

KATZ CONTEMPORARY

Leif Trenkler

Indian Sky

30 January - 4 April 2015

Opening: Thursday, 29 January 2015

KATZ CONTEMPORARY Gallery is delighted to present the exhibition *Indian Sky*, featuring new paintings by **Leif Trenkler** (*1960 in Wiesbaden, lives and works in Cologne, Germany). Trenkler's work has previously been displayed at KATZ CONTEMPORARY in the solo show *L'heure bleue* in 2012. His most recent work exuberates intense sensations, strong contrasts between light and shadow and the exhilarating effect of "wrong colors" achieved through a jarring overexposure and resulting in a new calibration of the color. The title *Indian Sky* refers to the dazzling array of colors of an "Indian Summer"; its central figure is the multifaceted appearance of light itself. The sun's dissolves change the surroundings, bleaching them out or at least making them fade away. The reflection of the light changes the spectrum of the color, creating new shades and chromatic mixtures that reveal the actual image on the surface in a different way.

Leif Trenkler is one of the pioneers of the contemporary "Neue Figuration" (*New Figuration*) movement in Germany and shapes it through his characteristic style: His realistic painting depicts snapshots of seemingly insignificant events which really are magical moments captured by the artist. Their inherent magic becomes evident through precisely being recognized as what they are: moments. The scenes' protagonists are embedded in the public sphere, in architecture and nature, though they are often arranged in the middle- or background, at times even seen from the back, which can make them appear strangely foreign, distant and removed. Other pieces do not show figures but solely pay homage to the effect of light and shadow on architectural elements and nature. The brushwork is barely visible and the colors are chosen deliberately enough to create a cohesive dramaturgic composition. In addition, there is the play of light and shadow as well as reflections on the water through which temporal and spatial limitations dissolve in Trenkler's works. The viewer inevitably loses orientation while spaces of experience open up and pure visibility becomes the subject. Fiction and reality are no longer clearly distinguishable in the paintings. Trenkler succeeds in unraveling the space into a poetical-phantastical other-worldliness from which emerges a 'new room' full of suspense.

Trenkler makes references to different art historical movements ranging from Gothic art to Abstract Expressionism: Like early Renaissance masters he paints on wooden panels. Wood offers more resistance to the brush than the canvas, mutes the colorfulness and since it was once a living material offers a different presence to the painting, according to Trenkler. The artist's use of "off-colors" or the overmodulation of colors brings to mind Otto Dix' later work as well as Vuillard or Bonnard who also experimented with odd color combinations to enliven the painting. Another important component for Trenkler is getting distance from his own memory – he waits and lets images come to the surface from the depths of his memory – as well as the indispensable change of scenery: It is only from afar that he can see things in a new light, not at all looking for something exotic but by simply paying attention to subtle shifts

in everyday life. Travelling is thus a necessity for a fresh outlook: His gaze would inevitably wear off if the artist spent the whole year in the studio.

Playing with the colorfulness of the “Indian Sky“ dissolves temporal and spatial boundaries in the paintings. The space within the image gets suspended, providing room for its own reality and inviting the viewer into the pictorial world of the painting. The fascinating yet mysterious power which Trenkler’s paintings exude may derive from the fact that what it depicts is simultaneously standing still while also making “the act of seeing“ the subject: The paintings are of course tangible, while at the same time they are dematerializations transforming an object into pure visibility.

Stefanie Schneider

For visual material and further information please contact the gallery:

Tel: +41 44 212 22 00 / info@katzcontemporary.com

PREVIEW

François Berthoud

1 - 16 May 2015

Opening: 30 April 30 2015

Elger Esser

29 May - 25 July 2015

Opening: 28 May 2015