

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE



Can of Worms

Katya Kirilloff

October 29th – December 3rd, 2022

Opens Saturday, October 29th from 3-6pm

Opening performance by Jonny Campolo at 5pm

I don't know why I started drawing, I think it was a way of releasing the anxiety that opening my can of worms created. I hadn't drawn since I was a child, it surprised me that returning to the place I was a child unearthed this desire to draw. Writing my own press release made me uncomfortable because I would have to own my drawings, claim them with reason, and they feel like a very pure, unfamiliar part of myself that I am now just meeting. I don't know who this person is and I want to protect her, and at the same time bare my guts.

In traditional psychoanalysis, the analyst invites the patient to lie on the couch. Lying on the couch is meant to relax the patient into a more free-associative state of mind; it is intended to help the patient say everything. Because of this, there is a lot of resistance to lying on the couch. One might say patients are hesitant to 'open a can of worms.' What if we open the can and can't shut it again? It feels safer to keep those thoughts and feelings repressed, hidden, unknown, away from the conscious experience of day to day life. But haven't we learned that these worms escape from the can whether we like it or not? That they creep and crawl in various forms unbeknownst to us even if we don't acknowledge them?

Katya Kirilloff (b. 1976) opened a can of worms when she began her drawing practice in 2021. Despite her natural drawing and draftsmanship abilities, her background is in photography. For Kirilloff, this can-opening occurred during the pandemic when she moved across the country, back to her hometown outside Baltimore, Maryland. Suddenly, all these worms from the past were inching their way up to the top of her aluminum cans. Kirilloff released them in her drawings, the lids pulled back revealing gut-like worms wiggling together, exposing the secret parts. Some cans even have surprises inside! An engagement ring, a keychain baby, a key – all signifiers that simultaneously entrap us and open new doors. Afterall, the unconscious is where our inner contradictions and amibiablenes are stored as one.

Kirilloff uses the readymade phrase 'opening a can of worms' to provide a platform for psychological meaning for herself and for the viewer. While the metaphor is warning that you may unleash more problems by opening the can, the actual purpose of earthworms is to literally move the earth, making the soil new as they go. Worms infuse the earth with new vitality, just as analysis is considered 'the talking cure.' Amy Stewart, in her 2004 non-fiction book, *The Earth*

Moved, writes that, "in this complex age, the earthworm may emerge as a kind of unsung hero, one whose potential we are only just beginning to understand."

Perhaps the whole world needs to lie on the couch and open a can of worms.

-Tisch Abelow

The exhibition is on view by appointment only. For more information (including exact location) and images, please contact info@freddygallery.biz