

# GLADSTONE GALLERY

Katja Horvat, "Andro Wekua, "A Dog's Fidelity," *Interview DE*  
February 21, 2017

**inter/VIEW**

## Andro Wekua, "A Dog's Fidelity"

*The dogs, moved by old memory, still lift  
their hindlegs at a once-familiar spot.*

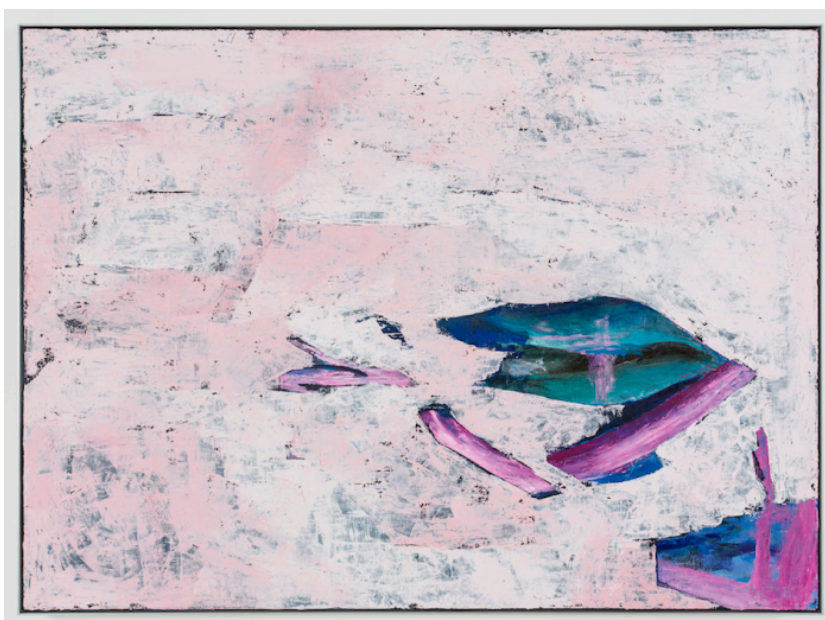
*The church's walls have long since been torn down,  
but these dogs see the church walls in their dreams.*

*Dog-dreams have canceled out reality ...*

*For them the church still stands; they see it plain.*

Joseph Brodsky, from "A Halt in the Desert"

Not being able to see the show live, I struggled to find the right words to describe my own sense of it. In a press release it says, "The exhibition includes large painterly tableaus, redolent of European landscape and seascape painting, which, in wrestling spatial relations of figure and ground, convey the aesthetic process as a dive into fiction as reality." so let's just go with that. Anyhow, in all his works Andro Wekua plays with a relation between surreal and real. He is piecing together a picture that is a result of his upbringing, entwined with a current world situation. Or as Donald Judd once said, "Any art involves philosophical, social, and political attitudes."



LICKING BLACK SEA, 2015/2016

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Andro Wekua was born in Sukhumi but now lives between Berlin, Germany and Zurich, Switzerland. Wekua is without a doubt one of the most notable and prominent artists working today. We sat down with the artist to discuss his new show, "A Dog's Fidelity" at Gladstone 64, New York, which is on view until February 25th, 2017.

*Slavoj Žižek once said, "As soon as we renounce fiction and illusion, we lose reality itself; the moment we subtract fictions from reality, reality itself loses its discursive-logical consistency." Would you agree?*

We could paraphrase that through a quote from Joan Didion, "We tell ourselves stories in order to exist."

*How did you come up with the title, "A Dog's Fidelity"?*

The title is a line from a Joseph Brodsky poem, „A Halt in the Desert.“ For me, the poem communicates a paradox contained in the state of exile, where one's past, despite having no physical relation to the present, persists to be as real as to be almost tactile.

*Do you have a dog?*

I do not.

*How did the show come about?*

I wanted to collapse my collage and painting practice into one and do an exhibition solely of these works. I really like Gladstone 64 space, especially how intimate it is and thought that the two would go together perfectly.

*Gauguin once said that the art was inside his head and nowhere else. That said – is your work a manifestation of your fantasies?*

What art is a manifestation of for me is hard to explain.

*Do you think you have certain cycles within your work? Meaning – when you look back at your work do you see one phase followed by another?*

I am always moving in a circuitous way from film, photography, collage, painting, sculpture. Sometimes combining all those elements, sometimes not.

*What would you do if you didn't do art?*

I would probably sleep even more than I do now.

*Are you a collector?*

I was a collector of cars but since I don't drive, I let them go.

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A. PORTRAIT, CHROME, 2016

Gladstone Gallery on the exhibition, “Andro Wekua creates environments within the confines of a formal painting structure that hope to arrive at a place – sometimes actual, sometimes imagined – that draws the viewer into a proposed reality. In particular, the new portrait series start as collage, move into printmaking and finally painting. Each step adds a layer – both literally and conceptually – that drives the ambiguity, an actual construction built upon fiction and memory.”