

**Sanya Kantarovsky**  
***Recent Faces***  
April 24 – June 12, 2021

Text by Bradley Kronz

"Recent Faces" is an exhibition of fifteen works by Sanya Kantarovsky, depicting humanlike faces. I was told that most of these faces are not portraits, meaning that most of them are not "real." Depending on one's perspective on where art comes from, these could be literal people that exist somewhere not-of-this-world, and it is the artist's job to make and sustain contact with them. An ideal of this being the painting from *Ghostbusters II* of "Vigo the Carpathian," a 16th century warlord who lives inside his own portrait. This is one way of thinking about what an artist does. Conversely, another possibility is that the artist enlists their subconscious to do *anything*, and then uses their rational mind to make sense of it, in this case as a face. Something like seeing cloud animals, or deciding where to put the carrot on a snowman, but even less than that because there is no carrot. If you have ever made art before, even once, you know exactly what I'm talking about. It is intrinsically linked to the idea of nothingness. Both of these beliefs I find compelling, although most art places possess a strong preference for the former, more seemingly magical possibility, if only because it is hard to make a case for the political and social importance of an often unplanned "trick of the mind." Also a case I would like to make! Again, the attention to the manner in which these faces appear on a surface could be the way a threshold has made itself visible to us, or simply exercises in a type of efficiency. I can say for sure that the impulse beyond the face, to depict the eyes of a human, tells you that what you are seeing is *true*. My point being that the need to see a face is a phenomenon of the viewer, but absolutely extends to the artist as well. It provides a form of closure to both, as the artist is also a viewer, especially of their own work. Your beliefs alone inform where that sight comes from.

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