

TIM VAN LAERE GALLERY

ANTON HENNING

18 May – 24 June 2017

Tim Van Laere Gallery is pleased to present the second solo-exhibition of Anton Henning at the gallery. In contrary to his first exhibition, Henning decided to place the focus solely on his paintings by presenting them in the modernist white cube setting of the gallery-space. The titles of the works accentuate the recurring subjects in the paintings of Henning. This choice in subjects show the vast determination of Henning that not everything has been said and done in art. He begins every painting from scratch, using the unlimited range of his own imagination and pictorial knowledge to continuously reinvent the same subject. For this show he selected numerous flower still life, nudes, a portrait and an interior, which display not only his masterful technique, but also his originality with quality, sincerity and strive for his personal sense of beauty.

The oeuvre of Anton Henning (°1964 Berlin, lives and works in Berlin and Manker) comprises paintings, sculptures, drawings, films, photographs, musical pieces and entire environments and could be read as a contemporary interpretation of the *Gesamtkunstwerk*. Focussing equally on the search as well as the outcome, he creates a hybrid pictorial event, an anarchy of images liberated from the gravity of the isms in art history. With his motif repertory, material choices, stylistic devices and playful reinventions of the genre types, Henning doesn't simply quote from art history, but he playfully looks for painterly potential through his own pictorial memory which has remained deliquescent, discarding all spatial, temporal, and ideational contexts.

Henning redefines all classic genres: still life, interior, portrait, nude and landscape. In his painting *Pin-up No. 199* (2016), Henning makes a clear reference to tradition, here not only to the classical tradition of the academic nude from the Venuses of Titian to the Odalisques of Ingres, but mostly to its avant-garde subversion when Edouard Manet decided to recast the genre from the academic aesthetics to the portrait of a Parisian prostitute on a divan in *Olympia* (1863). Matisse, Picasso and Kirchner reacted to Manet's *Olympia*, by pushing the genre even further, looking outside Western tradition as a way to advance it and ultimately form the new painterly dialectic of modernist art. Anton Henning continues this artistic debate over the genre and pushes all boundaries aside. He creates a critical persiflage by combining the influence of the tradition of art history with influences from the pin-up girls and porn queens from nude photographs. Skilfully combining 'high' and 'low' culture, Henning exposes all cultural clichés and renounces all notions of the concept of 'good taste', creating a space where high and low could meet.

Henning's post-postmodernistic approach doesn't quote. It is humorous and yet dead serious. It digs out the left-out chances and possibilities which modernistic dogmas and arrogance left us to grasp. *Interieur No. 544* (2016) showcases the masterful skill of Anton Henning to creating his own pictorial language. Presenting different genres within the genre of an interior, he combines flower still life, nude, interior and even abstract with figurative painting. What's important to Henning are the transitions, passages, variations and transformations. It is not about eclecticism, quotation or nostalgia.

Anton Henning is one of a number of German artists to receive considerable international recognition. Numerous publications are a challenge and inspiration for a whole generation of young painters. Anton Henning's works are represented in numerous international public and private collections, a.o. MOCA (Los Angeles), Centre National des Arts (Paris), Magasin III (Stockholm), Gemeen-

temuseum (The Hague), The Menil Collection (Houston), De Pont (Tilburg), National Museum of Art (Osaka), Arp Museum, (Rolandseck, Remagen), Daros Collection (Zurich), Essl Museum (Klosterneuburg), Los Angeles County Museum of Art | LACMA (Los Angeles), Museum für Moderne Kunst (Frankfurt am Main), Portland Art Museum (Portland), SMAK (Gent), Städel Museum (Frankfurt am Main), Hammer Museum (Los Angeles), Valencia Art Contemporaneo (Valencia).