

Yves Scherer

Imagine

March 14 – May 5, 2024

Opening Thursday, March 14, 5–7PM

Peres Projects is pleased to present *Imagine* by Yves Scherer (b. 1987 in Solothurn, CH), the artist's first solo exhibition with the gallery, and his first in Seoul.

Scherer's practice is multidisciplinary and diverse, encompassing figurative sculptures in aluminum and pink onyx, stylized paintings, and mixed-media works. Identity, as well as the human figure and its representation, are focal points in his practice, which he expands on in *Imagine* by depicting archetypical human figures, marking a distinct shift away from the celebrity images that are common to his earlier work.

Scherer oscillates between gravity and lightness, finding a balance between the two poles in *Imagine* that at once considers the contemporary human experience, and transcends the particularities of the here and now. Indeed, in this series, the artist explores romantic ideals expressed largely through scenes of childhood naïveté. A smitten boy sits in a tree with a ring of glass hearts crowning his head, while elsewhere a young girl sweetly clutches a doll in her arms. Both sculptures are reminiscent of the Swiss-German Hummel figurines that represent similarly idealized characters, expressing a mix of nostalgia and innocence. Near them, a graceful Baroque dancer holds a flower plucked from an unseen meadow. A fertile, Swiss-inspired landscape is further evoked in a series of painted canvases mounted on the surrounding gallery walls.

Such figures populate the exhibition both with their physical presence and their suggestive power: each implies a second, not present counterpart in the space, their postures or expressions conveying an unrequited yearning. Scherer thus explores relationality through the palpable absence of a beloved other. Although cheerful in tone, the works speak to deeper existential themes—like love and devotion to family—and when arranged together are imbued with an atmosphere of sentimental longing, forming an emotionally nuanced, yet immersive, exhibition environment.

It is also through these sculptures that the artist explores his personal memories and heritage. While the works are nonspecific, representing ideal forms rather than recognizable figures, they are likewise highly intimate, giving shape and fixity to intangible memories, fleeting perceptions and emotions. Throughout his oeuvre, Scherer explores the thin, porous line that separates the private and public spheres, and in *Imagine*, his work intertwines images from a shared culture—particularly that of the Swiss mountains of his youth, which are rendered with a degree of abstraction in his painted canvases—with references to his private memories, finding a balance between collective and autobiographical narrative. It is especially in his sculptural works where the artist presents cherished, quotidian moments as a reality to be publicly apprehended, those that express intimate and familial experiences. The surrounding collection of paintings serves as a lush environment for the figurative sculptures, their abstractions similarly existing in relation to the more figurative works occupying the space, yet emanating their own discrete sense of emotional radiance.

In this exhibition, Scherer asks his audience to imagine without prescribing a particular vision—a possible future, a happy past, an enticing fiction—maintaining his consistent interest in the murky boundary between reality and illusion. He engages with narrative by establishing relationships between certain works, between the sculptural figure of a boy picking flowers, for example, and an abstract canvas of flowers. Not only this, but for Scherer, material has great metaphorical significance. He references a distinctly human quality in metal, given that the substance is the result of industrial processes and permits the artist a great degree of precision in rendering hyperrealism in human subjects. Metal also serves as a potent counterpoint to the profound durability of stone, and its suggestion of the eternal. In stone, time works on a sublime scale, and in this exhibition what we are called on to imagine is not only a specific, human-sized narrative, but the timeless magnificence of nature. The artist's attraction to pink onyx in particular relates to its translucent lightness, its blend of strength and soft, fragile beauty. It is through this delicate yet solid matter that Scherer reinforces his central theme: the unassailable and exquisite love of family.

– Sarah Messerschmidt

This is Yves Scherer's first exhibition with Peres Projects. Scherer has exhibited in numerous exhibitions worldwide, including solo exhibitions at Galería Mascota, Mexico City (2023); M. LeBlanc, Chicago (2023); The Journal Gallery, New York (2023); Galleri Golsa, Oslo (2023); Galerie Eva Presenhuber, New York (2022); Galerie Guido W. Baudach, Berlin (2021); Cassina Projects, New York (2021); Kunsthaus Grenchen, Switzerland (2020); Kunstverein Wiesen, Germany (2019); Kura, Milan (2019); Basement Roma, Rome (2019); and Swiss Institute, New York (2015). His work has been featured in a number of institutional group exhibitions, including *Ja, wir kopieren! Strategien der Nachahmung in der Kunst seit 1970*, Kunstmuseum Solothurn, Switzerland (2023); *Jahresausstellung*, Kunstmuseum Olten, Switzerland (2019); *New Swiss Performance Now*, Kunsthalle Basel, Switzerland (2018); and *New Contemporaries*, Institute of Contemporary Arts (ICA), London (2013). In 2021, he participated in the Belgrade Biennale, curated by Ilaria Marotta and Andrea Baccin. Additionally, Scherer has received numerous awards including the Swiss Art Award at Art Basel in 2015. His work has entered several collections, including Farnsworth Art Museum, Rockland; Portland Museum of Art, Portland; Kunstmuseum Olten, Switzerland; and Kunsthaus Grenchen, Switzerland.

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