

Sies + Höke Galerie

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Andi Fischer

Opening: June 23rd, 6 – 8 pm
Exhibition: June 24th – July 30th, 2022

PRESS RELEASE

Surfers often talk about the “perfect wave.” But is “perfect” really the right adjective when it comes to waves? William Finnegan, for one, has his doubts. The US author and journalist wrote an award-winning book about surfing a few years ago. “Waves are not stationary objects in nature. They’re not diamonds or roses or something that you just look at.” Instead, Finnegan describes the miracle of waves as the end of a process, an “explosion across a reef,” which is affected by the wind and tide. The ephemeral nature of waves is part of their magic. It takes a special kind of nature literacy, courage, and muscle memory to conquer them on a surfboard.

With his two large-format wave paintings *Enorme Wirbelwelle* (2022) and *Enorme Wirbelwelle № 2* (2022), Berlin-based painter Andi Fischer celebrates the unique blend of fear, respect, euphoria and release that he experiences when surfing. Interferences as well as surfaces in light blue, royal blue, and navy blue combine to create a dynamic moment that comes from inside the wave. “It comes very close to the feeling of swimming through a wave,” Fischer explains. “It’s a beautiful feeling.” Fischer’s paintings also need an initial explosion for energy to be released. The artist uses oil sticks to apply paint straight onto the canvas. They are made of compressed oil paint mixed with mineral wax, enabling the artist to express himself directly. Spontaneity and speed are thus placed at the core of the work.

Nine new paintings by Fischer, each with an individual title, make direct references to art history. The source of inspiration and fundamental resource for the artist was Lucas Cranach the Elder’s painting *The Golden Age*, dated around 1530. Today, it belongs to the Bavarian State Painting Collections in Munich and is on display at the Alte Pinakothek. Fischer dissects this allegorical depiction of a paradisiacal garden into its separate components (people, couples, and animals), thus casting a contemporary, highly pared-down view on the pictorial world of the business-minded and politically active Old Master from Wittenberg.

Lastly, Fischer’s third new series of paintings focuses on a group of anarchistic crows. These birds have accompanied humans since the dawn of time; they even precede them.

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“The cultural history of humankind has unfolded under the eyes of crows,” Berlin-based cultural scientist and biologist Cord Riechelmann writes in his celebrated monograph on the species. “And crows follow this culture if they can expect something from it.” Given that corvids’ eating habits include feeding on carrion, these animals have been symbolically associated with death in people’s imaginations from very early on. As if in a dark premonition, Vincent van Gogh, for example, had a flock of ravens circle above a summer wheat field shortly before his death in 1890. This existential gravity has a subliminal resonance in Fischer’s paintings. However, a sober and humorous perspective on these omnipresent, feathered companions prevails in these works. Perhaps this is also because we see these birds today primarily as clever beneficiaries of the human culture of abundance. Alpine choughs, for instance, seem to feed less on dead chamois than on things like discarded school lunches in schoolyards. At any rate, we hear that they often show up on time for recess.

Kito Nedo