

VIELMETTER LOS ANGELES

Press Release

Forrest Kirk

The Owl of Minerva Flies at Dusk

January 28 – March 11, 2023

Opening: January 28, 4 – 6PM



Vielmetter Los Angeles is excited to announce “The Owl of Minerva Flies at Dusk” an exhibition of new paintings by LA-based artist Forrest Kirk. The exhibition will be on view in Gallery II from January 28 through March 11, 2023.

Inspired by the writings of German philosopher G.W.F. Hegel, Forrest Kirk’s most recent series of paintings depict an atmosphere of resounding orange sunsets amidst sci-fi landscapes filled with magical figures,

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buildings, and other imaginative forms of motion, depth, and color. Implicit in the paintings is a sense of otherworldliness, a subtle narrative of epoch. Recurring visual tropes, such as the owl, feathers, bombs, tigers, and biomorphic shapes appear and reappear throughout the paintings representing time, pressure, change, and reminders of the wildness that exists in all of us.

The title of the exhibition riffs off a line from Hegel's prototypical essay *Preface to the Philosophy of Right*, in which Minerva, the goddess of wisdom, and her pet owl, a symbol of not only knowledge but also of cultural discernment are invoked to encapsulate the philosophical thought that historical and individual development tends to happen in hindsight; simply put that life's lessons are typically learned through making mistakes. The title of the exhibition also gives a proverbial nod to a desire for keeping a place for philosophy amidst our contemporary lives -- or in the artist's words "philosophy takes over at night when scientists are off work."

It has been said of Forrest Kirk's paintings that the form(s) and the content within his compositions inseparably contain multitudes. The artist has always explored his own evolving spiritual and artistic mindscape through a lively, shapeshifting practice of painting, all the while reflecting on humanity's struggles with its existence, its aggressions, and its limitations.

Forrest's signature medium of choice, aside from the deliberate array of acrylic paints and poetic moments of assemblage, is Gorilla Glue, which he uses as a means of establishing dimensionality within his work. The layers of paint and glue are built up and scraped away, creating valleys of texture, and often revealing what came before.

There is an esthetic roughness juxtaposed with visual allure, amongst Forrest's visceral canvases. It is not just the artist's intentionally radical style that extends his paintings beyond convention, but also the artist's ability to visually and intellectually address this complex web of cause and effect called life in a way that depends less on the emotional demands of the world, and more so in line with such precepts of compassion and inspiration.

Forrest Kirk (b. 1975) lives and works in Los Angeles. Forrest studied at California State University, Los Angeles, and spent time studying classical painting in Paris, France. Notable solo shows include presentations with Rebecca Camacho Presents, San Francisco, CA (2023), Kristin Hjellegjerde Gallery, London (2022), Marianne Boesky Gallery, Aspen, CO (2021), Gavlak Gallery, Palm Beach, FL (2021), Parrasch Heijnen Gallery, Los Angeles (2020) and Chimento Contemporary, Los Angeles (2018). Forrest's work is included in the permanent collections of the Hammer Museum, Los Angeles, the Santa Barbara Museum of Art, the Museum of Contemporary Art, San Diego, and the Virginia Museum of Fine Art, Richmond, VA.

The gallery is located at 1700 S Santa Fe Avenue, south of the 10 freeway. Parking is available in the south parking lot adjacent to the building. Gallery hours are Tuesday through Saturday from 10 am to 6 pm and by appointment. For further information and press inquiries, please contact Olivia Gauthier at Olivia@vielmetter.com.