

# THE NEW YORKER

## MATVEY LEVENSTEIN

For centuries, painting adhered to a strict hierarchy—eventually flattened by modernism—with religious (and, later, historical) subjects reigning supreme, followed by portraiture and landscape, with still-life on the bottom rung. Levenstein revives the system, only to subvert it once again. Soft-focus paintings of church interiors, based on photographs he took in Italy, double as still-lives: they all feature floral arrangements. The show's only landscape isn't really one at all: trees are relegated to the background of a scene dominated by a vase of peonies on a table. Amid all the churches, the most numinous image is a portrait of the artist's sleeping wife, guarded by a vigilant Chihuahua the same Titian hue as her hair. Through May 9. (Goldston, 530 W. 25th St. 212-206-7887.)