

Enjoy and Take Care! **11 juni- 11 juli 2020**

Tim Van Laere Gallery presents *Enjoy and Take Care!*, a group show with work by 20 artists from the gallery. It's a generous show, both towards the artists and the public. After a period of compulsory closure, the gallery celebrates its reopening with a show that puts the artists of the gallery first. The show gives visitors the opportunity to discover recent and new work by the artists of the gallery through works from different media including sculpture, drawing, painting, furniture, film and photography.

As the title indicates, Tim Van Laere Gallery wants to share some joy and celebrate the artists who, as always, are the gallery's main priority. The exhibition includes, amongst others, 4 new drawings and a film (with Kim Gordon and Hannelore Knuts) by Marcel Dzama, a new work on paper by Adrian Ghenie, a monumental work by Kati Heck, 3 new sculptures by Edward Lipski, 2 new paintings by Bram Demunter and 3 new works (a ceramic sculpture, a small colour drawing and a charcoal drawing) by Rinus Van de Velde.

Participating artists: Bram Demunter, Marcel Dzama, Armen Eloyan, Gelatin, Adrian Ghenie, Kati Heck, Anton Henning, Tomasz Kowalski, Friedrich Kunath, Edward Lipski, Jonathan Meese, Ryan Mosley, Tal R, Peter Rogiers, Ben Sledsens, Ed Templeton, Rinus Van de Velde, Aaron Van Erp, Henk Visch and Anke Weyer.

The paintings and drawings of Bram Demunter (°1993 Kortrijk; lives and works in Knokke-Heist) are always an interactive process between things he reads, hears, sees and thinks. He developed a very own iconography that closely resembles a premodern visual language and image of man. He combines this with elements from modern abstract expressionist painting. With this he refers to the tradition of art history with references to Gerard David, James Ensor, Henry Darger and Rogier Van der Weyden. His works always revolve around the behavior of people and their interaction with each other and their environment, such as nature, animals and institutions, touching on "raw" human emotions.

The work of Marcel Dzama (°1974, Winnipeg; lives and works in New York) is immediately recognised by his own distinctive visual language, layered with artistic influences like Dada and Marcel Duchamp. He combines political and social developments with a world of fables, myths and fictional stories. Mostly known for his drawings, he also makes sculptures, paintings, films and dioramas.

According to Armen Eloyan (°1966, Yerevan; lives and works in Zurich) a good painting is like a good joke, the pieces have to come together. With his characteristic dark humor, colourful paint and thick black contours, Eloyan reveals a dystopian world where things are thrown out of balance, confronting the viewer with existential questions. Combining influences from street art and animated cartoons with references to great pioneers in painting such as Willem De Kooning and Philip Guston, Armen Eloyan depicts a world where familiar figures, associated with our childhood, are stripped from every ounce of innocence.

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The artist collective Gelatin (living and working in Vienna) is composed of four artists. They met for the first time in 1978 during their participation in a summer camp. Since then they play and work together. One can define their universe as an enormous extravagant chaos. Their work stems from their performances and mainly translates into sculptures. The work of the Viennese collective, which consists of performances, installations, plasticine paintings & collages, watercolors, furniture, sculptures, etc., is always characterized by infectious, childish enthusiasm and focuses on creating new hedonistic and physical experiences. They encourage the public to participate and contribute something with their ideas.

At first sight Adrian Ghenie's (°1977, Baia-Mare; lives and works in Cluj and Berlin) paintings deal with subjects that carry a historical set of references, but collective memory is constantly challenged by enigmatic prophetic actions, occulted and personal folds in the temporal linearity. Ghenie's works have become increasingly complex and multilayered, generating an open-ended set of internal and external meanings. Infused with ambiguity, the works operate in the areas between figuration and abstraction, history and imagination, past and present.

