

# GALERIE CATHERINE BASTIDE

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## **Henrik Olai Kaarstein** **Pride**

16 November – 20 December 2014

("Lady Pride, national pride, gay pride, parental pride, maternal pride, artistic pride, female pride, classless pride, pride lecture, we are proud, bongo pride, cock pride, pride tears, tears of pride, proud shit, proud abstraction, proud patience, proud future, Europride, pink pride, proud blue, red pride, proud black, orange pride, proud violet, purple pride, proud white, yellow pride, pride grey, proud flower, proud rose, proud sex, good pride, less good pride, adequate pride, proud Magdalene of Magdala, proud in Persia, proud at home, proud in water, proud with a gun")

-Henrik Olai Kaarstein

Henrik Olai Kaarstein's work is an exploration of the domestic, the intimate and the private in its materials, its rituals and its aspirations. It is often made out of found objects, many of them functioning as a sort of personal image bank and having a sentimental as well as an aesthetic value: a sleeping bag, an office table, a fake rose, a tissue paper box, some underwear packaging, some cardboard sheets, and so forth. His paintings are not painted on conventional canvases, as he uses various objects and materials soaked in paint or stained by it, rather than the paint being deposited on the surface of the canvas. Characters, symbolic systems and recurring imagery are used such as a swimming/drowning divas, some birds, roses, torsos, objectified men, and even some terrorists, all brought into play in colorful abstractions. Kaarstein relies on these various sources to paint even though he works in a intuitive way, allowing mistakes made during the process to remain or even to be highlighted, letting the process of soaking his supports sometimes damage the surface if needs be, to embrace, "the murky line between creation and destruction". The constant feed of news, information and disinformation is source of excitement and fascination for Kaarstein, who equates the confusion delivered by mass media each time a sensational situation arises with something he wants to project in his own art, such as in "Dzhokhar Rose", based on the press images of the surviving sibling of the Boston Marathon Bombers.

*Henrik Olai Kaarstein was born in Oslo, Norway in 1989. He has attended the Nordland College of Art and Film, Kabelvåg, Norway and is currently enrolled at the Staatliche Hochschule für Bildende Künste, Städelschule, Frankfurt am Main. He has exhibited in Milan, Oslo, Naples, London, Athens and Rome.*