

Monika Sprüth and Philomene Magers are delighted to present an exhibition of new work by acclaimed German artist Andreas Schulze. In his third solo show at the Berlin gallery, the artist will present two ceramic sculptures alongside a selection of paintings, depicting landscapes inspired by the artist's recent expedition to the island of Sicily.

Andreas Schulze first came to prominence in the early 1980's, as a pivotal figure in the explosive flourishing of creativity which centred around Monika Sprüth's gallery in Cologne. Schulze has since been recognised as an inventor of new pictorial worlds, having developed an autonomous and unmistakable visual language with which to explore various interior views of society. A fundamental theme in the artist's work is the power of painting to create illusion, giving multifaceted treatment to the theme of the interplay between being and appearance, reality and staging in the medium of painting. An independent and anti- hierarchical use of traditional styles of painting links his work with the Avant-garde movements of the early twentieth century, above all Dada, Surrealism and Symbolism, yet his cool, analytical compositions and his independent themes allow Schulze to retain a unique position within the context of contemporary art.

The exhibition will showcase a series of paintings depicting the landscape of Sicily, where Schulze, following the tradition of old master painters who would partake in artistic pilgrimages across Europe, recently visited. These works on paper are made up of strangely dimensioned forms, rendered in perspective and executed with a vivid palette, bringing hidden layers of consciousness and underlying emotions to mind. *Ohne Titel (Bahnstrecke am Meer)*, 2013, depicts recognisable landmarks including the railway track which crosses the island, and the volcano Mount Etna. In four of the paintings, the artist furnishes his seascapes with isolated objects, as in *Ohne Titel (Bett am Meer)*, 2013, in which Schulze blocks a picturesque vista with the brown form of a bed frame harbouring large, cloudlike cushions. Here, the domestic object becomes the protagonist of a concealed narrative, freeing it from its function and assigning a performance filled with significance. These illusionistic landscapes, which privilege psychological depth over flatness, correspond to the Surrealist preference for mysterious, enigmatic stage sets. By folding together the genres of interiors and landscapes, and exploring notions of inner and outer space, the compositions convey coziness and menace, familiarity and strangeness, playfulness and melancholy, calm and discomfort, ultimately evoking the dislocated and fragmented nature of contemporary experience.

Juxtaposed against the uncanny melancholy of Schulze's paintings, two of the artist's playfully anthropomorphic ceramic sculptures will be exhibited. These sculptures take the familiar, everyday shape of vases or jugs, adorned with the facial features of the artist himself. Each unique ceramic has been hand crafted, alluding to a sense of homely tradition which Schulze has sought to

challenge and complicate in other aspects of his work. The sculptures tap into a vein of Schulze's practice that is replete with, and almost fetishizes, bourgeois décor and ornamentation, which is symptomatic of Schulze's fascination with modern yearnings for contentment.

Andreas Schulze was born in Hanover in 1955. He studied at the Gesamthochschule Kassel and Staatliche Kunstakademie Düsseldorf, where he is professor of painting. Major solo exhibitions include the opening show of Galerie Monika Sprüth in Cologne (1983) and INTERIEUR at the Falckenberg Collection in Hamburg (2010). Major group exhibitions include Tate Britain, London (1983), MoMA, New York (1984), the Kunstforeningen, Copenhagen (1988) and the Triennale in Milan (1997). He lives and works in Cologne.

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