Kati Heck's (° 1979, Düsseldorf; lives and works in Pülle) masterful virtuosity is unmistakable. She portrays her figures in a photorealistic way with a great attention to every detail. She combines that precision with abstractions and parts that are applied almost sculpturally on canvas. With her works, Heck synthesizes different styles, combining elements from expressionism and surrealism with social realism. Her works are reminiscent of the bars, dancers and actors of Otto Dix and George Grosz, but also refer to Jean-Michel Basquiat, the Dada movement, Man Ray and the Old Masters. She brings painting to a whole new level, as a gesture in the direction of free, radical self-confirmation.

The oeuvre of Anton Henning (°1964 Berlin; lives and works in Berlin and Manker) comprises paintings, sculptures, drawings, films, photographs, musical pieces and entire environments and could be read as a contemporary interpretation of the Gesamtkunstwerk. Focussing equally on the search as well as the outcome, he creates a hybrid pictorial event, an anarchy of images liberated from the gravity of the isms in art history. With his motif repertory, material choices, stylistic devices and playful reinventions of the genre types, Henning doesn't simply quote from art history, but he playfully looks for painterly potential through his own pictorial memory which has remained deliquescent, discarding all spatial, temporal, and ideational contexts.

Tomasz Kowalski (°1984 Szczepleszyn; lives and works in Krakow and Szczepleszyn) is a key figure in emerging Polish painting today. His influences owe deep gratitude to the tradition of German Expressionism, Outsider art and esotericism along with Surrealism. The influence of psychedelia and Postmodern American literature feature prominently in his work. This constellation of references share a common representation of a paranoid thinking about reality, full of alternate versions, varying paths and multiple parallel narrations. It is this combination of Kowalski's imagination, his figurative play with abstraction and confident handling of paint that gives his work a unique vitality. His paintings are a micro-utopia, a reflection of a hypothetical reality or simply a representation of what it means to be alive today, right here.

Friedrich Kunath's (°1974 Chemnitz; lives and works in Los Angeles) work is imbued with ambiguity. His work has been influenced by the culture of wisdom and popular culture, to the point of obsession and sometimes even systematization. His personal journey from East to West Berlin, to his new home in Los Angeles, presented Kunath with a wide range of source material, ranging from the canon of art history and German philosophy to the idiom of kitsch and the make-believe world of Hollywood and Los Angeles. Kunath's work is about the universal themes of human existence, such as love, loss, optimism, vulnerability and melancholy. His oeuvre includes various media, from painting, sculpture, drawing, video and photography to extensive installations, all with tragicomic pathos and dreams about possibilities.

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Spirituality and existential discomfort in human existence, and the rituals with which man tries to relate to it, are recurring themes in the work of Edward Lipski (°1966, London; lives and works in London). "My work is between the cultural and visual level," explains Edward Lipski, "I am interested in the space between something you immediately understand and something abstract. This confusion creates a certain intensity." Lipski's work moves between these two poles. The distance between the extremes has faded, until we find ourselves immersed in a seductive visual chaos.

Jonathan Meese (°1970, Tokyo; lives and works in Berlin and Hamburg) is known for his versatile work, ranging from exuberant paintings, installations, ecstatic performances to a powerful oeuvre of sculptures in various media. All of Meese's work is driven and supported by the pursuit of the dictatorship of art. Apparently effortlessly, he developed an independent and unique vocabulary in all genres that gives his work the diversity, visual energy and quality that, according to Robert Fleck, has been unseen since Picasso.

In the paintings of Ryan Mosley (°1980 Chesterfield; lives and works in Sheffield) time, place, history, the characters that populate them and the spaces they inhabit are all warped, distorted, thrown out of kilter, in states of fusion, disintegration and recombination. The figures he portrays in various ways merge or correspond with their backgrounds; the contours of their heads, jawlines, beards and hair and cheekbones flattening into a field of interlocking shapes. It is as if, in some hard-to-fathom way, the people Mosley portrays are the paintings they inhabit.

The duality of Tal R's (°1967 Tel Aviv, Israel; lives and works in Copenhagen) heritage is recognized in his work, which offers both festive and sinister sensations. His subject is deliberately easy to describe, but meaning is, as in dreams, enigmatic. Tal works with different media (collage, sculpture, installation, painting) and intuitively removes images from different sources. Historical and art-historical references are abundant: threads of expressionism, fauvism and symbolism continue, as well as a nod to traditional Scandinavian art, art nouveau and art from outsiders.

