

MICHAEL BAUER

Butter Bebop (Transatlantic Creme Dreams)

9 SEPTEMBER – 7 OCTOBER

PRIVATE VIEW: TUESDAY 8 SEPTEMBER, 6-8PM

'Instead of repeating a one-shot stunt to generate paintings in the model of mass production, he builds a complex visual language that follows the logic of a successful road trip: the right combination of planning and intuition. Each painting offers the freedom to chart one's own perceptual course, in which spontaneous detours and surprise encounters yield the best results.' - Becky Brown, *Art in America*, October 2014

Alison Jacques is pleased to present a new exhibition of paintings by Michael Bauer. This will be Bauer's second exhibition at the gallery in which three paintings of monumental scale fill the main space. Unlike previous works by Bauer in which compositions were restricted to the painting's centre, his new paintings spread throughout the canvas, and in some cases continue off the edge. Each painting is a conversation illustrated with an endless variety of mark making. In various ways and though countless lines and colours each mark of Bauer's represents a distinct moment in time, a thought inferred by another thought. Simultaneously abstract, realistic, pointillist and symbolist Bauer creates a conversation for which there is no singular entry point. Impressions that creep into his paintings are an important part of the artist's process. In this new series there is an unmistakable link to the heathery colourful masses of Odilon Redon's flower paintings. Bauer explains this further, 'Sometimes Something materialises and I react. I realise where it might have originated from and I react again. It is about the process of painting, which is a playful and sometimes tunnel-vision activity. When these references appear I don't focus on romanticizing the memories but instead use them to create a certain artificiality.' In one painting a graphic hand rests atop a book whilst a head of broccoli mirrors its shape. In another it is a helmet and bucket or a bell and cheese wedge. Each painting offers a different, yet familiar entry point into something more complex, something we would not otherwise recognize - or at least not the same way. Between these figurative icons is a dense compilation of abstract references punctuated by small acid-green mossy shapes and large grey masses. The small gallery space contains paintings of a more modest scale. In these works Bauer includes a safari hat in each, one camouflaged and the other khaki in colour. Often concerned with memory and time Bauer's paintings repeatedly reference each other whilst transforming something seemingly strange or awkward into a strength. In one painting a ham and cheese sandwich offers a jovial counterpart to the grey bulbous intestinal parts of a firearm.

Bauer merges the distinct and seemingly dissimilar styles of figurative representation and poetic abstraction, utilising both whilst avoiding the limitation of either. Constantly in flux, the line of Bauer's work is unpredictable, neither compelled toward depiction nor limited from it. Colour, form and the remaining spaces of presence and absence triumph to create humorous, seductive, awkward and magnificent investigations into the process of painting.

Michael Bauer was born in 1973 in Erkelenz, Germany and currently lives in New York. Past exhibitions include Villa Merkel in Esslingen am Neckar, Germany (2011); Anthem, Kunsthaus Baselland, Basel (2009); Stadtische Galerie, Delmenhorst, Germany (2007); and Bonner Kunstverein, Bonn, Germany (2007).

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Other exhibitions include Alison Jacques Gallery, London (2013); Lisa Cooley, New York (2012); Peter Kilchmann, Zurich (2011); Norma Mangione Gallery, Turin (2011); Jack Hanley Gallery, San Francisco (2007); and HOTEL, London (2006, 2009). He holds a degree from the Hochschule fur Bildende Kunst in Braunschweig, Germany. A monograph on Bauer's work, "Borwasser" was published by JRP Ringier Press (2008), and includes an essay by Jennifer Higgie, co-editor of Frieze magazine.

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