

THOMAS DANE GALLERY

Mukherjee Paroma. "Ella Kruglyanskaya's Women at Tate Liverpool". *Blouin ArtInfo*, 15 June 2016

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## Ella Kruglyanskaya's Women at Tate Liverpool

BY PAROMA MUKHERJEE | JUNE 15, 2016



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Ella Kruglyanskaya, *Bathers*, 2006  
(Courtesy the artist and Gavin Brown's enterprise New York/Rome)

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Ella Kruglyanskaya was born in Latvia in 1978 and moved to America in the mid '90s. She lives in New York now and over the last few years, has been portraying the female form in her artworks in a manner that is both graphic and painterly. That her work has undeniable influences of German expressionism as well as film and popular culture from the 1950s and 1960s is most apparent. Her compositions are charmingly exact, almost forcing an interplay of the elements of painting and graphic drawing.

Kruglyanskaya has always been very aware of the politics of gender and representation, and this echoes in her work at her exhibition at Tate Liverpool. A focused survey of her practice from the past decade, this exhibition also presents newly commissioned works that carry forward the dramatics of portrayal in desires inherent in the human gaze. In frames laden with duality of content, interpretation and visual puns, her female protagonists are more actors than real subjects. They almost stage their own scenes, especially in theatrical encounters and gossip sessions. Kruglyanskaya, thus, challenges the very history of representing women in visual art by drawing from art's own complexities, themes that exaggerate the works. This exuberant and dynamic world of hers is tightly packed into each composition, in a manner that is intentionally flat and a departure from the traditional form of painting.

Indulging in a use of several styles and techniques, even certain overlooked formal concerns, Kruglyanskaya embraces egg tempera in her work. A combination of coloured pigments and egg yolk, this old technique was used in medieval panel work and Kruglyanskaya uses it in her rich works to give them even more finesse and grandeur.

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Kruglyanskaya has exhibited widely, including recently concluded solo shows at Studio Voltaire, London; The Power Station, Dallas; Contemporary Art Centre, Riga and White Columns New York (2011). In today's society, where patriarchy still looms large, her work is incredibly stark, honest and entirely on its own terms, thus successfully showing the door to old notions of depicting the female body in its infinite representations.

*Ella Kruglyanskaya* is presented in parallel with *Francis Bacon: Invisible Rooms* and *Maria Lassnig*. Curated by Stephanie Straine, it is on show from May 18 to September 18, 2016 at Tate Liverpool.