

To the press

Mark van Yetter  
«False Friends... and Six Bottles»



2 March – 5 May 2019

Press preview: Friday, 1 March 2019, 12.30 p.m.  
Opening: Friday, 1 March 2019, 6 p.m.

Curated by Giovanni Carmine & Alexis Vaillant

Kunst Halle Sankt Gallen is presenting «False Friends... and Six Bottles», a survey exhibition by American artist Mark van Yetter with a selection of more than 80 works spanning from 2005 to 2019. The output presented here reveals a painterly practice which pulls in many directions. What might first appear to have only evasiveness as a binding device, emerges as a body of work that conveys the complex and emotional condition of our time while evoking a sense of distance and anxiety in the face of world events.

For the past fifteen years, Mark van Yetter (\*1978, lives and works in Pennsylvania) has drawn from a wide range of influences. One can distinguish in his work the prevalence of European painting from the turn of the 20th century to the present alongside traces of romantic sentimentality found in certain strands of early American modernism that he daftly undermines with either biting sarcasm or slapstick humor. The present comprehensive overview of Mark van Yetter's work at Kunst Halle Sankt Gallen reveals a delicate combination where the former 'new world' looks as built as ruined.

The art historical narratives filtered through van Yetter's work reach from clear thematic references – for instance Giorgio Morandi's still lifes reflected here in the newest series of 'bottle'-paintings; Edward Hopper's and Robert Crumb's scenes of American life resonating in the epic *The Mere Knowledge of a Fact is Pale* – to a conceptual and critical positioning often expressed in scatological imagery and with ambiguous jest akin to the work of contemporary figures like Mike Kelley, and Rosemarie Trockel.

Mostly oil on paper, the work of Mark van Yetter operates in the liminal realms between the public and the intimate, the down-to-earth and the fantastical. Frequently drawing on his own history and an intuitive approach that responds directly to the world around him, van Yetter generates visions that oscillate between the strange and the familiar. At the core of these visions, generic experiences and more ambient cultural and political tensions intermingle. Anchored in solitary places but stretching beyond, Mark van Yetter's art thus suggests other ways of catching the world.

Building on both playful and disquieting depictions of the human condition as conveyed by the artist, this survey exhibition has been divided into four parts. First: a group of paintings focused on the indoor/outdoor relationships. Facing it: a 27 meters long drawing dramatically floating in the space. The latter is followed by a 'Salon Americana' in which Mark van Yetter's own 'Americana' counteracts that of Trump's bleak projections. And finally, conceived as an exhibition within the exhibition, a vast group of old and recent works featuring recurrent thoughts in Mark van Yetter's oeuvre such as: the liminal and visionary places of transition, the simultaneous mechanisms of composition and decomposition, a deliquescent humanity.

Mark van Yetter's paintings on paper describe a feebly sensitized world where ideas of freedom, digitalization, and subjectivity are chimera with a role to play, and where objects, volumes, architectures, nature, humans, and animals are of equal importance. In that horizontal world, van Yetter's works explore the threshold of the narrative more than the narrative itself, and addresses both perception and lifestyles of today. It is clear that for the artist, there is no good life without a measure of absurdity.

Through its dystopian sites where clever dogs ignore a naked activist, or a dandy false friend gently whips the back of a female figure carved on the lid of a dish, Mark van Yetter makes of us the witnesses of a global zoning out that flirts ultimately with the deadpan of not being political – and thus becoming it.

**Mark van Yetter**, born 1978, lives and works in Pennsylvania/US.

Solo exhibitions (selection): Salzburger Kunstverein, Salzburg/AT (2018); Bridget Donahue, New York/US (2018); Frieze, New York/US (2018); LISTE Art Fair, Basel/CH (2016); Micky Schubert, Berlin/DE (2016); Kunsthall Stavanger, Stavanger/NO (2016); VIVII, Oslo/NO (2015); Kunstwerk EV, Cologne/DE (with Stefanie Popp) (2015); Cleopatra's, Brooklyn, New York/US (in collaboration with Jonas Lipps) (2014); PlazaPlaza, London/UK (2013); Alex Zachary, New York/US (2011); Dispatch, New York/US (with Matt Hoyt) (2008).

Group exhibitions (selection): Croy Nielsen, Vienna/AT (2018); MD Bar, Cologne/DE (2017); Ludlow 38, New York/US (2017); Institut für Bienenzucht, Düsseldorf/DE (2014); Apt. 302, Marseilles/FR (2014); Art Metropole, Toronto/CAN (2013); Lion and Lamb, London/UK (2012); Villa Merkel, Esslingen/DE (2011); Colazione in Barriera, Turin/IT (2011).

#### **Events and Educational Programme:**

##### **Opening**

Friday, 1 March 2019, 6 p.m.

##### **Guided Tour on Tuesday/Introduction for Teachers**

Tuesday, 5 March 2019, 6 p.m.

##### **Art Snack** – Short guided tour and a snack

Thursday, 21 March 2019, 12.30 p.m.

Admission: CHF 10/members CHF 7; no registration required

##### **Painting Afternoon** – For children from 4 to 8 years-old

Wednesday, 3 April 2019, 2 p.m.

Admission: CHF 5; registration until the previous day at: [info@k9000.ch](mailto:info@k9000.ch)

##### **Art Lunch** – Guided tour followed by lunch

Thursday, 25 April 2019, 12 noon

Admission: CHF 25/members CHF 22; registration at [info@k9000.ch](mailto:info@k9000.ch)

##### **Guided Tour on Sunday**

Sunday, 5 May 2019, 3 p.m.

##### **Workshops for School Classes**

On 19 March, 26 March, 2 April, 23 April and 30 April 2019 we are offering workshops. See [www.k9000.ch](http://www.k9000.ch) (Art Education/Workshops for School Classes)

**High-resolution images can be found in the press kit on our website under Information/Press. For further questions please contact Giovanni Carmine ([carmine@k9000.ch](mailto:carmine@k9000.ch)) or Maren Brauner ([brauner@k9000.ch](mailto:brauner@k9000.ch)).**

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Opening times:  
Tues to Fri 12 – 6 p.m.  
Sat & Sun 11 a.m. – 5 p.m.