

Jānis Avotiņš

~

26 January – 10 March 2012

IBID PROJECTS

35 Hoxton Square | London | N1 6NN |
United Kingdom

t: +44 (0)207 998 7902

f: +44 (0)207 729 3309

e: info@ibidprojects.com

www.ibidprojects.com

IBID PROJECTS is pleased to present our third exhibition with Riga-based painter Jānis Avotiņš, one of the most significant artists of his generation to have emerged from the Baltic region in the past decade. It will be the most extensive display of Avotiņš' work in the UK to date.

Jānis Avotiņš' work is sourced from discarded magazines from the USSR, post-war national picture books and photographs of poets, artists and intellectuals in the Soviet Regime. His paintings awaken a familiar signifier in the collective memory but neutralize emotion through the articulation of what lay in the absent or invisible part of the canvas, which suggests a kind of void. The subjects themselves are a contradiction: although they have nothing to do with the crimes under communism, they still served as model Soviets photographed for propaganda purposes. Through this new series of work, Avotiņš poeticizes the conflicting relationship to a Soviet past by translating the historical photo into the painterly.

Central to Avotiņš technique is the way paint is applied in thin washes of pale, bleached colour overlaid with small alternating brushstrokes. Whilst some of the artist's scenes mimic the look of old, Soviet-era photographs, others recall the contemporary appearance of his hometown. Many scenes seem to be part or wholly imagined; dream-like visions of the past, or slowly reconstructed memories of friends, places, events and situations.

His new body of work consists of double portraits of men. The subjects look on with serious and sometimes grave facial expressions. They appear to be timeless, unobtrusive, conservatively dressed; melancholy emanates from them. Accordingly, the spectrum of thinly applied colors is sparse. The poignant faces of the subjects emerge, while the remaining parts seem to blend into the background.

Jānis Avotiņš was born in Latvia in 1981 and lives and works in Riga. Recent solo shows include *Jānis Avotiņš*, Johnen Galerie, Berlin, DE, *Implicated*, Akinci Gallery, Amsterdam, NL and Rüdiger Schöttle, Munich, DE. Recent group shows include *Is It That He Does Not Seek The Truth, But Does Want To Influence?*, Riga Art Space, Riga, LT, *After the Fall*, Hudson Valley Center for Contemporary Art, NY, US and *Painting Triennial*, CAC, Vilnius, LT.

IBID PROJECTS

35 Hoxton Square | London | N1 6NN | United Kingdom
t: +44 (0)207 998 7902
f: +44 (0)207 729 3309
e: info@ibidprojects.com
www.ibidprojects.com

Janis Avotins

BIOGRAPHY

1981 Born in Soviet Union
Lives and works in Riga, LV

EDUCATION

2010 MA Painting, The Latvian Academy of Art, LV
2003 BA Painting, The Latvian Academy of Art, LV
2002 Erasmus Exchange Program, Manchester University, UK
1999 Janis Rozentals School of Fine Art, LV

SOLO EXHIBITIONS

2012 IBID PROJECTS, London, UK*
2011 Rüdiger Schöttle, Munich, DE
2010 *Implicated*, Akinci Gallery, Amsterdam, NL
2009 *Janis Avotins*, Johnen Galerie, Berlin, DE
You, my word, as if it was me before a dark glade, Galerie Rüdiger Schöttle, Munich, DE
2008 *Janis Avotins*, Ludwig Forum, Aachen, DE (exh. cat.)
Janis Avotins, Stadtgalerie Schwaz, Schwaz, Austria Ludwig Forum, Aachen, DE (exh. cat.)
I write to you at 20:02 as you wrote to me at 18:08, Johnen + Schöttle, Cologne, DE
2007 *Super Normal*, IBID PROJECTS, London, UK
Suzie Q Project Space, Zurich, CH
2006 *I Never Go On Holidays*, Medium, Gustavia, BL Johnen Galerie, Berlin, DE
2005 Johnen + Schöttle, Cologne, DE (exh. cat.)
IBID PROJECTS, London, UK (exh. cat.)
Galerie Rüdiger Schöttle, Munich, DE (exh. cat.)
Possession, IBID PROJECTS, Vilnius, LV
2004 *Possession*, Riga, LV
Rheinschau, Art Cologne Projects, Cologne, DE
2003 *Conversance*, Riga, LV

SELECTED GROUP EXHIBITIONS

2012 *Is It That He Does Not Seek The Truth, But Does Want To Influence?*, Riga Art Space, Riga, LT
2010 *After the Fall*, Hudson Valley Center for Contemporary Art, NY, US
Painting Triennial, CAC, Vilnius, LT
2009 *IBID PROJECTS at Remap2*, Athens, GR
Your Gold Teeth II, Marianne Boesky Gallery, New York, US
2008 *Salon*, The Cartin Collection at Ars Libri, Boston, US
Back to Black, Kestnergesellschaft, Hannover, DE
2007 *Strange Brew*, Max Lang Gallery, New York, US (exh. cat.)
Size Matters: XXL – recent large-scale paintings, Hudson Valley Center for Contemporary Art, Peekskill, US
Janis Avotins, Adrian Ghenie, Andrew Palmer, Galerie Rüdiger Schöttle, Munich, DE
Prague Biennale 3, Prague, CZ
Judith, Perry Rubenstein Gallery, New York, US

- 2006 *Infinite Painting* (curated by Francesco Bonami and Sarah Cosulich Canarutto), Villa Manin
Centre for Contemporary Art, IT (exh. cat.)
Reverence, Hudson Valley Center for Contemporary Art, Peekskill, US
The Trace of a Trace of a Trace, Perry Rubenstein Gallery, New York, US
- 2005 *Prague Biennale 2*, Prague, CZ
Dark Dreams, Johnen + Schöttle, Cologne, DE
- 2004 *Dark Dreams*, Johnen Galerie, Berlin, DE
Galerie Rüdiger Schöttle, Munich, DE
Life Of a Commercial Gallery - IBID PROJECTS, Cooper Gallery, Dundee, UK
Esoterica, IBID PROJECTS, London, UK
- 2002 *Autumn 2002*, Riga Contemporary Art Space, Riga, LV
- 2001 *Latvian Contemporary Art Exhibition*, Riga, LV
- 2000 *Interferences 2000*, International Multimedia Festival, Paris, FR

**forthcoming*

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- 2011 Margherita Dessanay, *Open Files: Janis Avotins at IBID PROJECTS*, Elephant, December
- 2010 Vilnis Vejs, *The new simplicity*, Eurozine.com, July
- 2009 Andris Brinkmanis, *Brand New: Janis Avotins*, Flash Art, November
Roberta Smith, *Your Gold Teeth II*, The New York Times, July
MaijaRudovska, *A Few Words About the Latest Developments in Latvian Painting*, *Epifanio*, 10
- 2008 Noemi Smolik, *Janis Avotins*, Artforum, May
- 2006 *Transeuropa*, Achtung, Nr 7
Gesine Borchardt; *Der Dirigent der Atempause*, Monopol, June
- 2005 Marc Spiegler; *New On The Bloc*, Art & Auction Magazine, annual
Amelie von Heydebreck; *Janis Avotins' Seelenräume*, Monopol, December
- 2004 *Ein Äffchen und die Eisprinzessin*, AZ Kultur, November
Abgesang auf eine heroische Art. Süddeutsche Zeitung - Kultur, November
SZ Galerie-Tip, SZ Extra, November