

PIEROGI

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Opening Reception: Friday, 8 May. 7–9pm
Hours: 11am to 6pm, Tuesday through Sunday, and by appointment
Exhibition Dates: 8 May through 7 June, 2015
Exhibition Location: PIEROGI 177 North 9th Street, Williamsburg Brooklyn
Directions: Take the L train to Bedford Avenue stop. Walk north two blocks to North 9th Street and turn right. The gallery will be on your left.

DARINA KARPOV

Ignis Fatuus: Works on Paper

Ignis Fatuus is an atmospheric, phosphorescent light seen by travelers at night, especially over swamps or marshes. It is said to recede if approached, drawing travelers away from the safe path. It was an object of inspiration for many artists and writers of the romantic era, such as Arnold Böcklin, Gustave Doré, Goethe, as well as contemporary writers such as Cormac McCarthy, among others.

"I thought it was a great metaphor for having faith in the creative process. The mysterious numinous light (even if sometimes it feels foolish!) leads you off the predetermined path into unknown territory. My process is always open ended and speculative, so the work continually unfolds and shifts directions until a certain image forms out of complexity, out of the friction between different ways of drawing and imagining representation." (Karpov)



Magic Days 3, 2015, Watercolor and acrylic on paper, 20 x 27 7/8 inches

Pierogi is pleased to present an exhibition of recent works on paper by Darina Karpov. Karpov works on both canvas and paper and often alternates between the two. After working on a series of paintings she prefers to return to paper in order to find renewal. This show is a kind of homage to her earlier work, expanding on some of the themes and techniques that she has touched on since 2007, and includes both large and small-scale drawings. This will be Karpov's fifth one-person exhibition with the gallery.

As in her early work, there are many references to nature and the body. "I try to refashion various elements from flora and fauna – shapes and forms that are fertile and vivacious, but also impermanent – at times mutating into something with darker associations." In this new work, Karpov has begun abstracting elements that have become internalized over the years: forms such as ropes, stringing tentacles, tree branches, crystals, vegetation, and organisms, revealing a more dramatic tension between spontaneity and control.

In a reflection of her serendipitous creative process, Karpov often works in a panoramic format, or joins several sheets of paper to make diptychs, triptychs, et cetera. In this way, her work develops as a chain of events through time in a continuous sequence – cinematically, narratively – as she is often influenced by her passion for film and literature. For this exhibition, she will expand upon this idea by filling a long narrow vitrine in Gallery 2 with a selection of small format drawings, sketches, and collages, in an overlapping sequence.

"To me drawing forms out of the contact between pencil or brush and the surface of the paper. It's a continuous weaving of thought, images, fantasies, and dreams which seem to emerge out of a semi-conscious state, from some zone where human and animal, past and future, interior and exterior, are still undifferentiated and are part of the same fabric. This very essential activity helps me tap into my personal mythology, to discover stories and characters." (Karpov)

Karpov has also begun incorporating text into her works. In some instances it is readable and comes from poetry, or what she happens to be listening to while working. However, in works such as "Detours and Pitfalls" and "Geryon," she incorporates intentionally undecipherable writing – asemic writing – as she is grafting a kind of code or mantra, using letterforms as a structural element.

Karpov was born in St. Petersburg, Russia and currently lives and works in Brooklyn, NY. She studied fine art in St. Petersburg before moving to the United States where she received an MFA from Yale University and a BFA from the Maryland Institute College of Art. Her work is included in numerous permanent collections, has been exhibited widely, and has been included in such publications as "Frozen Dreams: Contemporary Art from Russia" (Thames & Hudson). She is a recipient of Yaddo and MacDowell Residencies.