

"We Never Dream Alone"
WITH

SIDSEL CHRISTENSEN
ANDREW LEVENTIS
LISA SLOMINSKI

PRIVATE VIEW 8th of January 2015
6:30 – 9:00PM

9th of January – 7th of February 2015

"In what ways can we still read our terrifying dreams with (Freudian) tools based on ancient Greek myths? In the age of smartphones, archetypal layers have been rewired and have mutated into a semi-collective techno-subconscious. We never dream alone. The digital is being pushed into the realm of the subliminal."

- Geert Lovink

You wander, ghostlike, amidst a number of scenarios. You pass by an unmade bed, human presence evident through the tumbled sheets, yet no people are present. You turn your head and see a hand pour bourbon into a decanter; a woman behind a diner counter stands with her back to you, leaving you to see only her bobbed blond hair. Water laps and pulses to distort the image it reflects while somebody walks towards a large, ornate door. You are surrounded by these flashes, awake in a cinematic, Lynchian dream. Around you, two disembodied voices speak to one other, soft murmurs swimming in and out of audio focus, trance like, mesmerising. The walls around you tug insistently at your senses, an endless pattern of leaves and rainbow feathers surrounding you, while a strange chandelier rotates slowly in the air. In *We Never Dream Alone* (9th of January – 7th of February 2015), featuring works by Sidsel Christensen, Andrew Leventis and Lisa Slominski, the borders between real and unreal, fact and fiction, virtual and visceral are explored. Diverse media, from video and painting to installation bind together the diverse yet complementary practices of these three artists, as each navigates the 'other' space, that expanse between waking and sleeping, a collective influence on their psyches.

Sidsel Christensen's practice explores the field created between 'inner' and 'outer' reality, navigating the boundary between fact and fiction. In doing so, she examines different possibilities for the imagination to transform reality (as it is perceived) for an individual or group. This investigation is played out in conversation, live presentations and video portraits, and it is through these media that Christensen engages with the intimacy that revolves around body language and narratives of subjectivity. She thus attempts to capture an idealised 'space' between herself, the artist, and the

subject/audience, where the work is created by creative input and framing on both sides. This lays the groundwork for a space of potential, power struggle and fiction. In *We Never Dream Alone*, she presents the single screen projection *Study for Composition XI (A Conversation at the Edge of the Object)*. The video sets up a conversation between Christensen and art collector Thomas Frankenberg. Set at 'the end of the world', it allows for an imagined, dream-like space in which everything is broken down, with no stable boundaries between object and surroundings. It encompasses philosophical reflections on his collection, including the status of the object in terms of an exploration of texture, proximity, meaning, preservation and disappearance. As the camera pans through the collection, and the conversations unfolds, we are presented with a journey through a landscape bordering on abstraction, in which fragments of art objects and natural elements join in unexpected ways, employing their own logic of encounter. The collector's and Christensen's voices (the latter trancelike under a hypnotic regression), provide the soundtrack to the work, pervading throughout the gallery space.

Meanwhile, Andrew Leventis creates still lifes from snapshots of period dramas played out on film and television, concerned with the tension between the painted and technological image. Looking through the filter of the digital screen, he reflects on how contemporary TV borrows configurations from painting, whilst himself borrowing back from the pictorial designs of contemporary television. In a sense, these cinematic interiors, in their fabrication, are 'dreamt up', constructed by the various writers, actors and productions crews who have created them, before being re-interpreted by Leventis into painted tableaux. Leventis's work provides a familiarisation and empathy with the cinematic subject, a feeling that he equates with the contemporary affinity to mass media images. This is further enhanced by the human touch provided by the physical act of the painting process. In the work presented here, Leventis focuses on interiors and characters that occupy suspense films, particularly cult films that are noteworthy for their vivid Technicolor and stylistic flourishes. In each painting, there is a negation of interest on the figure, yet an emphasis on the interior and environment that the character inhabits. The purpose here is to record the interaction between the character and the environment, rather than to record the figure's face and physical features, as in traditional portraiture. Leventis looks to film direction to examine this person-object association, since in film the relations between characters and objects, particularly the ways that objects are meant to more fully flesh-out and describe characters are entirely fabricated.

