

TIM VAN LAERE GALLERY

TOMASZ KOWALSKI **22 March – 5 May 2017**

Tim Van Laere Gallery is pleased to announce Proto-Weather, the fourth solo show of Tomasz Kowalski at the gallery. The exhibition features 12 paintings on canvas and a large selection of works on paper.

Tomasz Kowalski is a key figure in emerging Polish painting today. His influences owe deep gratitude to the tradition of German Expressionism, Outsider art and esotericism along with Surrealism. The influence of psychedelia and Postmodern American literature feature prominently in his work. This constellation of references share a common representation of a paranoid thinking about reality, full of alternate versions, varying paths and multiple parallel narrations. It is this combination of Kowalski's imagination, his figurative play with abstraction and confident handling of paint that gives his work a unique vitality. His paintings are a micro-utopia, a reflection of a hypothetical reality or simply a representation of what it means to be alive today, right here.

A big toothed jaw gnawing on stones and bits of archaic sculpture, a levitating mummy unraveling itself or a boy stealing eggs from a nest are some of Tomasz Kowalski's imagery, which presents a myth-like fantasy, drawn from his own surroundings and memories. A childlike sensitivity emerges; to allow oneself to be lost in the paranoia of deep imagination or hallucinatory visions; the entranced zone. He often examines archetypal representations of objects and situations and their relation to reality by slanting it, and approaching it from from a different angle. A terrain that exists beyond the certainty of past, present and future, a sort of hinterland or gap, in which new forms of knowledge and sensation are revealed. This can be described as an idiomatic structure, a 'world of parts' which the occasion of an exhibition allows to unlock and allows its elements laid bare and observed.

Tomasz Kowalski's practice has naturally evolved from an extended conversation between family and friends. Recent tapestries made together with his mother Alicja Kowalska, a textile artist, were presented in a collaborative two-person show in London in 2018. His works flow thus from a community, which in turn is alive in the work. For this show he will present specially commissioned screens designed and produced by his father.

The title Proto-Weather refers to something that was already present in every stage of history and maybe even before, a "general atmosphere" of sorts.

Tomasz Kowalski (°1984, Szczecbrzeszyn, Poland) lives and works in Warsaw and Szczecbrzeszyn. Selected solo exhibitions include the Contemporary Art Museum, St. Louis, USA, and Centre for Contemporary Art Ujazdowski Castle, Poland. Selected group exhibitions include; La Kunsthalle-Centre d'art Contemporain, France; MSN-Museum of Modern Art, Poland; Kunsthalle Wien, Austria; MUMOK-Museum Moderner Kunst Stiftung Ludwig, Austria; De Appel, Netherlands; Centre Pompidou, France; and S.M.A.K., Belgium.