



Sam Friedman's First Solo Show in Greece Is a Celebration of Mindfulness and Natural Forms

Mykonos, 17 July 2019 — American painter Sam Friedman returns to Dio Horia for a residency on Mykonos, leading into his first solo exhibition in Greece. The exhibition *Days of Kindness* includes paintings and works on paper from the artist's Landscape Paintings series, and opens on July 25th in the presence of the artist.

Sam Friedman has been creating his Landscape Paintings since 2008. These are abstractions of landscapes prompted by his interest in lines, forms and colors found in nature, which he repurposes as formal elements to create new compositions. Each Landscape Painting has its origin in a powerful moment, usually an encounter with a natural landscape or phenomenon. Yet in spite of its naturalistic references, each work remains non-representational and strictly formal in its conception: Friedman is not literally painting landscapes, but adopts the flow and movement he sees in nature in order to address questions about the medium itself. As such, all his works are to be viewed primarily as exercises in color, composition, line quality, opacity, sheen, and the physical interaction between paint, brush, canvas and the artist himself.

Drawing inspiration from New York's post-war abstract artists, Edo-period Japanese prints, African masks, Indonesian art, Rousseau, Matisse, Picasso and others, **Friedman** approaches abstraction not as a visual result but as a process. His Landscape Paintings arise from the recognition that human beings don't exist in nature as a foreign body, but are indeed part of nature. Friedman's works consist of fluid, organic lines not because they seek to reproduce a landscape, but because natural contours are closer to the movement of the human body. This organic element also relates to the scale of the artist's own movements: the length of a line or the radius of a curve always depends on the reach and movement of his arm. This imbues the paintings with approachability, since the viewer can feel an essential connection to each work in a tacit, visceral way.

In the poem *Days of Kindness* (1985), Leonard Cohen reminisces his life on the Greek island of Hydra in the 1960's and his affair at the time with Marianne Ihlen. It is a poem full of the warmth of a summer evening illuminated by the moon, candles and oil lamps (there was hardly any electricity on Hydra back then), echoing the tender feelings of a relationship that in the meantime has come to an end. In **Sam Friedman's** exhibition, a setting sun, rippling water and blades of grass stand as reminders of the unequal relationship between humans, nature and time. Being an artist with a strong sense of tradition and the history of his medium, Friedman situates himself in an almost timeless artistic practice, where repetition, dedication and a meditative state are essential for its existence. His paintings require a slower pace and calmness, putting an emphasis on smooth rhythms and frictionless motion. This is also why Friedman loves painting the same subject repeatedly: we must imagine him not as a human machine that mechanically reproduces the same images, but as a Japanese potter who dedicatedly throws the same vase again and again for years, in a constant search for simplicity, perfection and lightness.

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NOTES TO EDITORS

— **Sam Friedman** (b. 1984, Oneonta, NY) studied illustration and typography at the Pratt Art Institute and later on worked on commercial projects for Nike and The New York Times. As his personal practice shifted towards painting, he became the studio manager for KAWS, who after a few years encouraged him to pursue his own career as a painter. He is a fast-emerging young artist whose work has a direct reference to nature, with very sharp outlines and pop colors. He has presented six solo shows and several group shows with galleries in the USA, Europe and Asia. Sam Friedman has been featured in Architectural Digest, Artsy, Hypebeast, High Snobiety, Juxtapoz and other publications. He lives and works in Beacon, a small town north of New York City.

— **Dio Horia** is a gallery for contemporary art and culture that was inaugurated in 2015. Dio Horia Gallery strives to be at the forefront of cultural experimentation both in Greece and the world beyond, by representing young emerging artists from small peripheral countries. At the same time, Dio Horia is running an international residency program and also organizes group shows and publications with established and emerging artists that have not exhibited in Greece. Finally, Dio Horia engages in collaborative projects developed as a result of associations with artists, curators, non-profit organizations and cultural carriers. These fall into categories ranging from social, cultural and literary studies to music and performing arts. The gallery is based in Mykonos, Greece, and in the second half of 2019 it will open a new location in Athens. <http://www.diohoriam.com/>

— Exhibition info

Sam Friedman: *Days of Kindness*
Solo & residency show
July 25 - August 23, 2019

Dio Horia Gallery

Panahra Square, 846 00 Mykonos, Greece
Tel: +30 2289026429
Email: info@diohoriam.com
<http://www.diohoriam.com/>
[@diohoriam](https://www.instagram.com/diohoriam)

Hours:
Daily, 19:00-02:00

— Now showing at Dio Horia Gallery

Javier Calleja: *Those Little Things*
Solo & residency show
June 28 - July 24, 2019

— Upcoming

Spyros Aggelopoulos: *Donut Factory*
Solo show
July 25 - August 16, 2019

Joakim Ojanen: *Island*
Solo & residency show
July 25 - August 23, 2019

Amir Fallah
Solo & residency show
August 23 - September 30, 2019

Hulda Guzmán
Solo show (Athens)
September-November 2019

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