SWANSEA

born in Charlotte, North Carolina, lives and works in New York City

The magic of Ena Swansea's paintings resides in her use of rich materials to create resounding psychological environments. Working in oil paint over a graphite ground, Swansea allows the unpredictable qualities of her media to clash with a physical tension. She builds her paintings up in canorous layers, combining the illusive quality of oil paint with the deadened effect of graphite.

Using qualities of painting as a metaphor for psychological tension, Swansea offers vulnerability as a platform for self-knowledge, creating an ease with uncertainty, beauty in the spontaneity of gesture. Within this vast and irresolute field Swansea transfixes space and time, creating an unsettling plane where ominous ambiguity ebbs into tranquillity and solitude.

Ena Swansea studied at University of South Florida, Tampa and achieved recognition in 1998-99 for a series of abstract paintings based on observations of lightfall in the landscape. Key to this work was a subtly colorized grisaille palette and layers of transparent paint. The restless gray forms suggested moving shadows and were widely appreciated for their ingenious equation of style and content. Critical response noted that a subtle but recurring theme in the history of painting had resurfaced in a smart new way.

Besides solo shows in galleries in New York and Berlin, Ena Swansea's work has been featured in important group exhibitions, such as *True Romance. Allegories of Love from the Renaissance to the Present*, Kunsthalle Wien, Villa Stuck, Munich, and Kunsthalle Kiel (2008/07); *IDYLLE*, Sammlung Falckenberg, Hamburg, Domus Artium 2002, Salamanca, and National Gallery, Prag (all 2007); *The Triumph of Painting III*, Saatchi Gallery, London, and Leeds City Art Gallery; *Back to the Figure. Contemporary Painting*, Kunst Haus Wien, Kunsthal Rotterdam, Museum Franz Gertsch, Burgdorf, and Kunsthalle der HypoKulturstiftung, Munich (2006/07); *Greater New York*, P.S.1 Contemporary Art Center, New York, *Goetz meets Falckenberg*, Sammlung Falckenberg, Hamburg, and *Story-Tellers*, Kunsthalle Hamburg (all 2005). Parallel to her 2008 solo show at the Musée d'Art Moderne (MuDAM), Luxembourg, she presented her first solo exhibition in Switzerland at Arndt Partner Zurich.



rowboat, 2010
oil and graphite on canvas; 152,4 x 121,92 cm |
60 x 48 in # SWAN0039



bullfight, 2010
oil and graphite on canvas; 121,92 x 182,88 cm |
48 x 72 in # SWAN0040



matador, 2010
oil and graphite on canvas; 182,88 x 121,92 cm |
72 x 48 in # SWAN0038