

Andi Fischer

Enorm viele Vögel fliegen

Opening: February 21st, 6-9 pm
February 22nd – March 28th, 2025
Sies + Höke, Düsseldorf

Under the Symbolic Sky

“I like moments when things seem fragile or damaged. When the appearance crumbles,” says Andi Fischer, standing in front of the single-family house which he has drawn in a pleasantly lopsided way. Fischer can do that. He can also depict a tense sky with scribbles of oil pastel. These renderings seem like the signs of an unknown alphabet whose letters seem to repeat but never do. The house in *ANSICHT EINER WILDEREI* (*View of a Poaching*), in turn, is no particular house, it is *a house*, like the ones children would draw: gable roof, two windows, a door, with a tree next to it and a family inside. An idyll where something’s wrong. Speaking in his studio, Andi Fischer remarks that it is also important not to paint identifiable things located in time, but things that we can agree upon across the ages. Visual archetypes, so to speak.

A specialty of Andi Fischer’s painting is that the colours do not mix and shapes scarcely overlap, at best they touch one another gently. Here and there, one line crosses over another, without injuring it, and there is almost always enough white space in between that lends these work a great openness and variability overall. Walking past these new works, created in 2025 and 2024, it sometimes seems like individual visual elements could be removed, carried around and then returned. But of course they are irretrievably fused to the support. Fischer’s compositions are created without brush or palette, his working materials are oil pastels ranging in thickness from an ordinary finger to the width of a lumberjack’s thumb, that were first developed by a French manufacturer for Pablo Picasso. Oil paints rich in pigment can thus be more directly applied than with the brush.

Andi Fischer paints with boldness and conviction. With his way of working, corrections are nearly impossible, and this can be seen in the works themselves. Shrub, vessel, ruffled raven, cloud, castle, sun, house, splotch of colour: proportionality and spatial plausibility are abandoned in favour of shapes and motifs that float ever more freely, also in comparison to earlier works. In *DÜRRE DISTEL* (*Scrawny Thistle*), individual houses are placed alongside a much larger thistle, while on the right hand of the image round towers jut upwards. From the blue marks above, gray strings rain down. The symbolic sky arches, but not over the entire picture, since Andi Fischer never depicts closed worlds, but assembles them tentatively using visual signs. They could also be abstractions vivid with colour, while the castle towers are more on the margins and have something of the nature of a sketch with their summarily drawn execution. Our gaze associates, leaps between the shapes. They are not quickly exhausted, but engage the eye longer, even if they can be grasped at a glance, and that is the art of Andi Fischer. There are no longer any people in these new works, and they are not missed, the interlopers. Not only do the animals get along just fine with one another, the same is true for figuration and non-figuration. The white space between the shapes grants all the markings, no matter how small, the freedom to be entirely themselves, and artist always leaves margins of his canvases blank. This decision is very important. It keeps the works and the occurrences within them

open, generating the half-conscious impression that the shapes drift from work to work, or, like the ravens on the field, settle down here and there.

The large raven in *DORT HINGEGEN GEIERRABEN* (*There, on The Other Hand, Vulturerravens*) is placed in the middle of the canvas. Very little actually situates him there, a few plants and also a second raven, which is smaller, due to the distance. But is that distance after all? Is the visual space intended to be plausible? And for whom and according to what criteria? The large raven seems like a silent thinker brooding in his black coat of feathers.

Enorm viele Vögel fliegen (*An Enormous Number of Birds Fly*) is the title of this exhibition, and in fact birds are a frequent motif in Andi Fischer's work, not just flying ones. They peck or swim and sometimes seem like people wearing bird costumes. The artist's viewpoint reflects an anthropomorphic perspective on animals, one that might initially be considered child-like. But Fischer does not render the ravens, often seen as harbingers of bad fortune, in a cutesy fashion. They are our vis-à-vis, our fellow creatures, familiar and enigmatic like our neighbours, partners, and parents.

The thistle in *DÜRRE DISTEL* (*Scrawny Thistle*) lives a similar life of its own. It comes from the well-known self-portrait of Albrecht Dürer from 1493 now in the Louvre.¹ Andi Fischer, born in Dürer's birthplace Nuremberg, saved the plant, which Dürer often included in his works and has thus been frequently interpreted by writers and researchers, with a deskilling process to the present. The same was done to the castles that frequently appear in Dürer's work, but usually in the background of biblical scenes. With the thistle, the "über-father" Dürer now appears in Fischer's work. But this is something that needs to be known beforehand, for Fischer does not imitate the mimetic art of Dürer, who aimed for the precise reproduction of nature. The works in recent years demonstrate nicely how Fischer can limit himself increasingly and yet lose nothing, on the contrary, he has invented a new, free style that wafts powerfully and cheerfully from the canvas.

Boris Pofalla, trans. Brian Currid

¹ Daniel Hess and Thomas Eser, *Der frühe Dürer* (Nuremberg, 2012). 194-207