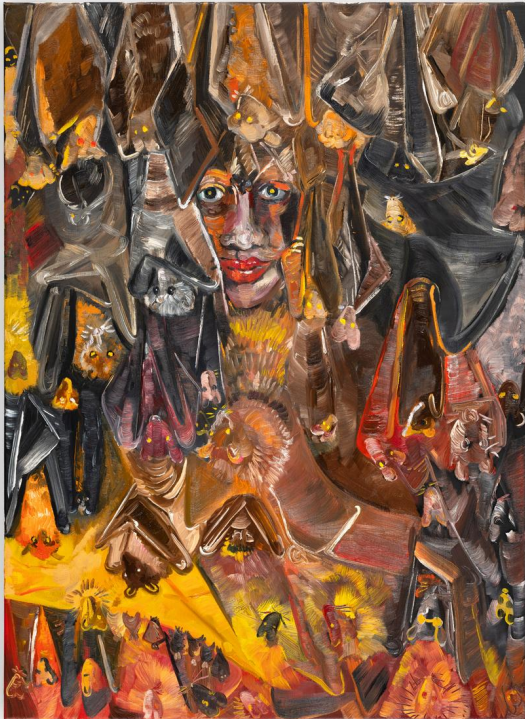


Pola Dwurnik: Yellow Eyes

30 Orchard St, Gallery 2 ▪ Oct 13 - Nov 12, 2023



Harkawik is pleased to announce *Yellow Eyes*, the first US solo exhibition of Warsaw based painter Pola Dwurnik. In her richly narrative paintings, Dwurnik explores humankind's fraught relationship to the animal kingdom. Her people peer out from swarms, flocks, herds, gaggles and yokes, their eyes piercing and cast upward, her brush levelling the contrivances that segregate them from their pack. Dwurnik's world is absent the hormone-sick, alien creatures that we consume today, whose lives are defined by a series of cruel measures meant to shield us from their suffering, from the horrible truth of our indifference. Hers are the animals of old, the ones we feared not because they told us stories about ourselves, threatened to overtake us with unimaginably quick and deadly illnesses, or became something we didn't recognize, but because we encountered them one by one, in close proximity, full of the majesty of an unknowable imperative.

Yellow Eyes is comprised of eight paintings in a mid-size format that is new for the artist, and radiate with neutral colors that come exclusively from nature. Dwurnik's brush, made of animal hair, introduces fur, whiskers and feathers into her compositions in a spate of decisive, one-off marks, like the bear of Heinrich von Kleist's *On the Marionette Theatre*, who

parries reflexively without hesitation. Her paintings have a finality that is perfectly matched to the inevitability of a beating wing, a breath, a bloody claw, a stone that is whole in one moment, cleaved the next. They cannot be known, or unknown. Headdresses, tapestries, throw rugs, taxidermy and other trophies linger, either so dead they've come back to life, or else just as stoic and absent of thought as the humans who gather them. Like the sorceress in Ludovico Aristo's epic *Orlando Furioso*, Dwurnik seduces us, transforming us into shrubs when we bore her, reminding that the razor's edge between fascination and horror might be slightly less sharp.