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The Dark, Brooding Landscapes of L.A. Artist Stas Orlovski



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Los Angeles-based artist Stas Orlovski bridges the gap between drawing and film with a new show, “Pastoral,” at Mixed Greens gallery in Manhattan, which is characterized by dark abstract and transmutable landscapes. Orlovski’s projected stop-motion animation, the eponymous Pastoral (2014), spans the entirety of a wall at the gallery’s north space, and combines two- and three-dimensional scenes. One particular sequence features an iconic silhouette that references Picasso’s famous Demoiselles painting, which then disappears into the video’s misty landscape.



Orlovski’s drawings and prints gather inspirations from other varied sources, including Victorian imagery, Soviet children’s books, Hungarian textiles, and Japanese prints. Swallows with Tree (2014), for example, features several Russian swallow heads that have been xerox-transferred onto a drawing of a tree. The birds are tangled within the branches of tree, or perhaps emerging from a nest. Dark Waves (2014), a foreboding drawing using ink, charcoal, and collage, is less about animal forms and more about making a visual connection between the abstract form of a wave and a fluid medium like ink. Orlovski’s stylized waves fit like pieces in a puzzle and serve as a metaphor for subconscious thoughts.

With other works, such as Figure with Moon and Waves (2014), Orlovski again references the Demoiselles pose, though in this instance, her figure is suspended in a cosmic landscape. She could be a fertility goddess, bathing in the moonlight. In Figure with Curtain (2014), we see her form peek out from behind a drawn curtain and repeated several times at an increasingly smaller scale. Orlovski is referencing space and time through repetition, much like an animation would. Each work of “Pastoral”—be it drawing, print, or animation—carries similar motifs and elements of collage, and develops visual themes between one-off prints and his more ambitious moving pictures.

—[Haniya Rae](#)

“Pastoral” is on view at [Mixed Greens](#), New York, Oct. 16th–Nov. 15th.