

NICELLE BEAUCHENE GALLERY

Panayiotis Loukas

A brief guide to happiness

January 18 – February 24, 2024

Opening reception Thursday, January 18, 6–8 PM

Nicelle Beauchene Gallery is pleased to present *A brief guide to happiness*, the second New York solo exhibition with Athens-based artist Panayiotis Loukas.

A brief guide to happiness comprises new oil on canvas paintings that continue the artist's disruption of psychological and domestic realms through his distinct visual style and revelry in the absurd. Myriad narratives melt together across large-scale, highly detailed tableaux. Like an exuberant novelist, Loukas fashions scenes that, while seemingly ridiculous, reveal their meaning over time with a considered dose of imagination. Specific motifs recur throughout Loukas' scenes: anthropomorphic fruit, flowers, and glass bottles find themselves among dancing rats, shoes, and dripping, smoking candles—all glinting with animacy and action.

Loukas employs technical observation to construct compositions that blend elements of psychedelia, folklore, horror, and popular culture. The artist's paintings often revolve around the domestic, using the subject of the home and its affect-laden contents as players in the drama of everyday life. Here we enter the fever dream abode of the metaphorical artist, represented—cloaked in tatters with a palette in hand—in two of the exhibitions most hallucinatory paintings: *The night that never ends* and *Hey now, hey now now* (both 2023). Humans are mostly sidelined in these scenes, depicted more so as observers than actors; in this new body of work, viewers instead encounter the home's most keen protagonist, the cat. Well aware felines of all sizes lounge and cavort through the paintings, much like the innumerable strays that stalk the artist's own neighborhood in Athens.

Watching these cats and they, in turn, watch him, Loukas allows for the familiar to enter stranger domains. As Kafka describes, "You do not need to leave your room. The world will freely offer itself to you to be unmasked, it has no choice, it will roll in ecstasy at your feet."

Panayiotis Loukas (b. 1975, Athens, GR) lives and works in Athens, Greece. Recent exhibitions include Nicelle Beauchene Gallery, New York (2021); Callirrhöe, Athens (2021); *The Same River Twice*, curated by Margot Norton and Natalie Bell, organized by DESTE Foundation and New Museum for the Benaki Museum, Athens (2019); State of Concept, Athens (2019); Dio Horia, Mykonos (2015, 2017); Onassis Cultural Center, Athens (2016); Chalet Society, Paris (2015); Kunstraum Innsbruck, Austria (2015); Family Business, New York (2013); Palais de Tokyo, Paris (2012, 2013); and The Breeder, Athens (2007, 2008), among others.