

MAGNUS PLESSEN *lucid density*

Vernissage: Sunday, June 11, 2023, 11am
Exhibition: June 09 – August 12, 2023
Opening hours: Tues-Fri 11am to 6:30pm, Sat 11am to 5pm

Magnus Plessen (*1967 in Hamburg) lives and works in Berlin together with his wife and their four sons. He enjoys international recognition as one of the most important European painters of his generation.

We are pleased to present *lucid density*, the seventh solo exhibition at the gallery featuring the artist's latest works. Plessen's artistic practice is characterized by an unmistakable blend of abstraction and figuration, exploring the complexity of perception and representation. His unique ability to allow new forms to emerge, challenges conventional notions of space and time and invites the viewer to rethink his own understanding of reality and engage with the dynamics of variable patterns of form. These patterns of form encounter familiar signs and gestures, like in his work *lucid density*, the omnipresent body cult on Instagram:

«My 17-year-old son practices bodybuilding and, with his muscular body, is now even bigger than me. This is my personal challenge with four adolescent sons...»

In my search for a suitable body, I came across Arnold Schwarzenegger and Ronnie Coleman, whose poses and blatant muscle definitions are still considered as gold standard in the scene. In my new paintings, the distinctive poses of these two bodybuilding icons interact with translucent light and moving waveforms. This is how hybrid matter/light beings emerge for me.»

It remains open, however, where these beings come from. A note in the artist's studio reads the following sentence: *«Will you recognize me when I come back to you as an alien?»*

By superimposing recurring, drop-like patterns, figurative elements and wave forms, Plessen creates visually dynamic compositions that simultaneously depict different, sometimes contradictory storylines or states. Thus, in *Hands up lighter*, the usually frightening moment «Hands up!» is intertwined not with a frightening but with a provocative look and, in addition, with the action of lighting up. In the static medium of painting, flowing actions are thus captured simultaneously, which, according to our everyday experience, occur separately from one another.

In this respect, the wave-like forms that run continuously and indefinitely through this group of works are reminiscent of overlapping interference patterns, wave circles, triggered by different impulses, which in their continuous dispersion can partially reinforce yet also extinguish each other.

Magnus Plessen's solo exhibitions include The Rose Art Museum, Brandeis University, Massachusetts (2014); Art Institute of Chicago (2005); Espace 315, Centre Georges Pompidou, Paris (2004); Kunstsammlung Nordrhein-Westfalen, K21, Düsseldorf, Germany (2002); and MoMA PS1, New York (2002). He has participated in numerous international group exhibitions, including the High Museum of Art, Atlanta (2022); Museu Serralves, Porto, Portugal (2007); Sammlung Goetz, Munich (2006); and the 50th Venice Biennale (2003).

Since 2019, Magnus Plessen teaches painting at the Staatliche Akademie der Bildenden Künste, Karlsruhe, Germany.

Mai 36 Galerie
Victor Gisler