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INKA ESSENHIGH

15 OCTOBER – 14 NOVEMBER 2020

NEW YORK, NEW YORK – MILES McENERY GALLERY is pleased to announce an exhibition of new paintings by Inka Essenhigh. The show will open on 15 October at 525 West 22nd Street and remain on view through 14 November 2020. The exhibition is accompanied by a fully illustrated publication featuring an essay by Jenni Sorokin.

Inka Essenhigh paints fantastical worlds where the everyday is twisted and contorted by energetic forces from within and without. Over the past 20 years she developed her own style and vision that she has put to use to create beautiful manifestations of the world: albeit one that isn't completely free of evil. Rendered with technical prowess, her lexicon of surreal nature scenes and otherworldly figuration has been variously interpreted as related to Japanese anime, comic books, European fairy tales, and children's animation. While Essenhigh is neither fully Surrealist nor fully Pop, what the art movements with which she is associated with have in common— is a relationship to the uncanny.



As found throughout Surrealism and other modern avant-garde movements, Essenhigh's paintings tend to be uniquely episodic, while still sharing themes of flora and fauna. They are touched by a curious self-containment and an interiority of the force of imagination. Her works display dimensional narratives that require close-up viewing, creating a visceral dialogue, one viewer at a time. Each is marked by bright, rich color, and a decision to revel in the "little world" schema of psychology with a fluidity between people and their things.

The works on view display storybook fantasias that often rearrange familiar elements of daily life or the natural world into something disquietingly picturesque. Her dreamlike paintings, populated with woodland scenes, Baudelairean flowers and mystical beings, offer an animistic responsiveness in which plant life and non-Anthropocene beings become cyphers for human-like behaviors and feelings.

INKA ESSENHIGH (b. in 1969 in Bellefonte, PA) received her Bachelor of Fine Art degree in 1992 from Columbus College of Art & Design, Columbus, OH and her Master of Fine Art in 1994 from the School of Visual Arts, New York, NY.

Recent solo exhibitions include "Other Worlds: Inka Essenhigh," Susquehanna Art Museum, Harrisburg, PA; "Uchronia," Kavi Gupta Gallery, Chicago, IL; "Inka Essenhigh: Manhattanhenge," The Drawing Center, New York, NY; "A Fine Line," Virginia Museum of Contemporary Art, Virginia Beach, VA and Kalamazoo Institute of Arts, Kalamazoo, MI; Miles McEnergy Gallery, New York, NY; "Between Worlds," Frist Center, Nashville, TN; "Stars and Flowers," Baldwin Gallery, Aspen, CO; "Comet Dust & Crystal Shards," Jacob Lewis Gallery, New York, NY Columbus College of Art & Design, Joseph V. Canzani Center, Columbus, OH; Tomio Koyama Gallery, Tokyo, Japan; Pace Prints, New York, NY; 303 Gallery, New York, NY; Victoria Miro, London, United Kingdom; 303 Gallery, New York, NY; Victoria Miro, London, United Kingdom; DA2 Domus Artium 2002, Salamanca, Spain; Sint-Lukasgalerie, Brussels, Belgium; "Etchings," Michael Steinberg Fine Art, New York, NY; Museum of Contemporary Art, Miami, FL; Galleria il Capricorno, Venice, Italy; Fruitmarket Gallery, Edinburgh, Scotland; Victoria Miro, London, United Kingdom; 303 Gallery, New York, NY; and "Works on paper," Victoria Miro (Project Room), London, United Kingdom.

Recent group exhibitions include: "Really." (curated by Inka Essenhigh and Ryan McGinness), Miles McEnergy Gallery, New York, NY; "Do You Think it Needs a Cloud," Miles McEnergy Gallery, New York, NY; "Life During Wartime: Art in the Age of Coronavirus," University of South Florida Contemporary Art Museum, Tampa, FL; "The Figure in Solitude," Kavi Gupta Gallery, Chicago, IL; "Radical Optimism," Kavi Gupta Gallery, Chicago, IL; "Skirting the Line | Painting between Abstraction and Representation," Center for Maine Contemporary Art, Rockland, ME; "FIXED CONTAINED" (curated by Tomokazu Matsuyama), Kotaro Nukaga, Tokyo, Japan; "Not All Doors Are The Same," Booth Gallery, New York, NY; Invitational Exhibition of Visual Arts, American Academy of Arts and Letters, New York, NY; "Belief in Giants," Miles McEnergy Gallery, New York, NY; "Parallel Lives," Kavi Gupta Gallery, Chicago, IL;

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“Le Nuove Frontiere della Pittura,” Fondazione Stelline, Milan, Italy; “Dead Among The Dead!,” Ellis King, Dublin, Ireland; “Imagine,” Brand New Gallery, Milan, Italy; “Introductions,” La MaMa La Galleria, New York, NY; “Eden, éden” (curated by Timothée Chaillou), Galerie Torri, Paris, France; “The Ukrainian Diaspora: Women Artists 1908-2015,” The Ukrainian Museum, New York, NY; “Painters NYC,” Páramo Galeria, Guadalajara, Mexico and El Museo de los Pintores Oaxaqueños, Oaxaca, Mexico; “Disturbing Innocence,” The FLAG Art Foundation, New York, NY; “Sargent’s Daughters,” Sargent’s Daughters, New York, NY; “The Golden Ass,” Blindarte Contemporanea, Naples, Italy; “Cinematic Visions: Painting at the Edge of Reality,” Victoria Miro, London, United Kingdom; “Pivot Points: 15 Years & Counting,” Museum of Contemporary Art North Miami, Miami, FL; and “Fairy Tales, Monsters, and the Genetic Imagination,” Frist Center for the Visual Arts, Nashville, TN, traveled to Winnipeg Art Gallery, Manitoba, Canada and Glenbow Art Museum, Calgary, Canada.

Her work may be found in select collections including Albright-Knox Art Gallery, Buffalo, NY; Denver Art Museum, Denver, CO; Museum of Contemporary Art, North Miami, Miami, FL; Museum of Modern Art, New York, NY; San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, San Francisco, CA; Seattle Art Museum, Seattle, WA; Tate Gallery, London, United Kingdom and the Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, NY.

Inka Essenhigh lives and works in New York, NY.

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Miles McEnery Gallery is open Tuesday through Saturday 10:00 AM to 6:00 PM and by appointment.

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 @miles.mcenery.gallery

Image: *Blue Spruce, 2020, Enamel on canvas, 50 x 80 inches, 127 x 203.2 cm*

Miles McEnery Gallery

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