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Kanevsky @ DCG
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Kanevsky in his stride: "We have lost that old nonchalance of the hand," William Butler Yeats lamented nearly a century ago, but apparently no one told Lithuanian-born painter Alex Kanevsky.

His pictures at Dolby Chadwick display an impressive manual ease. But they lack another kind of sophistication: an adequate sense of the fraught condition of representation in 21st century painting.

Kanevsky has his own intuition that after modernism picturing, even in painting, implies more than illustration. It always smuggles in assumptions about how vision works, about the correspondence between the real and the representable and about what depiction asks us to overlook.

Kanevsky faces this problem squarely but unrevealingly in "J.F.H. With Her Portrait" (2008): It describes a model having just slightly more definition than the Kanevsky portrait of her beneath which she sits.

Though most of his full-figure portraits appear dully confident, a kind of disquiet does haunt Kanevsky's better paintings. It arises more often from his work's anecdotal qualities, though, than from grappling with a sense of the art form's own problematic historical position.

The great exception is "Renovations" (2008), an 8-foot-long horizontal picture that purports to describe an old apartment, possibly undergoing improvements, in 360-degree panorama.

The accordion-fold space of the work takes the painted surface into and out of coincidence with the painted walls it describes, at one point seeming to give us an end-on view between walls.

"Renovations" translates anecdotal content into a saga of spatial construction and deconstruction. It thus forces viewers to track the level and nature of their involvement in the picture, always keeping the reality of paint foremost. And the proportions of the painting accord with its almost cinematic unfolding.