



JENKINS JOHNSON GALLERY

521 West 26th Street • 5th Floor • New York • NY 10001  
212.629.0707 • Fax: 212.629.4255

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## Vanessa Prager: Paintings and Drawings

February 7 – March 30, 2013



*Grape Rock*, 2012, oil on canvas, 28 x 40 inches



*Fired*, 2012, pen on paper, 16 x 17 inches

Jenkins Johnson Gallery, New York is pleased to present a solo exhibition in the Project Room of works by Los Angeles contemporary artist Vanessa Prager. This will be Prager's first solo show with Jenkins Johnson Gallery in New York. There will be an opening reception on Thursday, February 7 from 6 to 8 pm.

Influenced by classical painting, drawing, vintage photographs, film, and her love of animals, self-taught artist Vanessa Prager presents us with beautifully rendered drawings produced using common blue and red ballpoint pens, as well as ethereal paintings on canvas. Her work touches briefly on luminaries such as Balthus, Rembrandt and Egon Schiele, while remaining original and un-derivative. Prager is stylistically drawn to the "timeless quality" of the clothes and hairstyles of the forties and fifties, and her love for the past, coupled with her attraction to contemporary pop-culture and Americana, is palpable and provides us with an entry point into her rich narrative.

Prager is fond of color, which is omnipresent in both her canvas and works on paper. Through the high contrast application of her medium - the ballpoint pen onto blank music paper or through the use of diaphanous layers of applied paint - Prager weaves the viewer into her work as a protagonist in a thriller plot. When presenting figures, Prager often bathes them in strong light with no apparent direct source, creating an ethereal, dream-like nature to the work. Broad areas of purposefully unfinished details and omitted features draw attention to the piece while continuing the narrative. Akin to a skip on a record player or an abrupt ending to a still-unfinished story, Prager examines these omissions, playing with their glaring obviousness, investigating how the mind of the viewer fills in the gaps.

Her tendency to examine these open spaces can be seen in the recent drawing "Fired," depicted above, a quintessential work from Prager's oeuvre. She achieves a sense of light and shadow through various pressures and cross-hatching that seems like it should be impossible with a basic ballpoint pen, and yet the figure takes on a personality that is quite developed. Prager's thought-provoking and technically astounding drawings and moodily vaporous paintings are a window into the world of Vanessa Prager that intrigues and leaves us wanting to see more.

Vanessa Prager has been exhibited at galleries in New York and the greater Los Angeles area. Museum exhibitions include Santa Monica Museum of Art and upcoming, the Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles. The artist has received much critical acclaim in national press including *W Magazine*, *Los Angeles Times*, *LA Weekly*, *Huffington Post*, *Nylon*, among others.