

Pioneer Association – Andrew Lewis  
opening march 14, 4-9pm  
03.14 - 04.18



For his second personal exhibition at art : concept in Paris, Andrew Lewis shows paintings depicting his personal version of Western mythic explorations.

Compressing time and space, a series of nine paintings superimpose the Pioneers' imaginary and American spatial conquest. Rather than focusing on aspects such as patriotic clichés or historical impacts usually associated to those human and technological adventures, Andrew Lewis creates landscapes and scenes where hybrid means of transport combine horses-drawn carts and lunar modules.

Thus, the artist highlights the poetics of technological and social evolutions considering them as a progress. However, Lewis' s sci-fi universe convey all the ambivalence of such a notion. The fictitious parallel between those historical periods points out the inevitable, repetitive and cyclic mechanism: invention, amazement, boredom. According to the artist, this logic arises from technological innovations, and can be understood as a common principle to our personal lives. Excited by anything new at its beginning, we enthusiastically adopt innovations, then getting used to them, we consider them as normal, banal, and finally boring. Pioneers' Association also deals with the banal, but not only as a counterpoint of changes or inventions. Lewis perpetuates an artistic practice, that, from 17th century Dutch painting to Warhol, has been literally celebrated the everyday repetitions, and the banality of our lives.

With regard to his previous works gathered in the exhibition "Couronne Impériale", Lewis's narratives follow the recurrent theme of displacement encouraged by the search of an elsewhere or a lost paradise. Moving structures – carts or lunar modules - always accompany utopias. Made to transport bodies, they function here as symbols for bodies.

Andrew Lewis' aesthetical interest in the body is one of the links between the nine paintings series and the paintings gathered in the second room. Some of those ten other works echo late 19th century paintings such as interior genre scenes and figures studies. Thus, the artist multiplies points of view and approaches explorations in a wider and metaphorical sense.

*Venus and Apollo* represents two children standing on each side of a console table and carefully looking at a decorative sculpture displayed on its top. However, the title confirms the first impression given by this small sculpture. Here does not stand the expected artwork usual to a genre scene, but a small-scale representation of Apollo lunar capsule. In the background, an antic Greek Venus sets up a symmetrical compositional effect responding to the Apollo bronze model. Lewis considers the antique sculpture as well as the popular culture icon, both those topics are equally worthwhile. The lunar capsule is a metaphor for the body and for desire, such as the Apollo-and-Venus myth which is, among others, an allegory of passion and love.

Therefore, Andrew Lewis creates a narrative based on the body metamorphosis, its displacements, and their representations (image, sculpture or technological objects). His new paintings series embrace many layers of what exploration means, from the geographical fact to the invisible one that any man does in his own interior world. In  *Holding a lantern in her hand*, the teenage girl laying on a couch is looking at a flame emerging from the dark. Seen from behind, her head leaning on her elbow, she embodies this state of consciousness: the instant of tranquillity linked to the desire of being somewhere else.

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