

Psychologistics

Neuroscientists have posited that the conscious mind resembles a theatre. Input and memory coalesce in emotion and ideation. Scenes play out onstage, complete with embedded symbolism and an ever-evolving rationale. Greg Burak's paintings, too, are not unlike theatre. Compositions are carefully constructed with their inhabitants in mind, methodically planned yet filled with paradoxes. One-point perspective draws attention center-stage while peripheral views fade.

For over a decade, Burak has mediated the quotidian and the occult through narrative fragments, referencing high art alongside the magical. Employing a restrained palette and formal techniques, he confronts the unexplainable through a meticulous and rational methodology. Narrative is deprioritized in pursuit of conceptual tenors, and the paintings become holistic studies of cerebral states. They illustrate the mystical, but more importantly, they embody it.

Psychologistics presents spartan interiors, seemingly mundane until uncanny details begin to emerge. Space is divided atypically: the vanishing point of *Woman & Leaping Dog* (2023) rests between figures of the foreground, creating a visual loop between here and there. Forms and shadows subtly conduct the gaze in varying directions. An admirer of Arnold Schoenberg, Burak likens this effect to a struck note decreasing in volume. Elsewhere, a long and empty corridor leads to a dead-end, a curtain drapes along the absence of a window. Meticulously arranged books are anonymous and ever present, and the smoke of a woodstove inexplicably drifts to the floor, disappearing underneath a closed door.

Human consciousness materializes with equal mystery. Figures are arranged in dialogue with historic works of art: *The Conversation* (2025) takes queues from Piero Della Francesca's *Flagellation*, suggesting a private conversation. *Death of Macbeth* (2023) illustrates Shakespearean prophecy and psychological collapse in a literal flattening of landscape with figure. These subjects appear to be suspended in time, frozen by tension or the absence of it. Body language implies haste, deep feeling, dishonesty, anxiety, earnestness, and despair. All the while, human dynamics are accented by their congruent backdrops. The motives and actions of the subjects, while intriguing, come second to the artist's comprehensive designs. *Psychologistics* visualises a sixth sense, an exercise in intuition and contemplation.

Greg Burak (b. 1986, Haverstraw, NY) holds an MFA in Painting from Indiana University, a BFA from the Maryland Institute College of Art and an Associates Degree from the Delaware College of Art and Design. His solo exhibitions include *Associates* at Fortnight Institute (New York, NY) in 2022 and *Visitations* at Fortnight Institute (New York, NY) in 2018. He has exhibited at 303 Gallery (New York, NY), Delaware College of Art & Design (Wilmington, DE), Harper's (New York, NY), Monmouth Museum (Lincroft, NJ), The Painting Center (New York, NY), Patel Gallery (Toronto, Canada), and Venus Over Manhattan (New York, NY), among others. Burak lives and works in Queens, New York.