

# Steve Gianakos

January 7th – February 25th 2017

Opening on Saturday, January 7th from 11 am to 9 pm.

## Figures On A Knife Edge

All of Steve Gianakos' oeuvre seems founded on afterwardsness—or on the aftermath of pernicious blows of one kind or another: slaps in the face, thrusts of the pelvis or some other funny business... It's not based on commentary then, but on lapses and relapses, bounds and rebounds, in the same way as a conversation strung together by cheeky plays on words, constant alliteration, incessant ellipsis and various other linguistic affectations.

A brilliant graduate of the Brooklyn Pratt Institute almost ten years after the first apparition of Pop Art, the artist has shamelessly made use of its codes, language and idioms, eroding them as much as simply using them as established articles, already out of fashion, almost nostalgic in nature. The last stars blazing in the firmament of art.

Strippers from the pages of throwaway dailies, prints of borrowed images, cut out and stuck together in haste like make-up applied on the back seat of a nighttime taxi—his heroines have no more consistency or substance than a cigarette paper rolled between clumsy fingers; the latest in line always procuring more pleasure than the very first one that led to our original condemnation...

*The King is Dead. Long Live the Queens!* So, their allotted hours are dazzling, full of joy, transgressive, improbable and corrupt. And the layers of paper on which Steve Gianakos reproduces their evenings and early mornings are as white as the darkest of nights, as clean as a Kleenex found at the bottom of a handbag, as crystalline as a voice lubricated by alcohol and tobacco and as fresh as the daily news. *Just a Cut Above the Rest.*

Let's not get carried away... Slouched on her divan, the diva is less divine than full of wine, more deflowered than delicate flower, yet remains refined in the very essence of the term. So we shouldn't be surprised to see her applying blusher with the edge of a razor blade (*Her Knees Shook Like Castanets*, 2012), devouring a head (*Mother and Child*, 2012) nor fitting into the mold of polite society (*She blew the job interview with her arrogance*, 1998). Nothing to get alarmed about or even to shed a teardrop...

"Ooh! Just another drop, darling! Go on... Just one finger more... one last one."

"One more for the road?"

A rebellious beauty, a bit crazy, behaving a little badly but today quite happily *girlie*, she fakes and dissimulates both good and bad taste, eats badly but with chopsticks, plays false notes out of time but with grace and distinction. Getting down to business, both excessive and lascivious, she slithers down the slippery slope, taking her pussy for a panther and vice-versa. Whatever tickles your fancy, but not just anyone's allowed. And at the fairy's dainty fingertips, the varnish vanishes...

And then Art finds itself at a loose end, like an only child in a deserted palace. After having plundered everything, we have to get things together again, she tells him in a tête-à-tête. Handbag, hand on the collar, collar turned up, head well covered, she is finally ready to show herself all at once. Just a little carnal, she exhibits herself, under the spotlight, one last snack, a last flash of well turned-out cleavage.

"Mr Porcher, take me to Rue Chapon !" she cries out greedily "Where are my guests?..."

Hey Benoît, on with the show! Lets meat our invitees!

When all's said and done, here's to Art with the longest of teeth! It's time to feast your eyes!

Charles Arthur Boyer (Translation Chris Atkinson)



**Steve Gianakos**  
*Mother and child, 2012*  
Acrylique sur toile  
100 x 80 cm

Courtesy Semiose galerie, Paris  
Photo : A. Mole



**Steve Gianakos**  
*Her knees shook like castanets*, 2012  
Acrylique sur toile  
80 x 100 cm

Courtesy Semiose galerie, Paris  
Photo : A. Mole



**Steve Gianakos**  
*She blew the job interview with her arrogance, 1998*  
Techniques mixtes sur papier  
74 x 60 cm

Courtesy Semiose galerie, Paris  
Photo : A. Mole



**Steve Gianakos**  
*An incurable longing*, 2006  
Techniques mixtes sur papier  
135 x 115 cm

Courtesy Semiose galerie, Paris  
Photo : A. Mole



**Steve Gianakos**

*Deciding to try her hand at interior decorating, 1993*

Techniques mixtes sur paper

68 x 42 cm

Courtesy Semiose galerie, Paris  
Photo : A. Mole



**Steve Gianakos**  
*She sand to rare reggae*, 2005  
Techniques mixtes sur papier  
87 x 76 cm

Courtesy Semiose galerie, Paris  
Photo : A. Mole



**Steve Gianakos**  
*She was the center of excitement and affordability, 2002*  
Techniques mixtes sur papier  
120 x 80 cm

Courtesy Semiose galerie, Paris  
Photo : A. Mole