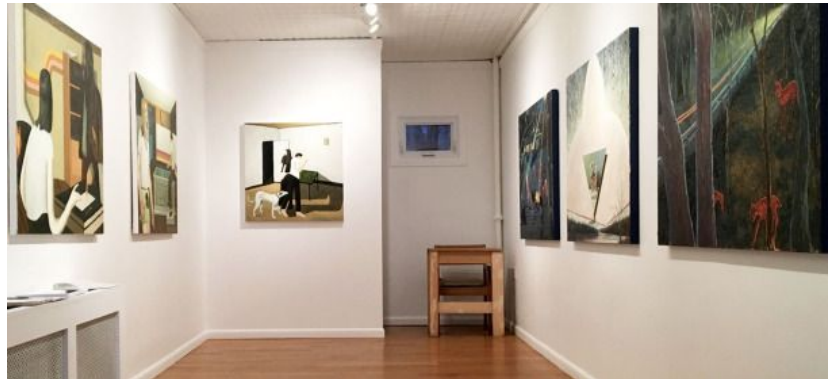


Inside/Outside at Gitler & _____

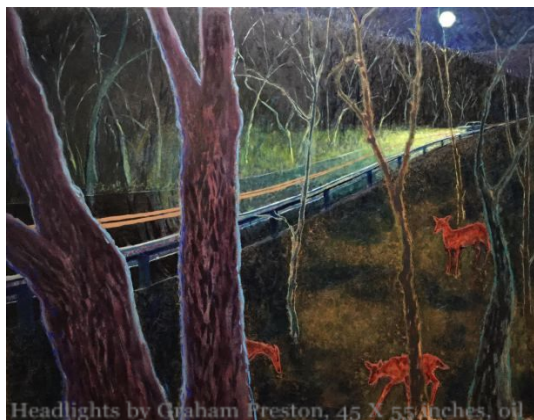
Posted on February 17, 2017 by C. ECKEL

There's a guy holding a bird in the center of the room and a mountain lion in the corner, returning his gaze. The whole scene – room and inhabitants – is colored a kind of rustic brown, reinforced by planed wood beams on the floor. A white house cat stands to the left, fixed on the lion. This painting, the first on display



upon entering the Inside/Outside show at Gitler & _____, sets a tone of ominous whimsy that extends throughout the exhibition. Both its creator, Greg Burak, and co-exhibitor, Graham Preston set out brilliant moments of highly specific yet remarkably recognizable spaces that subtly subvert expectations and create alluring mysteries. The show, made up of four new works by each artist, offers a deep viewing experience that requires the viewer's imagination to complete narrative pauses in uncanny spaces.

In *Headlights*, Preston depicts a sole car on a rural road, flanked in the foreground by a guard rail and beyond, a cluster of deer. The deer, which activate anxiety within the scene, are treated with a seemingly divine glow that elevates them both spiritually and formally, amid the dark landscape. Preston's use of electric outlines to define form and flatten the viewing plane give a



Headlights by Graham Preston, 45 X 55 inches, oil on panell

contemporary feel to pastoral scenes, and create natural patterns that allude to medieval tapestries. His exteriors reverberate in vivid color while, as in the case of resting deer, offer moments of peace.

These mark a sharp contrast to Burak's calm palette, producing the moments preceding disaster. The rooms within Burak's painted worlds lack the type of ethereal splendor that Preston's reveal, but pull from the deep emotional pools of fear and dreaming to elicit intrigue. His figures, like the characters of Hemingway, give away only what they must in order to present the desired scenario, then allow the audience to do the rest.



Work by Greg Burak

The treatment of media by each painter further complements this reading of their work. Burak's closed shapes lead away from specificity of form, reinforcing the dream-like quality of his vignettes, and push forward the role of the viewer. Preston takes the opposite approach and rather than broadly apply paint, he chooses to dive into excruciating details that testify to the veracity of his imagery. The resultant work from both artists pushes expectations of contemporary realism. In their work, moments of truth are presented then defied and authenticity prevails despite lapses from reality.

The show, which offers an escape from familiar spaces by revealing the potential majesty and drama within them will remain on view until March 9th at the Gitler & _____ Gallery, NY, NY.

[insideoutside-at-gitler-](#)