

TILL MEGERLE

YES

07.05. – 13.08.2023

Kunsthalle Bremerhaven

Till Megerle's drawings could not be more heterogeneous. Some are worked out in detail, stroke by stroke; others are sketchy and fleeting with just a few lines; and yet others are almost abstract, based on individual color surfaces from which motifs emerge at certain places. Some drawings merely feature the graphite of the used pencil; while others are held purely in brown tones; then there are drawings that are markedly colorful, with the colors appearing to be so meaningful that they spill out of the drawings, as it were, onto the similarly colored frames made specifically for the pictures. The spectrum Megerle makes use of for his drawings is therefore extremely multifaceted. Yet it is not his intent to fathom the field of drawing in its entirety. The styles and techniques recur too often for that and are ultimately limited to three or four; albeit completely different ones. Rather, the variety owes to a specific artistic logic or approach inherent in his practice, namely, the question of what can be expressed, depicted or shown in which way. Certain motifs, aesthetics and moods can be created only in this way and not in any other. And to this end, either a very protracted, condensing and multilayered process is required, or a very quick and fragmentary one.

Even if Megerle's drawings are made in different ways, figures always appear in them. Intertwined, twisted, oddly proportioned or distorted beings. Strangely enraptured. Somehow alien. As if they were from other worlds and times. Almost caricature-like with their very specific facial expressions and gestures. And although several figures can usually be seen in the pictures, they each seem to be self-engrossed and extremely preoccupied with themselves. Nevertheless—for that is what the sometimes entangled and interwoven bodies and gestures of the figures as well as their positioning tell of—they seem to be doing something together, to be somehow related to each other. But others do not, for their gazes mostly pass by each other. They either stare into space or look out of the picture directly at the viewer. In accordance with these contradictions, the scenes remain strangely in limbo; charged by a tension that could suddenly change. It is not clear whether they are so twisted, distorted and displaced out of themselves or as a reaction to each other. It can also not be discerned whether what is shown is ominous, violent and dystopian or simply comical, quirky and bizarre. It is probably both, like a flip-flop image, so that the drawings tell of the complexity of interpersonal relations and conditions.

This unfathomability characterizing the worlds Megerle conjures up with his images is also reflected in their strange falling out of time and context. They are anchored neither in the present nor the past, nor in any fantastical, utopian or surreal spheres. This is likely due to the abundance of different references that Megerle uses in his drawings. What he interweaves are allusions to concrete motifs as well as to aesthetics and moods. Some of his drawings, for example, are reminiscent of Grünewald's psychedelic image worlds or paintings by Bruegel. They could almost be details from them, or his figures could have sprung directly from them. But at the same time, the drawings are also unmistakably located in the present. With their modernist houses, post-war architecture and wind turbines, they refer to an environment that is unquestionably today's, as do the figures wearing hoodies, clearly testifying to a contemporary taste. So what we encounter in

Megerle's drawings are, for example, seemingly medieval figures with down jackets in the peripheral dreariness of a contemporary nowhere. Elsewhere, we see sketchy, fleeting beings. And then again figures that seem quite real, as if they were one's own parents or grandparents, symbolizing a middle-class suburban idyll with a violin in their hand. In Megerle's drawn cosmos, then, worlds also collide, inner and outer realities that appear far apart from each other, yet interpenetrate one another.

All of this effects an atmosphere of contradictions, tensions and frictions that—almost contrary to the generated intensities—emerges on very small formats. Perhaps it is precisely this concentration, this compression and intimacy, this working in the depth, that is needed to create the density that characterizes Megerle's drawings.

Curated by Stefanie Kleefeld.

Till Megerle, born in Bayreuth in 1979, lives in Vienna. He studied at the Academy of Visual Arts Leipzig and at the Academy of Fine Arts Vienna. In the past, he has shown his work in solo exhibitions at the Vienna Secession (2021), Galleria Accapella, Naples (2021), Christian Andersen, Copenhagen (2017), Kunstbunker Nürnberg (2017) and Kunstverein Freiburg (2015), among others.

Events

Sunday, May 7, 2023, 2 pm

Artist Talk with Till Megerle and Stefanie Kleefeld

Thursday, June 22, 2023, 6 pm

"Kunst und Cocktail"

Guided tour with Julia Bokermann

Saturday, June 24, 2023, 2 pm

"Kinderclub" with Ludmilla Euler

Friday, July 7, 2023, 7 pm

GUIDING LIGHT

Concert with Artjom Astrov, Kisling & Till Megerle

The exhibition is sponsored by the **Bundeministerium Kunst, Kultur, öffentlicher Dienst und Sport** and by the **Seestadt Bremerhaven**. The "Kinderclub" is sponsored by the **Weser-Elbe Sparkasse**.