



We Never Dream Alone

9 Jan–7 Feb 2015 at Kristin Hjellegjerde Gallery, London



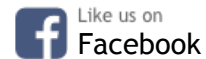
Andrew Leventis, *Suzy's Room*, Freiburg, 1977, 2014, oil on linen, 71 x 31 cm

“In what ways can we still read our terrifying dreams with (Freudian) tools based on ancient Greek myths? In the age of smartphones, archetypal layers have been rewired and have mutated into a semi-collective techno-subconscious. We never dream alone. The digital is being pushed into the realm of the subliminal.” - Geert Lovink

You wander, ghostlike, amidst a number of scenarios. You pass by an unmade bed, human presence evident through the tumbled sheets, yet no people are present. You turn your head and see a hand pour bourbon into a decanter; a woman behind a diner counter stands with her back to you, leaving you to see only her bobbed blond hair. Water laps and pulses to distort the image it reflects while somebody walks towards a large, ornate door. You are surrounded by these flashes, awake in a cinematic, Lynchian dream. Around you, two disembodied voices speak to one other, soft murmurs swimming in and out of audio focus, trance like, mesmerising. The walls around you tug insistently at your senses, an endless pattern of leaves and rainbow feathers surrounding you, while a strange chandelier rotates slowly in the air. In *We Never Dream Alone* (9th of January – 7th of February 2015), featuring works by Sidsel Christensen, Andrew Leventis and Lisa Slominski, the borders between real and unreal, fact and fiction, virtual and visceral are explored. Diverse media, from video and painting to installation bind together the diverse yet complementary practices of these three artists, as each navigates the ‘other’ space, that expanse between



On the street



waking and sleeping, a collective influence on their psyches.

Sidsel Christensen's practice explores the field created between 'inner' and 'outer' reality, navigating the boundary between fact and fiction. In doing so, she examines different possibilities for the imagination to transform reality (as it is perceived) for an individual or group. This investigation is played out in conversation, live presentations and video portraits, and it is through these media that Christensen engages with the intimacy that revolves around body language and narratives of subjectivity. She thus attempts to capture an idealised 'space' between herself, the artist, and the subject/audience, where the work is created by creative input and framing on both sides. This lays the groundwork for a space of potential, power struggle and fiction. In *We Never Dream Alone*, she presents the single screen projection *Study for Composition XI (A Conversation at the Edge of the Object)*. The video sets up a conversation between Christensen and art collector Thomas Frankenberg. Set at 'the end of the world', it allows for an imagined, dream-like space in which everything is broken down, with no stable boundaries between object and surroundings. It encompasses philosophical reflections on his collection, including the status of the object in terms of an exploration of texture, proximity, meaning, preservation and disappearance. As the camera pans through the collection, and the conversations unfolds, we are presented with a journey through a landscape bordering on abstraction, in which fragments of art objects and natural elements join in unexpected ways, employing their own logic of encounter. The collector's and Christensen's voices (the latter trancelike under a hypnotic regression), provide the soundtrack to the work, pervading throughout the gallery space.

Meanwhile, Andrew Leventis creates still lifes from snapshots of period dramas played out on film and television, concerned with the tension between the painted and technological image. Looking through the filter of the digital screen, he reflects on how contemporary TV borrows configurations from painting, whilst himself borrowing back from the pictorial designs of contemporary television. In a sense, these cinematic interiors, in their fabrication, are 'dreamt up', constructed by the various writers, actors and productions crews who have created them, before being re-interpreted by Leventis into painted tableaux. Leventis's work provides a familiarisation and empathy with the cinematic subject, a feeling that he equates with the contemporary affinity to mass media images. This is further enhanced by the human touch provided by the physical act of the painting process. In the work presented here, Leventis focuses on interiors and characters that occupy suspense films, particularly cult films that are noteworthy for their vivid Technicolor and stylistic flourishes. In each painting, there is a negation of interest on the figure, yet an emphasis on the interior and environment that the character inhabits. The purpose here is to record the interaction between the character and the environment, rather than to record the figure's face and physical features, as in traditional portraiture. Leventis looks to film direction to examine this person-object association, since in film the relations between characters and objects, particularly the ways that objects are meant to more fully flesh-out and describe characters are entirely fabricated.

