

Central to American artist Pieter Schoolwerth's (b. 1970 in St. Louis, lives in NYC) practice is a reflection of the human being, as it finds itself suspended between stasis and flux, and all the complexity and fragmentation that entails. Schoolwerth's first exhibition at a European institution encompasses paintings, reliefs and films that depict the continual change in the ways people interact with one another and their surroundings. Like no other artist, Schoolwerth exposes these changes by combining art-historical themes with the aesthetics of virtual worlds, deftly merging Old Master-style techniques with the digital possibilities of contemporary image composition.

Comprising a total of sixty works, the survey begins in the 1990s when Schoolwerth, just recently graduated from Cal Arts, was creating psychedelic works and installations, (and) inventing his own alternative cartography. Even then, Schoolwerth was bringing together the realms of high culture and subculture, thereby melding the ritual with the rational-conceptual. We find him, in these early works, already exploring the influence of the then still-emerging Internet, particularly its impact on the reception and constitution of pictorial representation.

As Schoolwerth continued to develop his ideas, he went on to found Wierd Records parallel to his work as a visual artist. The independent music label garnered fame for its parties, live music and performance art events in the 2000s, strongly influencing the New York club scene. This exhibition is the first to relate the artist's various fields of activity with one another, demonstrating how over the course of his career, he has not only continually explored the possibilities of figurative painting, but also the realms of music and performance. The survey offers visitors an in-depth look at Pieter Schoolwerth's complex oeuvre and shows him to be one of the most astute chroniclers of his generation.

Pieter Schoolwerth is represented by the galleries Kraupa-Tuskany Zeidler and Captain Petzel in Berlin, and Petzel Gallery in New York.