

DARK SUNS

PIERRE KNOP

22.04.2022 - 28.05.2022

We are proud to present Pierre Knop's first solo exhibition Dark Suns at Gether Contemporary. In the French/German artist's paintings, soulful landscapes encroach on small human figures and their houses, while they meditatively go about their daily lives swimming, hiking or fishing. A dreamlike quietude is accompanied by an ominous sense of unease, as something seems to be looming on the horizon and thickening the atmosphere.

Pierre Knop works intuitively and organically, usually on multiple canvases at once, embracing chances and presumed mistakes in his process. His use of multiple mediums on one canvas creates dynamic and vibrant compositions, ranging from richly saturated nearly flattened fields of colour to freely sketched areas of gestural lightness.

The artist perceives his studio as a laboratory for experiments. In long, intimate working sessions, the painter gets caught up in an associative flow in which his images form and interconnect. In previously unpredictable processes, he weaves together fleeting memories, dream visions and fragments of his extensive pictorial archive. Influenced by Expressionism, Post-Impressionism and Symbolism, the artist has an approach to figures and landscapes, recalling painters such as Pierre Bonnard, Ferdinand Hodler or Poussin. Among his contemporary influences, he names Jeff Wall and Gregory Crewdson, understandable references, considering their common affinity for enigmatic and oddly timeless scenic compositions.

The protagonists of his paintings are overpowering landscapes, their figures merge with mountains, beaches or forests and exist in a certain tension to their environment. In the age of climate crisis, where ecological questions like rapid global warming and pollution are threatening every aspect of life itself, these sublime and intact landscape compositions seem almost surreal. These uncanny scenarios can neither be located to a specific place nor time and explore the ambiguities of escapism: on the one hand, the basic human need for spaces of longing, on the other hand, the desire to flee from an increasingly complex world and one's own responsibility in it.

At first glance, Pierre Knop's pictorial worlds seem bright and at times humorous, but in the aftermath, there is also a sense of a more elusive restlessness. The world of Dark Suns is filled with this ambivalence and complexity and reveals the traditional genre of landscape to be anything but naive.

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Pierre Knop was born in 1982 in France and raised in Germany. He graduated from Kunstakademie Düsseldorf in 2013 and now lives and works in Cologne, Germany. Selected exhibitions include Kunsthhaus Essen, CHOI & CHOI, Seoul, Yossi Milo Gallery, New York, Kunstverein-Koelnberg, Annat Ebgi, Los Angeles, Ruttkowski68, Cologne, Annarumma Gallery, Naples, Spazio Amanita, New York and PM/AM, London.

GETHER

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Wednesday-Friday 12.00-5.00 PM
Saturday 12.00-4.00 PM