

# Wilde

## PRESS RELEASE

FABIAN MARTI : PFUUS JITZ !

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WILDE | GENÈVE

While Bernese visitors will easily understand the invitation to sleep suggested by the title of Fabian Marti's fourth exhibition at Wilde, visitors less familiar with the Swiss-German dialect can rely on their wanderings through the Geneva gallery to grasp its essence. They will find themselves immersed in a dreamlike space, standing in for the artist's son, suspended above his dreams in the sculpture *Such a Good Boy*.

The series of eighteen oil paintings on canvas titled *Lullaby Essentiels* functions as a kind of visual playlist. At the border of abstraction, the depicted forms suggest more than they represent. The artist unfolds some of his recurring motifs, such as the octopus on the ground floor—a figure he has been exploring for over a decade.

Upstairs, the smaller formats are occasionally hung at child's eye level, inviting the audience to rediscover the innocent gaze of early childhood. Blending intimate references with allusions to popular culture, Fabian Marti draws on both his own memories and a famous children's author, Dr. Seuss, as well as the painterly aesthetics of Francis Picabia. Clues to interpretation are found in the sometimes playful titles—transforming an ancient creature into "Green Fren"—and sometimes more serious, evoking children's psychological development through the awareness of the self or the "I."

The walls give way to several ceramic pieces whose initially rough appearance remains more realistic than the paintings of the same subject. The paintings seem to have absorbed the color of the raised dinosaurs, creating a contrast between the purity of the objects and the vivid hues of the canvases. The small scale of these extinct animals lends them a playful quality, reminiscent of toys or plush figures, while retaining the shine and fragility specific to the material they are made from. Thus, the sculptures become relics, witnesses of a cherished memory, frozen in matter.

These three-dimensional works, placed at the entrance, rest on the transport crates belonging to the paintings from upstairs. These containers trade their original function—they no longer serve to move artworks, but rather become pedestal-territories for the delicate sculptures. Much like children building a castle out of blankets, Fabian Marti uses the resources at hand to create his exhibition display, forsaking the usual pedestal.

From tenderness to anxiety, from surprise to fear, a multitude of stories and adventures emerge from the intentionally ambiguous iconography of the artist's work. The viewer wanders on the threshold of dreams just left behind, dreams we long to re-enter upon waking. Those who succeed will be guided by an extinct creature toward the epic battles of Poldy, to the rhythm of full moon whispers, murmuring the faults of passing time.

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## Biography

Fabian Marti was born in 1979 in Fribourg, Switzerland. From 2002 to 2006, he attended the Zurich University of the Arts (Zürcher Hochschule der Künste), and in 2008, the Mountain School of Arts in Los Angeles. He lives and works between Los Angeles and Zurich.

Marti works in sculpture, video, installation, and photography. His work oscillates between geometric formalism rooted in visual art and organic forms drawn from the subconscious. His ceramic series is one such example. Using traditional pottery techniques, Marti creates sculptures that evoke perpetual motion through repetitive circular forms. The optical effect, akin to a hypnotic spiral, reflects Marti's interest in sensations related to loss of control and consciousness.

In his photogram series, Marti explores the technique by placing various objects on photosensitive paper in a darkroom, then developing them through direct light exposure. He sometimes uses transparent digital prints—like those of cephalopods or fingerprints, recurring motifs in his work—which he places on silver gelatin paper for printing. In some photograms, Marti later integrates personal photos taken with his iPhone over the years. These glimpses of his daily life, selected from a corpus of over 60,000 images, are affixed with white tape to the inner surface of the Plexiglas case encasing the work, becoming part of the piece itself.

Using his materials to create imposing structures, Marti sometimes fills exhibition spaces with his intricate constructions, subverting the traditional method of hanging works on walls and inviting visitors into his unique artistic world. He strives to connect with nature, aiming to communicate with its essence through ephemeral constructions designed for use by other artists. In the *Two Hotel* project, Marti built a wooden structure on the beach in Piracanga, Bahia, Brazil, referencing the *One Hotel* created by Alighiero Boetti in Kabul in the 1960s. A simple and loosely structured space, it serves as both living quarters and a workspace for artists.