

Flora Yukhnovich: *Barcarole*

Exhibition 12 September–24 October 2020

Victoria Miro Venice, Il Capricorno, San Marco 1994, 30124 Venice, Italy



Flora Yukhnovich
Barcarole (detail), 2019
Oil on linen
166 x 145 cm
65 3/8 x 57 1/8 in
© Flora Yukhnovich
Courtesy the artist and Victoria Miro

Victoria Miro is delighted to welcome visitors back to its Venice gallery with new paintings by the London-based artist Flora Yukhnovich. Inspired by a residency with the gallery in Venice, these new works reflect on the influence of the city and Venetian culture.

In 2019, Victoria Miro established a studio space in Venice for invited artists to spend extended time in the historic city and make new bodies of work. During a two-month residency, Flora Yukhnovich used the opportunity to engage more fully with Venetian culture. Her sources include the music of Vivaldi and the memoirs of Casanova, in addition to one of her key influences, Giovanni Battista Tiepolo, whose works including ceiling frescoes in the Ca' Rezzonico museum and the Chiesa Santa Maria della Visitazione she was able to study first hand.

Titled *Barcarole* after the traditional folk songs sung by Venetian gondoliers, this exhibition, which includes new paintings completed recently in London, reflects further on these influences, in particular the frescoes of Tiepolo and the notions of pace, movement and musicality that arise visually from the orchestration of brushmark, line and colour. Following a hugely successful exhibition held on Vortic Collect, these new and previously unseen paintings, on show in the city that inspired them, welcome visitors back to the Venice gallery.

Of special interest to the artist while she was in Venice was Tiepolo's fresco *The Coronation of the Virgin*, commissioned in 1754 for the newly constructed church of Santa Maria della Visitazione, known as La Pietà, which inspired her to work on an oval canvas for the first time. Antonio Vivaldi, who was born close by, taught violin at the adjacent Foundling Hospital for many years and, while the church itself was rebuilt in a neoclassical style shortly after Vivaldi's death, it is still referred to as the 'Vivaldi Church'. For Yukhnovich, the idea of Vivaldi and Tiepolo working roughly contemporaneously has led to additional consideration of her paintings' rhythmic sensuality.

New paintings completed recently in London are a continuation of the themes and discoveries that preoccupied the artist during her residency. Each is based on a detail of a fresco by Tiepolo, in Venice as well as other cities. For the artist, working from reproductions provided a shift in focus and intensity – of colour palette especially. She explains, 'With these paintings, I brought colour back with quite a lot of intensity. I think reproductions idealise the colours to some degree and I have exaggerated it further. These works are about departing from the figurative source and arriving at a more gestural, abstract new place, where marks and colour can stand in for the attitude of the original painting but with more ambiguity and maybe more openness... I think they still retain a sense of illusionary space and some of the feeling of the escapism that Tiepolo's work has... The sense of escape and being transported is a prevalent Rococo theme, often revolving around islands, not as real locations but as other places full of possibility and free from the confines of everyday life. That felt like a very appealing facet to explore during lockdown.'

About the artist

Born in 1990, Flora Yukhnovich completed her MA at the City & Guilds of London Art School in 2017. She has received great acclaim for paintings in which she adopts the language of Rococo, reimagining the dynamism of works by eighteenth-century artists such as Tiepolo, François Boucher, Nicolas Lancret and Jean-Antoine Watteau through a filter of contemporary cultural references including film, food and consumerism. She had her first solo exhibition at Parafin, London, in March 2019, and has recently exhibited at GASK, the Gallery of the Central Bohemian Region, Czech Republic, the Jerwood Gallery Hastings and at Blenheim Walk Gallery, Leeds Arts University, UK. Collections include Government Art Collection and David Roberts Art Collection. In 2018 she completed The Great Women Artists Residency at Palazzo Monti, Brescia.

No booking is required when visiting our Venice gallery. We welcome a maximum number of 5 people at a time to the gallery.

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