

# GALERIE GISELA CAPITAIN

UWE HENNEKEN

*Integrity Studies. (Painting in a world gone mad)*

February 2 – March 23, 2024

Galerie Gisela Capitain is pleased to announce the exhibition *Integrity Studies. (Painting in a world gone mad)* by Denmark based artist Uwe Henneken (\* 1974 in Paderborn). This marks his now sixth solo presentation at the gallery.

Uwe Henneken's practice is marked by a continuous and ever changing flow of styles and motifs, connecting to profound questions of arduous journeys of introspection and extrospection. He, and therefore his imagery of dream-like scenes, are in search of deeper meaning, dwelling in and bringing forth different stages of consciousness and allowing the viewer to step into the artist's vision of inner and outer otherworldliness. The beings that populate his paintings are themselves seekers, who seem to have forgotten what they were looking for or what went missing.

His exhibition *Integrity Studies. (Painting in a world gone mad)* weaves together themes that resonate with the complexity of a modern world, serving as a metaphor for the constant flux that surrounds us from within and without.

At the heart of the show is the idea of a journey or transition. This narrative is a poignant portrayal transcending literal interpretation. Inevitably it establishes correlations with concrete changes in the wake of an anthropocentric globalization. These transitory motives allude to moments of relocation or displacement - may it be of travelers or fugitives - and symbolize a universal force of uprootment.

Henneken does not shy away from referencing existing images, incorporating them through his own means. By establishing these parallels, he creates a powerful commentary on the cyclical nature of human migration and the collective struggle for continuance, taking place in the physical but also mental realms.

*Wheels of Lifes (after Marion Adnams)*, 2024 is a reinterpretation of a painting by the English Surrealist Marion Elizabeth Adnams (1898-1995). In Henneken's painting, the deserted carriage is stranded in a seemingly endless landscape, set against the backdrop of a menacingly expanding sky. Its creation was inspired by the 'Dust Bowl' region of the American Midwest in the 1930s - a phenomenon of severe dust storms that completely changed the landscape, caused by natural but also man-made factors.

*Looking for Answers, where no Answers can be found (after As the Tide Comes In)*, 2024 takes an image from a Danish documentary about the few remaining inhabitants of a small Danish island, whose homes are threatened due to turmoils as a consequence of climate change. Gregers, the last farmer depicted here, is facing the catastrophe, vigilant yet aware of his futile resistance.

Henneken revisits even his own artistic history, by overpainting older paintings, as it is the case with *Tree of Life (Tree of Death)*, 2011-2023. The work stems from his *Imperium Schlemihlium* period, in which Henneken envisioned a kingdom populated by fools. This body of work was created as a reaction to the financial crisis in 2008. The painting underneath showed a row of clowns hanging from the tree and forming the word "Imperium" with their dangling bodies, that are now gone in favor of blazing colorfields of yellows and oranges. Instead, Henneken introduces a new pair of tender and hopeful figurines which gently seem to embrace the tree, suggesting a protective or mending presence.

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*Transformation People*, created from a very personal experience in 2015, was also retouched by the artist, which Henneken's explains in his catalogue *Always Returning* from 2019. An almost infinite row of his well known mysterious figures can be seen embarking on a journey towards their dispersion into a new state of being.

Henneken embraces the idea that change is not only inevitable but also an essential aspect. One can observe a representation of the steady flow and transformation inherent to life, with Henneken tapping into diverse cultural symbols and spiritual elements that are the foundation to his work.

Uwe Henneken had institutional solo exhibitions at Kunsthalle Gießen 2019, Centro Cultural Andratx 2018, Gesellschaft für Gegenwartskunst, Augsburg 2011, Kunstverein Braunschweig 2010, and Frans-Hals-Museum, Harlem 2007. Group exhibitions include Künstlerhaus Bethanien 2020, Kunsthalle Bremen 2018, Kunstpalaïs Erlangen 2016, me Collectors Room, Berlin 2014, Kunsthalle Recklinghausen 2012, Musée d'art contemporain, Bordeaux 2011, ZKM Museum für Neue Kunst, Karlsruhe, Arp Museum Rolandseck, Remagen, all 2011, Lido Pavilion, 53th Venice Biennial, Venice, Sprengel Museum, Hannover, both 2009 and Aspen Art Museum, Aspen 2007, among many more.

His work is held in the permanent collections of Kemper Art Museum, Saint Louis, Pinault Collection, Venice, Boros Collection, Berlin and Bayerische Staatsgemäldesammlungen, Munich.