

VERA PALME - FRANKFURTER KREUZ

One time I read Danish actress Susse Wold's autobiography that I found lying around my grandmother's house. Somewhere in the book Susse Wold describes how she was always so pleased with her wide face because it provided her with a larger surface on which to work with her make-up. Every time I think about issues concerning painting, colour, spatiality and surface I can't help but picture Susse Wold's face!

Abstract painting remains largely an unresolved problem. But, it has often occurred to me that the abstract painting performs similarly to how make-up contours. This is in part how I experience Vera Palme's works. Her paintings have always felt corporeal to me. Their appearances bumble between gloomy and poetic landscape paintings and then suddenly flash a facial feature, a body part, some skin. They *act* in the space between a smoldering psychology and vanity.

For the exhibition *Frankfurter Kreuz* at Bizarro Vera Palme has created a series of new paintings and a site-specific ceiling painting where sky and basement milieus entangle. Through outlined, yet half hidden motifs, fragments of figurations and impasto strokes, one detects Palme's lucid interest in infrastructure and architecture.

The highway architecture surrounding Frankfurt am Main grounds one of Palme's new pieces. The highway interchange equally connotes symbolism from western painting tradition as it does traffic nodal point. In Palme's painting the local and busy interweaving functions as metaphor for an image of organization, freedom as well as the risk and fear of having to circulate endlessly around. A nonchalant highway-aesthetic: both trappy, cute and chaotic. The industrial Autobahn is depicted without cars and in green and earth like tones. Maybe pointing towards a romantic idea of future ruins and overgrown architecture.

On the ceiling of Bizarro Vera Palme has worked site-specifically with depicting clouds on a blue sky. The struggle of painting a sky in a dirty cellar ceiling plastered with wires and pipes point towards the paradoxes and intensities characteristic of Palme's artistic method. Generally, Vera Palme's works ooze a referential connectivity that allows them to vibrate and interplay with a larger spatial and historical context. Drawing specifically on the tradition of Danish Golden Age and cloud study as genre Palme's work set the scene for a locally engaged and fluffy dialog on artistic methods and styles surrounding the sky motif which in the 1800s had the dual function of being a practical object for artists to develop their artistic skill set and on the other hand being a symbol of God. When he was professor at the Royal Danish Academy of Art, the famous Danish golden age painter C.W. Eckersberg (1783-1853) used the rooftop of Charlottenborg, around the corner from Bizarro, as his private studio to study the sky for his so-called airstudies. Palme's work touches upon traditional symbolism, painterly style and means of production in a somewhat reverse form that pretends to depict the Scandinavian blue sky that a countless number of artists from J. Th. Lundbye (1818-1848) to Auguste Rodin (1840-1917) all adored and via sketching, drawing, painting and patina-making all hurried to create an image of.

BIO

Vera Palme (*1983 in Frankfurt am Main) studied art in Berlin and Frankfurt am Main. Her work has been shown internationally in solo and group exhibitions, recently at Galerie Buchholz, Cologne and New Toni, Berlin both in 2022 and Kunsthalle Bern in 2021 amongst others. In 2018 she co-authored the novel 'Desecration of Descent' with Elif Saydam (Broken Dimanche Press).

Works shown (from the left)

Frankfurter Kreuz, 2023, 30 x 35 cm, oil on linen

UN, 2023, 30x35 cm, oil on cotton

-- (1), 2023, 35 x 30 cm, oil on cotton

-- (2), 2023, 35 x 30 cm, oil on cotton

-- (3), 2023, 35 x 30 cm, oil on cotton

Skystudie, 2023, dimension variable, professional wall paint