

For Immediate Release.

Alexander Kaletski: *Handle with Care*
October 24 – December 20, 2013

Anna Zorina Gallery is proud to present *Handle with Care*, an exhibition of recent paintings in many media by Alexander Kaletski based around the title theme.

Handle with Care - those words on their own can connote intimacy, fragility, value, travel, intention, and expertise, among other things. They can refer to a dangerous animal or a fragile person, a frangible object or a sensitive situation. We are most accustomed to encountering them on packaging material such as a piece of discarded cardboard where, having executed their protective function and now stripped of meaning, they echo hollowly - unless Alexander Kaletski resuscitates and transforms their significance by incorporating them in a work of art.

Kaletski, who doesn't limit himself to found materials, is a master of artistic engagement with his chosen media. His conversation with his materials, whether oil on canvas, acrylic on wood, or mixed media on cardboard, is dynamic, satiric, joyful and mordant. Kaletski's subject is usually the distinctive urbanite, revealed in the context of their obsessions and desires, whether social, sexual, consumerist, or ego-driven.

In *Handle with Care*, Kaletski's characters bestow their attentions on what they treasure and reveal themselves in the process. They tend to look directly at the viewer, implicitly demanding that we see them and see ourselves in them. What do we hold on to like life itself? Is ours the desperate grip of the *Last Bottle*, where what destroys us rules our lives, or the convivial open-handed welcome of *James Bourlet*? Sometimes the ambiguity makes us choose and reveal ourselves in the choosing. Do we see in *Dolce Madonna* only the obvious religious reference; the more universal love of child that consumes a parent's heart and mind; or does the title wordplay remind us of the appropriated shopping bag material, perhaps even recognizing that an expensive handbag is based on the same image. Maybe that's what she's holding so tenderly?

What do we value? What do we handle with care? Can we protect it and is it worth our energy? Are we capable of caring for the things that enrich our lives or are we obsessed with that which destroys us? Along with the sheer joy at encountering Kaletski's exuberant, virtuosic play of paint on varied surfaces, these are some of the questions evoked by this exhibition.