Finally, Lisa Slominski covers the gallery walls with her signature wallpaper work, alongside a floor piece. Sourcing images from the Internet and treating them as readymade objects, reworking and repurposing the forms in order to emancipate them from their virtual existence or typical associations. In abstracting these images, she shifts them from their virtual realm into the physical one. Through this process, and by using interior design, she investigates the relationship between observing and objectifying. Slominski is interested in how the digital age has changed our approach to interior space, as we are now faced with ever-expanding customisation tools and computer-generated suggestions. With its references to modern science, social media and the Internet, Slominski's work employs the

use of repetition and pattern, often with the florid sensibilities of the Baroque period, while searching for a sense of drama, exaggerated motion and control. By disrupting familiarity, her work seeks to create something permanent out of something ethereal, and push beyond simple juxtaposition to create hybrids of virtuality and décor. In this exhibition, she investigates ideas of access and appropriation in our relationship to both the Internet and interior space; the former provides an ocean of images and information, not only for reference but for us to take and manipulate.

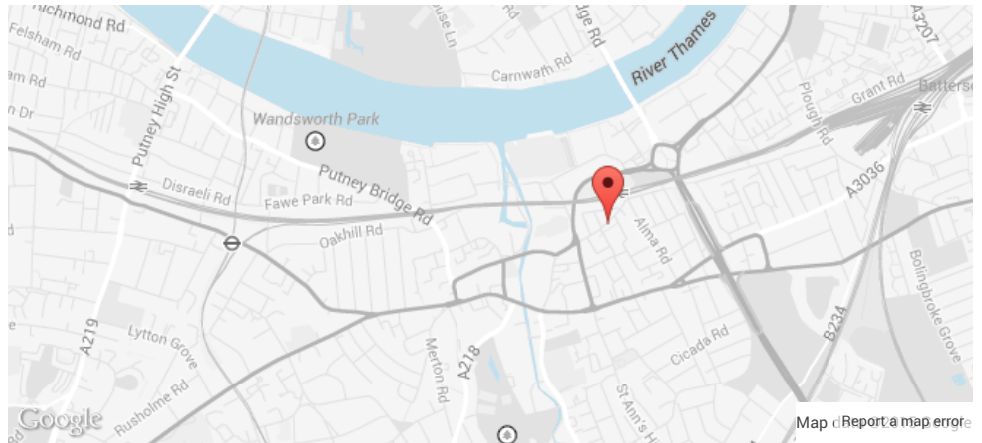
Ultimately, in *We Never Dream Alone*, we are faced with a collision of worlds – through the manipulated, distilled narratives of film; through an imagined space at the end of the world; and an abstracted world that has stepped through into the real world from the digital. We are wrapped up in the many voices and thoughts that spring from our collective consciousness, accessible and attainable through the various media and narratives that only we, as humans, can have dreamt up.

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Opening hours

Tuesday - Saturday
 From 11am to 6pm



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Captions

1. Lisa Slominski, 2 B Or Not 2 B, 2015, digital print and interior paint on door, interior paint on digitally-printed wallpaper, 196 x 78 x 4 cm (door), dimensions variable (wallpaper)

2. Andrew Leventis, *Unmade Bed*, Venice, 1973, 2014, oil on linen, 38 x 31 cm
3. "We Never Dream Alone" installation view at Kristin Hjellegjerde Gallery, London
4. Sidsel Christensen, video still from *A Conversation at the Edge of the Object (Study for Composition XI)*, 2014, HD video, single screen projection, stereo sound, 18 minutes, edition 2/5 + 1 artist's proof
5. Andrew Leventis, *Madeleine in Red Dress*, San Francisco, 1958, 2014, oil on linen, 76 x 26 cm
6. Sidsel Christensen, video still from *A Conversation at the Edge of the Object (Study for Composition XI)*, 2014, HD video, single screen projection, stereo sound, 18 minutes, edition 2/5 + 1 artist's proof

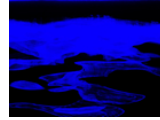
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