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SUSANNA BLUHM I slept, but my heart was awake

October 10 – November 15, 2013
Artist Reception, Thursday, October 10, 6:00-8:00pm

New York, NY—September 17, 2013—
Kathryn Markel Fine Arts is thrilled to
present *I slept, but my heart was awake*, an
exhibition of new work by painter,
Susanna Bluhm.

Using the visual language of abstracted
landscapes, signifiers of place, and a
vibrant—almost psychedelic—palette,
Susanna Bluhm has created a suite of
narrative paintings and inspired by the
Bible’s “Song of Solomon”—a book of
verses about love.



I slept, but my heart was awake, 2012
Oil and acrylic on canvas, 84 x 103 inches

The “Song of Solomon” describes the
span of a relationship through all of its
iterations—the thrill of falling in love, the
longing for that love, the physical experience of that love, the fear of losing that love. It
makes frequent use of sweeping hyperbole, “many waters cannot quench love, neither can
the floods drown it!”, terrific drama, and thinly veiled sexual innuendo. The emotions
chronicled therein, however, are as poignant and familiar today as they were during biblical
times, which Bluhm has assigned to her own life. The series of paintings born out of this
book comprise of what she has termed “a love song to my wife and son”.

These pictorial environments are drawn from numerous sources: photographs from family
vacations, experiences, hallucinations and dreams, and memories. Each image functions as a
snapshot, from which a narrative can be understood. Images depicted on the canvases may
have several associations; for example, the snake pictured in *Until the day breathes* can convey
both menace and fear, and alternately hope and rebirth. With thickly impastoed passages,
Bluhm’s snow *looks* and *feels* like physical snow rather than a reproduction of snow—
similarly it cannily imparts the excitement of new snowfall.

Susanna Bluhm lives and works in Seattle, WA. She earned her BA in Studio Art from
California State University Humboldt and her MFA in Painting from the University of
Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. She has been an Artist-in-Residence at the Irish Museum of
Modern Art in Dublin and at the Karl Hofer Gesellschaft in Berlin.

Kathryn Markel Fine Arts, Chelsea is located at 529 W. 20th St., Ste. 6W, New York, NY 10011
Gallery Hours are Tues.-Fri. 10:00am-6:00pm, Sat. 11:00am-6:00pm

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