

Press Release

Marius Steiger: Sun shines, Money falls

15 April – 27 May 2023

Blue Velvet Projects is pleased to present Sun shines, Money falls, a solo exhibition by the Swiss artist Marius Steiger.

In many ways painting itself is the subject matter of the new paintings of Marius Steiger. It's illusion of three dimensions and simulation of life harkening back to the earliest parlor tricks of post-Giotto perspective informed art. But, the subject is wider than that too, encompassing the sites we encounter painting, who encounters it and what happens when photography should have made painting moribund and the digital renaissance promises (and fails at) the same.

Steiger's paintings here, shaped and life sized, relate to cloning and rendering. Each is a perfect representation of itself, nothing is off, there are no slight blemishes to create visual interest. In much the same way that when humans took over the earth, its climates began to collapse, the world of Marius Steiger is one where painting will never die, it can do the job of all other cultural genres and has an unquenchable thirst for more.

Although, unlike humans and more like bees or ants, the works suggest an impossibility of individuality within the group. Not just within the paintings of Steiger, but almost as if all painting ever done was part of one cancerous expanding cultural narrative. It's the viewer's desire to find meaning within which reflects the total project back on itself. The possibilities of narratives based on the arrangements of quotidian things shows the humor in acting as if painting might have a goal of its own. In effect this is a giant still life made out of a collection of still life paintings. The individuals are somehow as strong as the entire whole. Steiger's works have clear conservative borders, all a standard thickness of paint on canvas, but his playing of them into the world dismantles and expands painting's meta representations.

The art and the decorative and the stagecraft enter together as one. His deployment of the gallery space as different types of interiors, like the country house living room, speaks again to the humor of art, and painting in particular, taking up all the visual decorative space in a room. It's the height of the middle class desire for highly intelligent conspicuous consumption. In its push to spread its rendered artifice Steiger and his work edit out all other cultural forms.

The uncanniness throughout is probably best expressed by the painted mirrors. We sort of know these from the mid-century masterworks of Lichtenstein, but those were paintings of mirrors, as paintings. Steiger's operate in a gray zone between depicting and being, and while we know they will never reflect the world around them in many ways they already are. The dead artifice that's depicted here shows a medium taking up all the air and leaving nothing but itself in the process. In its push to be everything and more than it thinks it can be, the true humor is in the interest and magic of representation that manages to blossom anyways.

— Mitchell Anderson

Blue Velvet Projects

Marius Steiger

***1999, lives and works in Basel and London**

Marius Steiger (*1999, Bern) is a London-based Swiss artist, currently studying MA Painting at the Royal College of Art. His work explores questions of identity, authenticity, artificiality, consumerism and consumption and humans relationship with modern technology. He creates works that combine real narratives with fiction in an austere yet romantic visual language, ironically questioning striving for perfection. The overall aesthetic conveys the digital world by referencing the screen through the illumination of the motifs and the physicality of the surface.

Education

2022 MA Painting, Royal College of Art, London
2015 Visual Communications, Schule für Gestaltung SfGGB, Biel

Selected solo exhibitions:

2023 Sun shines, Money falls, Blue Velvet Projects, Zurich
2022 Lust for Life, Incubator, London
Burning Land, Labs Contemporary, Bologna, Italy, with Alessio Barchitta
Free as a bird, La Placette, Lausanne, Switzerland
2021 Cast Away, La Voirie, Biel, Switzerland, with Floyd Grimm
Four Seasons, Mattenstrasse 81, Biel, Switzerland
2020 Piles and Spells, 4Rooms, Bern, Switzerland
Dog Walk, Chalet à Gobet, Lausanne, Switzerland
2017 Full Auto Fill In, Lokal-Int, Biel, Switzerland, with Manutcher Milani

Selected group exhibitions:

2023 Works on Paper, Unit 7, Studio 127, London
May your dream come,, Kunsthalle Palazzo, Basel
2022 Ohne Titel, Museum zu Allerheiligen, Schaffhausen
Regionale, Kunstraum Riehen, Basel
Iceberg, La Placette in Mudac, Lausanne
Aeschlimann Corti, Kunsthaus Langenthal, Langenthal
Impression, Kunsthaus Grenchen, Grenchen
2021 Cantonale, Kunsthaus Pasquart, Biel
Cantonale, Musée des Arts, Moutier
Down the hills, Blue Velvet Projects, Zurich
Hotel Simplon, Julietta, Basel
Paper View, Public Space, Biel, St. Gallen, Vevey
BestForm, Kornhausforum, Bern
Ctrl N, Alte Schreinerei, Bern
2020 X-Masters, Ballostar Mobile, Biel
Cantonale, Kunsthaus Pasquart, Biel

Awards & Scholarships

2022 Scholarship, Patronagefonds für junge Schweizer Künstler*innen, Basel
Scholarship, Fritz Gerber Stiftung, Zurich
2021 Project grant, Burgergemeinde Bern, Bern, Switzerland
Project grant, Canton of Bern, Switzerland
Project grant, City of Biel, Switzerland
2020 Project grant, Berner Design Stiftung, Bern, Switzerland
Förderpreis, Paul Boesch Stiftung, Bern, Switzerland
2018 Scholarship, Stiftung Movetia, Amsterdam, Netherlands
2017 Promotion Award, Paul Boesch Stiftung, Bern, Switzerland