

17 Jan 2025

Klaus Merkel
Touretten
January 17th – March 1st 2025

The relationship between façade and space, between surface and depth, is special in Aldo van Eyck's Schmela Haus, built in 1971. From the street, with its flat and narrow façade, the interior is as surprising as possible thanks to the circular glass opening. To enter, one has to cross a threshold before a generous view of what awaits one is revealed.

The new works by Klaus Merkel seem to double and concretize this tension between basement and façade: *24.05.04 page 787 Flags (Stella)*, a condensed appearance: unerring, darkly profound, ambiguous.

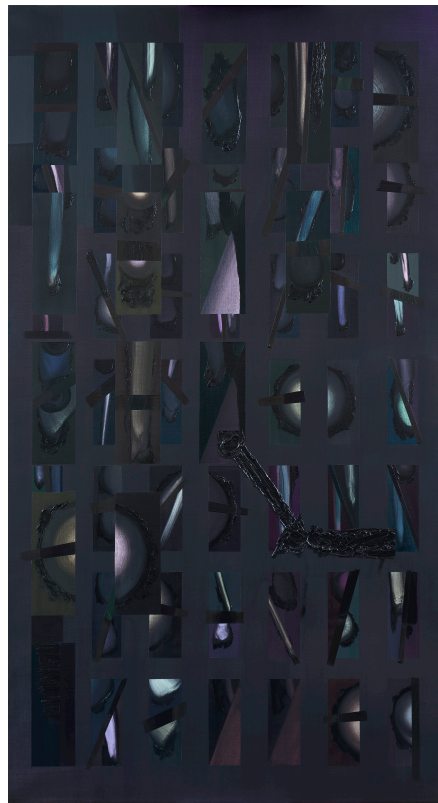


Klaus Merkel, *24.05.04 page 787 Flags [Stella]*, 2024, oil on canvas, 125 x 90cm



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Over the last four and a half decades, Merkel's work in the medium of painting has combined the concepts of display, discourse and abstraction in a way that is unique to him. The decisive moment for his practice came in the early 1990s with the seven panels *Katalogbilder*, on which he repainted his previous work side by side on a miniature scale and shifted its status. This led to a way of working that we find in the exhibition *Touretten*: Pictures that question the ideas of authenticity, uniqueness and the chimera of value linked to them and also provide a commentary *avant la lettre* on the visual structure of our digital world.

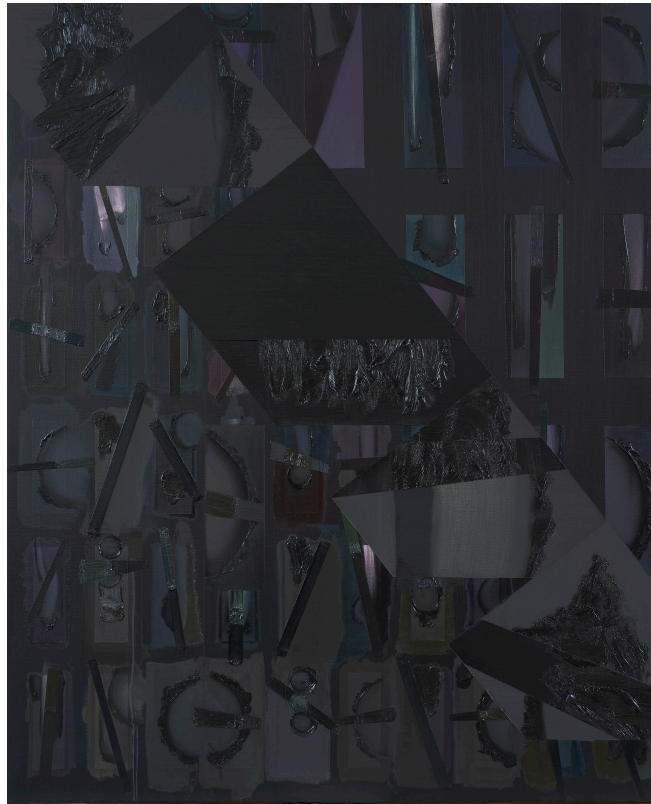


Klaus Merkel, *24.05.07 Puppen*, 2024, oil on canvas, 215 x 115 cm

In the painting *24.05.07 Puppen*, all the gridded rectangles are aligned in portrait format on the surface, all the painterly gestures are presented, covered by forms that clearly transcend their painted boundaries. In contrast to this, the painterly gestures in *24.07.27 Platz (Rihm)* reach beyond their boundaries. This painting breaks up the organized structure diagonally in a chaotic manner and yet reproduces it unmistakably in the background.



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Klaus Merkel, *24.07.27 Plotz [Rihm]*, 2024, oil on canvas, 160 x 130cm

The concept of re-enactment is also significant for the two extreme horizontal formats of *Tiere* with their motifs, they refer to works from the 1980s, which Merkel re-enacts in radically different colors and formats on two picture stages. In general, in the *Touretten* exhibition, painterly movements seem to be repeated on a black-colored background, like patterns of movement that have no specific purpose. Imitated patterns of movement are like re-enactments of previous pictures and allow the confusing and subjective nature of architecture to appear as a loop in a new light.



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Klaus Merkel (born in 1953 in Heidelberg, Germany) lives and works in Schallstadt / Freiburg, Germany. His works are part of numerous public and private collections, such as the Morat Stiftung, Morat-Institut für Kunst und Kunstwissenschaft, Freiburg, Germany; Kunst Museum Winterthur, Winterthur, Switzerland; Niedersächsische Sparkassenstiftung, Hanover, Germany; Alfried Krupp v. Bohlen and Halbach-Stiftung, Essen, Germany; Kienzle Art Foundation, Berlin, Germany; Hoffmann-La Roche, Basel, Switzerland; Kunstmuseum Liechtenstein, Vaduz, Liechtenstein; Kunstmuseum Bonn, Bonn, Germany; Staatsgalerie Stuttgart, Stuttgart, Germany; Museum für Neue Kunst, Freiburg, Germany; Museum Würth, Künzelsau, Germany; LWL-Museum für Kunst und Kultur, Münster, Germany; Collection Kienbaum, Gummersbach / Cologne, Germany; Collection Gaby and Wilhelm Schürmann, Herzogenrath / Berlin, Germany; Collection Haubrok, Berlin, Germany; The Works Collection, Heemstede, The Netherlands.