Finally, Lisa Slominski covers the gallery walls with her signature wallpaper work, alongside a floor piece. Sourcing images from the Internet and treating them as readymade objects, reworking and repurposing the forms in order to emancipate them from their virtual existence or typical associations. In abstracting these images, she shifts them from their virtual realm into the physical one. Through this process, and by using interior design, she investigates the relationship between observing and objectifying. Slominski is interested in how the digital age has changed our approach to interior space, as we are now faced with ever-expanding customisation tools and

computer-generated suggestions. With its references to modern science, social media and the Internet, Slominski's work employs the use of repetition and pattern, often with the florid sensibilities of the Baroque period, while searching for a sense of drama, exaggerated motion and control. By disrupting familiarity, her work seeks to create something permanent out of something ethereal, and push beyond simple juxtaposition to create hybrids of virtuality and décor. In this exhibition, she investigates ideas of access and appropriation in our relationship to both the Internet and interior space; the former provides an ocean of images and information, not only for reference but for us to take and manipulate.

Ultimately, in *We Never Dream Alone*, we are faced with a collision of worlds – through the manipulated, distilled narratives of film; through an imagined space at the end of the world; and an abstracted world that has stepped through into the real world from the digital. We are wrapped up in the many voices and thoughts that spring from our collective consciousness, accessible and attainable through the various media and narratives that only we, as humans, can have dreamt up.

***We Never Dream Alone* runs from 9th of January – 7th of February 2015
at Kristin Hjellegjerde Gallery, London**

Information for journalists:

Sidsel Christensen

Sidsel Christensen is a London-based artist engaged in moving image, live events and performance-based lectures. She maintains an ongoing working relationship in Norway, where she was brought up. Christensen received a BA from Goldsmiths and an MA from the Royal College of Art. Her works explore the multiple narratives of subjectivity, reality, feminism and perspective in order to recontextualise the spaces between subject and audience. In 2014 she executed her first major institutional exhibition at Stavanger Art Museum, Stavanger, Norway, and also showed a more comprehensive video installation at The Tetley, Leeds. Featured exhibitions from 2011-2013 include *The Edge of Reason* at the KINO Centre for Contemporary Art and Film (Sandnes, Norway), *Long Live The New Flesh* at the Institute for Contemporary Arts (London), Oval Space (London), Høstutstillingen at Kunstnerens Hus (Oslo, Norway) and a video commission, 'Compositions', produced for and showed at Berwick Film and Media Arts Festival (Northumberland, UK). For more information, visit www.sidsechristensen.com.

Andrew Leventis

American artist Andrew Leventis received his Bachelor of Fine Arts in oil painting from the American Academy of Art in Chicago in 2006, before relocating to London where, four years later, he received his MA in Fine Art at Wimbledon College of Art and, in 2012, an MFA in Fine Art from Goldsmiths College, University of London. Leventis has exhibited widely in London over the past few years, including at the *Young Gods Exhibition* and the Salon Art Prize 2012. Solo exhibitions include *Into The Screen: Still-Life and Moving Image*, Rowe Gallery, University of North Carolina at Charlotte, USA (2014) and *Andrew Leventis*, High House Gallery, Oxfordshire (2013). Leventis has also exhibited in North Carolina and Illinois and has taught painting at the University of North Carolina at Charlotte and has been a visiting professor of painting at Savannah College of Art and Design. For more information, visit www.andrewleventispainting.com.

Lisa Slominski

Lisa Slominski is an American artist living and working London. She received her BA in Visual and Critical Studies from the School of the Art Institute of Chicago and her MFA in Art Practice from Goldsmiths, University of London. Slominski's installation-based practice has maintained a strong connection to both interiors and architecture. She has shown throughout the UK and internationally, including Chicago, Miami and Cape Town. Press includes reviews by Aesthetica Magazine, the Miami New Times, and Traction Magazine interview, as well as being selected as a featured artist in 'Beyond Contemporary Art'. She has been the artist-in-residence for The Fountainhead Residency, Miami, the Florence Trust, London and The School of the Creative Arts, University of Hertfordshire. Gallery exhibitions in the UK include Elevator Gallery, Bearspace, The Pigeon Wing, Vegas Gallery, The Royal Standard, Departure Foundation, Tenderpixel and Pi Artworks. Forthcoming, Lisa will take part in a residency in California with the Kala Art Institute. For more information, visit www.lisaslominski.com.

Kristin Hjellegjerde Gallery

Kristin Hjellegjerde opened her gallery in south west London in June 2012 following her move from New York. The gallery showcases cutting-edge contemporary art from emerging and established international artists, with the central concern to create an intimate space in which an artist could present a coherent body of work within a focused environment. Drawing on her own international background, Kristin Hjellegjerde seeks to discover and develop new talents by creating a platform through which they can be introduced to local and international audiences and encouraging artistic exchange. Kristin Hjellegjerde also acts as an art advisor for both emerging private and corporate collectors. For more information, visit www.kristinhjellegjerde.com.

For further information and high-resolution images, please contact Kristin Hjellegjerde on khjellegjerde@mac.com.