

**Press Release
July 2018**

Tobias Pils – Antiparos

**July 22 to August 26, 2018
Opening: Saturday, July 21, 7 PM
Kastro, 840 07 Antiparos, Greece
Friday - Sunday: 6 – 11 PM**

Galerie Eva Presenhuber is pleased to present a new exhibition with the Austrian artist Tobias Pils. It is the first exhibition with the artist at the exhibition space on Antiparos in Greece.

Tobias Pils' paintings and graphic works are almost not interpretable. His process of painting is formed by a planning that negates itself throughout the process of being carried out. As a result, representation flips into abstraction, figurativeness turns into composition. Pils' work creates an uncanniness of interpretation and challenges the notion of subjectivity in painting: His way of painting follows intuition and is created in the context of the everyday of the painter. Yet, he never fulfills his plan but rather turns in different directions while painting. In doing so, he produces manifold forms within one painting. Nevertheless, his practice is always accompanied by technical precision and pictorial thought. In doing so, Pils creates a work whose attraction lies in the ambivalence of interpretative uncanniness, discontinuity, and technical brilliance.

In Antiparos, Pils shows seven new paintings which are all titled after the location where the exhibition takes place. The paintings *Antiparos 1-7* didn't originate as a series of paintings made for the exhibition, but rather evolved from themselves as a family of paintings. These seven paintings are all rendered in the same neither big nor small format and inhabited by various figures. The figures are connected to each other not by showing similar forms but in their shared ambivalence between abstraction and representation. On the one hand, they can definitely be regarded as figures; on the other hand, they mainly seem to serve the formal composition. Furthermore, it is not possible to distinguish whether they are human or animal figures. In a way they are both: Animal and human, abstract and figurative.

On the creation of his paintings, Pils has stated that he has a certain conception of how they should look like until this conception gets lost in the act of painting them. His work as a painter lies in taking the original idea and developing it into different, unplanned directions. Insofar, the term „family“ lies at the core of his work: His paintings emerge out of each other, sharing the same origin but moving in different directions. The commonplace term „family“ becomes the greater principle which is inscribed in each painting as well as in their relation to each other.

Accordingly, the figures in the paintings feature something generic or sexual. They grow out of each other, show female or male genitals – and sometimes both – and clearly are interrelated. The context of family here is not a narrative one. The seven paintings are not legible as a story. Their relation is that of a genealogy in which things are related, emerge from each other, and then move into totally different directions.

The *Antiparos* family of paintings marks the first time that Pils has chosen a title *after* finishing a work: When the context of the exhibition was set, the paintings were already finished. Just like a child gets a name which doesn't derive from the family history and yet isn't arbitrary, the location of Antiparos gives a new context and a new way of reading to the paintings. The possible meanings of the figures only change through the change of place – from Vienna to the Greek island – while nothing changes on the actual canvas. Suddenly the winged figures seem to resemble the mythological figures of Daedalus and Icarus – an association which wasn't part of the painting process and which results from the shift of context caused by naming the works alone.

KASTRO
840 07 ANTIPAROS
GREECE
TEL: +41 (0) 43 444 70 50
WWW.PRESENHUBER.COM

GALERIE EVA PRESENHUBER

This possibility of a shift of context producing a new, not yet entirely subsumable way of reading the paintings is characteristic of Pils' work. In the end, *Antiparos* is not a work about figures of the Greek mythology. Nevertheless, the figures in the paintings, being created not after a myth but artificially in the studio and rather in regard to their form than to their reference, gain a certain necessity through the Greek context. The wing-like arms were already there, one could argue, before the context was, and have nothing to do with the Greek island but rather with the subjectivity of the artist. Yet their presence doesn't seem to be arbitrary. Thereby, the paintings of *Antiparos* annul the antagonism of chance and necessity on yet another level distinctive of Pils' work.

Tobias Pils was born in 1971 in Linz, Austria, and lives and works in Vienna, Austria. His recent solo-exhibitions took place in museums such as Josef Albers Museum, Bottrop, Germany (2017), Kunsthalle Krems, Krems by the Danube, Austria (2017), Le Consortium, Dijon, France (together with Michael Williams) (2017), Chinati Foundation, John Chamberlain Building, Marfa USA (2016), Wiener Secession, Vienna, Austria (2013). Recent solo-exhibitions in major museums include "Open Studios", ISCP, New York, USA (2014), 'Faistauer Preis', Galerie im Traklhaus, Salzburg, Austria (2011), "Tenda Gialla", Pogon Jednistvo, Zagreb, Croatia (2010), "4th Beijing International Art Biennale", National Art Museum of China, Peking, China (2010).

Tillmann Severin

For more information, please contact Christian Schmidt (c.schmidt@presenhuber.com) at the gallery.

KASTRO
840 07 ANTIPAROS
GREECE
TEL: +41 (0) 43 444 70 50
WWW.PRESENHUBER.COM