

THOSE WHO FALL HAVE WINGS

With his new works the French painter Emmanuel Bornstein evokes an era showing a new aesthetics as a result of the struggle between figuration and abstraction. The vortex-shaped compositions, consisting of various layers, are characterized by breakings, multiple overpaintings and deliberately focussed dissonant colour tones. The palette seems to be both strange and familiar.

A nostalgic basic mood, already implied with the title of the exhibition by a modified citation of the poem „Das Spiel ist aus“ (The Game is Over) by Ingeborg Bachmann (1956), is pairing itself with a torn, nearly furious presence within the paintings. Bornstein sees the surfaces of his works to be vital or at least living like in the sense of Antonin Arnaud's theatre theory, and to be a product of the performative encounter between artist and canvas.

Motifs of being wounded and healed are encountering therein as well as the conviction that the painting is presenting a medium of another reality.

After having reacted to the themes of the Holocaust and World War II with his works – due to biographic involvement of his own family history – the new work series of the artist introduces a totally new creative work capital. In the past, Francisco Goya and his engagement with the atrocities of the Spanish Civil War during the occupation by Napoleon represented an essential, substantial and formal reference. Now this commitment is abandoned in favour of a polyphony of different references ranging from Joseph Beuys via Georges Rouault and Henri Matisse to Raymond Hains' palimpsest like posters. The intensive engagement in the medium of drawing, which opened new aesthetic levels to Bornstein, was also determinative.

The white, wide bordures edging the tableaux mark a zone, where the painting is reflecting itself as well as its history. Bornstein's shining time capsules are paintings showing paintings questioning their own status as intertextual entity. Their architecture is comparable to the blades of an aperture. The view is conducted along the edges of multiple image layers from the outside to the inside and then again back to the outside. In the compositional centre, a faceless figurine is found again and again, which developed itself out of the Ophelia motif during Bornstein's transition from the old to the new work series. Thus, there are felt many echoes to water or a seashore, attributed by the artist to the now rather male protagonist and whom he describes as the „beachcomber“. The step to an alter ego of the artist, who is newly reassembling the findings of the younger art history, is not far from here.

Emmanuel Bornstein was born in 1986 in Toulouse, France into a family focussed on theater and authors. His mother is an impresario, his father works as dramaturge and dramatist. He is familiar with literature and theater since his early childhood, however, he was desirous of being a painter only and to express himself by paintings. He starts drawing early and pays attention to Goya, Bacon and Munch already as a teenager. Immediately after his High School Graduation he studies painting at the École Nationale Supérieure des Beaux-Arts de Paris, later on at the University of Arts in Berlin. The reference to literature, the influence of a family focussed on theater and dramatics are felt within his paintings. Poems, text fragments and entire literary works often serve as a basis for the generating of his pictorial worlds.

Dr. Marc Wellmann, Director Haus am Lützowplatz, Berlin, May 2017