Peter Rogier's (°1967, Antwerp; lives and works in Oud-Heverlee) ironic-expressive sculptures float between abstraction and figuration and combine both excellent craftsmanship and innovative visual language. The work of Peter Rogiers is characterized by numerous contradictions. With his characteristic sense of humor, a large dose of (self) irony and exceptional artisanal qualities, Rogiers challenges the conventions of traditional art history by removing them from their typical contexts and introducing them into a new visual language in which the psychology of form is constantly central.

Ben Sledsens's (°1991, Antwerp; lives and works in Antwerp) works bear witness to an in-depth knowledge of art history. His palette of strong, vibrant colors, high technical qualities and simple visual language exist within a long tradition that refers to great masters such as Henri Matisse, Claude Monet, Henri Rousseau and Pieter Bruegel the Elder. Nature and daily life are also important sources of inspiration for Sledsens. His large-scale canvases seem deceptively simple due to the naive visual language and very recognizable subjects, but behind this lies a strongly thought-out composition in which Sledsens brings a visual storyline into his work.

Ed Templeton (°1972, Garden Grove; lives and works in Huntington Beach) spent his childhood in a world of skateboarding and punk rock music. He described his drawings, photos and paintings based on anecdotes and feelings that give the images a new, more profound interpretation. Human vulnerability is also an important theme in Templeton's paintings and drawings. This is especially true for the works populated by zombie-like human figures, who seem to have escaped from a medieval tableau of the Last Judgment. Templeton's early skate fame gave him a forum to discuss issues such as racism and homophobia that didn't get much room in the skateboard subculture. He played a pioneering role in leading skateboarding to the creative and cultural influence it has today.

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Over the past few years, Rinus Van de Velde (°1983, Leuven, lives and works in Antwerp) has built a strikingly coherent oeuvre, mainly consisting of monumental, narrative charcoal drawings. Although these drawings still play a prominent role in his work, Van de Velde has evolved increasingly towards a 'total artist', creating a tension between fiction and reality by the use of different media such as drawings, sculptures, installations and film. With his large scale drawings Van de Velde invites the viewer to step into his carefully constructed universe. Casting himself as a succession of fictive characters and constantly reinventing himself as a different kind of artist, Van de Velde inhabits different personas, genres and art forms.

Aaron van Erp's (°1978, Veghel; lives and works in Eindhoven and Asuncion, Paraguay) morose humor is channeled into haunted paintings. The artist's portrayal of a reflection of a disconcerting atmosphere has never been more potent. His works often displays random acts of surreal violence. His gruesome scenes take place in the artist signature dystopian environments, which take the form of deserted beaches and isolated interiors which are made even more absurdly surreal by the random placement of objects such as a table tennis table, or a FedEx crate.

With his poetic sculptures, Henk Visch (°1950 Eindhoven; lives and works in Eindhoven and Berlin) often manages to evoke all kinds of associations and stimulate the viewer's fantasy. In Visch's awareness there is both joy and pain. It contains raw material to play with and, even more, to work with so as to embody and stage, in a way that is familiar and secret, harrowing and full of leaps, some "truths" about our sexuality, our desires and our terrors, our arabesques and our collective gesticulations, our constant approximations, or, in short, our tribulations in space with the body as the vehicle: real bodies, invented bodies, those of known and utopian reigns.

Dismantling false dichotomies such as abstraction versus figuration, accident versus intention and confusion versus order, Anke Weyer (°1974 Karlsruhe; lives and works in New York) has developed a practice where anything is possible, where confusion is as marvellous as it is treacherous. Uninhibited and instinctively Anke Weyer paints with a certain urgency, a speed that keeps the painted picture honest and pure. Speed triumphs over composition. Her compositional choices are made in the moment, very consciously or impulsive, each decision has a different meaning and magnitude. The paintings document Weyer's proces: applying layers of paint, taking paint off, overpainting it again. Using energetic brush marks, drips, wipes and scrubbing, she develops a flux of forms and lines.