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André Butzer, Untitled (Paula Modersohn-Becker), 2017. Photo: Filippo Armellini

## André BUTZER

**Opening: Thursday, January 18th, from 7pm to 9pm**

**From January 19th to February 23rd**

**From Tuesday to Saturday, 11am - 7 pm**

Gió Marconi is pleased to present André Butzer (b.1973 in Stuttgart, Germany) in his fourth solo exhibition with the gallery.

André Butzer is one of the most relevant contemporary German artists. His work explores the possibilities of the pictorial medium and develops a personal and strongly expressive universe. Butzer's paintings reference German and American history, culture and politics, art history, science fiction, comics and animation.

At Gió Marconi both colourful figurative paintings and abstract black paintings from the N-series will be on display.

The series of abstract oil paintings was initiated in 2010 and has been developed over the last eight years. "N" stands for NASAHEIM (NASA Home), a neologism conceived by the artist and consisting of a combination of NASA (the acronym for the American space agency) and Anaheim, the original home of Disneyland. "N" is an imaginary, unreachable destination, invented by the artist, a non-place situated on the edge of abstraction where, according to Butzer, all the colours are conserved and where creation will find its true realisation. The N-paintings constitute a sort of zero zone in painting, where relationships between colours, compositional structure and pictorial unity are taken to their extreme.

In every single piece on display, the massive black pictorial field is interrupted by a freehandedly painted white gap.

André Butzer considers himself a colourist, explaining the use of black and white as being an exploration of the maximum potential of colour and the consequence of the acceptance or inclusion of all tints.

These works create their own chromaticity in accordance with different lighting: black does not only absorb light but also becomes a source of light itself, as does the white part, hovering above the painting like an interstice, creating a visual flash.

The artists stated "(... ) *it's a dark light. It inhabits the painting so that the painting itself becomes a source of light. It's the creator of light and a hint at the origin of life. Life and light are deeply connected terms. I'm a big fan of this over determined term matrix, because matrix loosely translated is mother. I think of painting as the origin of life(...)* " (Expressionism, Now with Added Black, Michael Slenske, Vice, 11.09.2017).

The cartoonish audaciously coloured female figures are a reference to both Expressionism but also to Walt Disney characters and science fiction. The artist has described these kinds of works as "Science-Fiction Expressionism". On a large-scale painting a blonde girl in a bright red dress seems to be walking happily out of the golden background. In "Untitled (Paula Modersohn-Becker)" André Butzer pays homage to the German painter whose small portrait with golden hair and blue eyes emerges out of a vivid red background.

A site-specific poem by the artist on the entrance wall of the gallery summarizes and completes the exhibition:

*Eternal return towards N-life // to N-lives  
Disney-dead and I-echo  
Death is life = brownness and  
the reception of a gracious second lifeliness  
which is primary lifeliness in the first place and the reception  
of golden colour in a very  
German-Japanese German-California,  
where we will see one another // ourselves!*

André Butzer (b. 1973, Stuttgart) lives and works in Rangsdorf.

Most recent solo exhibitions: IKOB Museum of Contemporary Art, Eupen (2018 Upcoming); Yoshii Foundation, Hokuto (2018 Upcoming); Växjö Konsthall, Växjö (2017); Bavarian Army Museum, Ingolstadt (2016); Kunstverein Reutlingen, Reutlingen (2015); Künstlerhaus Halle für Kunst & Medien, Graz (2014); kestnergesellschaft, Hannover (2011); Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna (2011); Kunsthalle Nürnberg, Nuremberg (2009); Kunstverein Heilbronn, Heilbronn (2004).

Most recent group exhibitions: Kunsthalle Krems, Krems (2017); Deichtorhallen, Hamburg (2016); Kunsthalle Düsseldorf, Düsseldorf (2015); Kunstmuseum Stuttgart, Stuttgart (2014); Kunsthalle Emden, Emden (2013); MoCA-Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles (2013); Museum of Concrete Art, Ingolstadt (2012); Kunstraum München, Munich (2012); Mumok, Vienna (2008); ZKM – Center for Art and Media, Karlsruhe (2008); Carré d'art - Musée d'art contemporain de Nîmes, Nîmes (2005); Kunsthalle Hamburg, Hamburg (2003).

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