

Thomas Erben Gallery



Bather, 2021. Oil on linen, 13 x 16in.

Janice Nowinski
Recent Paintings

September 9 - October 23, 2021

Thomas Erben Gallery is thrilled to present its first solo exhibition of New York-based painter Janice Nowinski (b.1959, Brooklyn, NY).

Small yet ambitiously expansive, Nowinski's paintings invite an intimate relationship to their surface, with each brushstroke containing the thoughts that constructed the piece. Carrying a visual and conceptual complexity, her paintings unfold with the time of their viewing. Color, line, subject matter, and form, as well as the artist's historical awareness, all contribute to a unique aesthetic and intellectual richness.

In Nowinski's *Bather* (2021), for example, deeply saturated hues radiate in a close value harmony. The leaning figure recalls the bathing women of Bonnard, Degas, and even of Ingres but radically simplified, liberated from a dependence on a living model or an authoritative abstract ideal. Neither naturalistic nor classically beautiful, the nude here is more of a type: an element of painting itself, drawn from its history. Like in many of Courbet's paintings, the figure tends to merge with the background, incorporated into the scene quite literally. The matter-of-fact brushstrokes and linework that Nowinski deploys give only what's essentially needed: they provide just enough

for the image, and in doing so, allow it to speak without compromise. Here, intuition conquers style; an improvised technique defeats overwrought process; a gut feeling drives the production; and form, taken simply for itself, shines forth from the painting.

On a technical level, the tactile quality of the work, the brusque handling of the paint, the conjunction of shapes arranged on the surface, allows Nowinski to escape from beneath the sway of a pre-determined "style." As a painter she is acutely aware of how the means and ends of painting diverge in their union: how line approximates the contours of a figure; how color defines space and gives weight to a mass; and how both seem to have a life of their own. Precisely by turning away from a strict method of painting does Nowinski discover the real potential of form.

Janice Nowinski was born in Brooklyn and grew up in Rockaway Park. She received her MFA in Painting from Yale University. She has exhibited at **American Academy of Arts and Letters, National Academy Museum, American University Museum, John Davis Gallery, Zurcher Gallery, Leigh Morse Fine Arts, Steven Harvey Fine Arts Projects, Kent Fine Arts, Lohin Geduld and Schweitzer Contemporary**. She is the recipient of a purchase prize from the **American Academy of Arts and Letters**. Her work has been featured and reviewed in the *Hudson Review, The New Criterion, Hyperallergic, Huffington Post* and *American Artist*. Nowinski lives and paints in Brooklyn, NY.