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Press Release

Semyon Agroskin

To See and Comprehend

12.09 – 26.10.2024

Solo exhibition entitled ***To See & To Comprehend*** includes a selection of recent works by **Semyon Agroskin** (b.1961 in Soviet Union) in small and medium formats realized with oil on canvas. Part of the exhibited works were created by the artist especially for this exhibition.

Semyon Agroskin is a multidisciplinary artist and architect who works with the diversity of mediums including painting, drawing, collage, and installation.

As a painter **Agroskin** follows traditions and implements the approach of academic school of painting and refers to the cultural heritage of fine art. Being an important part of his recognizable style and his art practice, the language of painting acts more as a metaphor, symbolizing the constancy of values and timelessness of narratives and meanings disclosed in the artist's works.

Agroskin's restrained palette which sometimes approaches to monochrome enables the artist and the viewer to perceive the idea and logic of depicted objects directly without being caught by the emotional level of perception.

The images and compositions created by the artist in accordance with canonical genres, such as portrait, still life, landscape, interior, are symbolic and possess multiple meanings being unrestricted by temporal and cultural references.

Compositions and objects imprinted in **Semyon Agroskin's** works are characterized by an almost religious ascetic austerity, a cult of simple things, symbolizing freedom from the domination of material values.

Most of the artist's works are permeated with a mystical feeling of an invisible human presence and of things taking place even when the character is not pictured. A broken cup, an overturned chair, scraps of food, or a door ajar are witnesses of someone's history, rituals, and everyday life.

The imagery of **Semyon Agroskin** is not static, it is not about momentary things or a specific moment in time, it is about *before* and *after*, about the irreversible and constant flow of time, transforming the things that we witness into kaleidoscopic memories.

"Semyon Agroskin's paintings are paradoxical in the internal drama, conflicts and tensions that the artist brings to life through art. The subjects of his work, from the early series "*Estate Inventory*" and "*Domestic Theater*" to the "*Living Iron*" and "*Others projects*" of recent years, are from everyday life and plainly unambiguous. The objects Agroskin depicts—hangers, linen, pots and tea kettles, people sleeping in train cars and the quick meals of migrant workers—are cause for dialog and for art. For him, the objects depicted are neither instruments of social injustice, nor social signifiers, nor portals into other worlds, nor confirmations of the domination of the everyday over the sacred (or vice versa).

The essence of his work and the force that attracts the viewer's eye to it is not found in his subjects, not in the empty corners, simple images of everyday life and interiors. If they are perceived as leitmotifs, they can

only distract the viewer from the main point of his paintings. Agroskin's works must be read exclusively "between the lines", looking not for what the artist consciously encrypted and veiled, but the opposite: what unconsciously comes from inside him, through his paintings, often against his will: the flickering of searching, doubts, internal states and struggles. Agroskin is valuable not so much for what he masterfully expresses on canvas, but rather for the inexplicable elements that break free from him through his work and without him knowing." Maria Naimushina.

"Memories and current events have equal footing in my works. I think about the periods of time before and after the visible plot. In the absence of opposition between past and present, the very axiom of the flow of time as the main factor of existence is erased. Empty interiors are filled with voices and sounds, with cracklings and rustlings. But a question hangs in the air: Where are the inhabitants of these spaces? Let's leave it to the viewers to decide. There is no specific articulation of the genre here. My place in the shifting landscape of contemporary art holds no interest for me. I'm always looking for interior intentions, reasons for being an artist.

The shadow cast by a door, clothing strewn about a room, a plate on a table, staircases in a metro station – these are all rudimentary exterior impressions that can serve as a pretext for a rather cold and unfeeling vision... I try to reveal the basic instincts hidden under the surface: love, friendship and even death. To that end, slightly colorized images from black and white films in the Italian neorealist style suit me just fine. I find conventional subjects related to sensuality quite boring. The silence that pervades my paintings involves not only the inhabited interiors, but also the human figures. The latter have just as much claim to these spaces as the world of objects does and are, to a certain extent, oblivious to what is going on at that precise moment. I feel like time passes differently in my works, and sometimes moves backwards." Semyon Agroskin

Semyon Agroskin (b.1961 in Moscow, Soviet Union) graduated from MARCHI (Moscow Architectural Institute) in 1984.

The works are included in the collections of The State Tretyakov Gallery, The State Hermitage Museum, The State Russian Museum, Moscow Museum of Modern Art, in private and corporate collections in Russia, France, Holland, Italy, Great Britain, Israel, USA.

The artist lives and works in Moscow and Israel.

Selected personal exhibitions include: "Voir et Comprendre", L Galerie, Paris (FR), 2024, "Memory Archives", In-Gate Gallery, Brussels (BE), 2023, "Se voir est difficile", Galerie du Tableau, Marseille (FR), 2023, "Passer sous silence", L Galerie, Paris (FR), 2023, Home exhibition, Paola Messana project, Marseilles (FR), 2022, "Home theater", Kaluga, ICC (RU), 2022, "Flashback", Club Gallery "Open Club", Moscow(RU), 2021.

Selected group exhibitions include: "Dialogue in time and space. National Art of the XX – XXI centuries", MMOMA, Moscow (RU), 2023, "Home and family. Pictures of peaceful Life", The State Russian Museum, St. Petersburg (RU), 2022 – 2023, "Waiting for Don Quixote", Voznesensky Center, Moscow (RU), 2022, Cosmocoscow, Moscow (RU), 2022, "Instant Fish Hunt", Zverev Center for Contemporary Art, Moscow (RU), 2022, "Travel Diaries", KultProekt Gallery in CUBE Moscow (RU), 2022, «ART PLATFORM-ON» 2022, Gwangju (KR), 2022, "ID", CYBERFEST, Marina Gisich Gallery, St. Petersburg (RU), 2019, Cyberfest, St. Petersburg, The State Hermitage Museum (2018), "Birch Time", A.Pushkin Literary Museum, Moscow (RU), 2018, "Art Riot: Post-Soviet Actionism", Saatchi Gallery, London (UK), 2017 – 2018, "Moscow Through the Ages", The State Tretyakov Gallery, Moscow (RU), 2017.

