

# shfap

Press Release:  
Andrea Belag: Ghost Writer  
new paintings  
September 6 – October 15, 2017  
Opening reception:  
Wednesday, September 6th, 6-8pm



*Taq*, 2017, oil on linen, 22 x 30 in

Steven Harvey Fine Art Projects presents an exhibition of paintings by Andrea Belag titled, Ghost Writer. The exhibition presents a group of recent paintings and is the artist's first solo show with the gallery.

Belag is well known as a New York abstract painter. Her principal allegiance has been to a darkly hued, lustrous, transparent color organized architecturally, occasionally resembling stained glass. In fact, she is about to unveil six glass murals fabricated by Franz Mayer of Munich, designed for the elevated Avenue U subway station in Brooklyn, commissioned by the Metropolitan Transportation Authority/Arts & Design.

In her new paintings Belag has expanded her pictorial vocabulary in several notable directions. She introduced a stripped down drawing with a brush that stems from the calligraphic shorthand of her watercolors. She is working on wood panels, letting the wood grain play an active role. Further, Belag is exploring new terrain in high chroma color paintings, which possess an explosive brilliance.

In his catalog essay, Jason Stopa points out the intimacy that underscores her smaller iconic panels. "Making the logical step from canvas to birch wood and linen, Belag's new work often reveals exposed wood that acts as a stand-in for flesh. Belag knows her themes: heightened emotions, physical intimacy, shared encounters, the passing of time, the memory of a lover. They all fall under the blanket of sensuality. In the Ghost Writer series, each surface is a body."

Belag practices an abstraction that contains a panoply of references. In her mark-making, the lush facture of her work can be related to vanguard practitioners of 80s abstraction such as Bill Jensen, David Reed and Mary Heilmann. Her immediate peers from the New York Studio School - Christopher Wool and Joyce Pensato are also compass points in the stripped down dedication to raw painterly brio they share. Their teacher, Phillip Guston, influenced all three of them, in developing their own highly individual painterly "bodies".

Belag is conscious of human fragility. Her new work has been riven by the death of her husband earlier this year. The bright rainbow hues, the quirky occasionally erotic forms on bare panels, are a meditation on that transit and the artist has dedicated this exhibition to him.

Belag attended Boston University, Bard College and went to the New York Studio School. Since 1995 she has been a teacher at The School of Visual Art. She received a Guggenheim Grant in 1999. The exhibition is accompanied by a catalog with an essay by Jason Stopa. Please contact Lauren Fowler at [lauren@shfap.com](mailto:lauren@shfap.com) or 917-861-7312 for further information or images.

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