

The Kunstverein Braunschweig regularly presents two artists in the Villa Salve Hospes. After the duo exhibition of Karl Holmqvist and Klara Liden in 2016 and the encounter of the sculptors Inge Mahn and Nora Schultz in 2017, this duo show of LEDA BOURGOGNE and IDA EKBLAD is a dialogue between two artists who both start from painting and go beyond it. The Villa Salve Hospes' symmetrical architecture is particularly disposed to the idea of a juxtaposition that puts two artist's work into dialogue. Along an imaginary mirror axis that crosses the rotunda and garden room and divides the building in half, Ida Ekblad's work will be displayed in the eastern section while Leda Bourgogne's work will be displayed in the western section with the hall of mirrors. The mirror axis on the upper floor is rotated by 180 degrees and divides the rooms along the corridor.

When Leda Bourgogne uses textiles from the clothing industry in her work, she inevitably plays on a type of corporeality: velvet and jersey fabric (associated with the grunge era) blend softly into the visual compositions. In contrast, latex—fetishistic and skin-like materials channel a kind of coolness and severity. Readymade sculptures consisting of CD stands—now somewhat tainted by '90s nostalgia—form a backbone, and leather jackets and boxing gloves assert themselves as human figures in the space. While the viewer sometimes feels the urge to touch such complex surfaces and their specific qualities, they notice interventions on the canvasses: a bleached textile, a cut through the fabric, a patched rupture like a mended wound. Somewhere between painting and sculpture, the artist works on her pieces like they are loving and suffering bodies. She injures the canvas so to heal it again as one might in an ambivalent romantic relationship straddling hatred and desire. Preoccupied with language, the body, and the subconscious, Leda Bourgogne points out identity constructions and power relations.

In Ida Ekblad's striking and expressive work art historical references from Situationism and Abstract Expressionism can be found as much as pop cultural gestures such as graffiti and comics. Whether using an airbrush or thickly applied, material-effect paint as on 1980s sweatshirts—Ida Ekblad's artistic practice is process-oriented and demonstrates an anarchic spirit, that also uses styles, motives, and materials from western (pop-)culture that are declared as tasteless and outdated. Ida Ekblad's use of canvas is a process of constant experimentation with painterly material—and anything else she deems fit as such. In this process, she emphasizes a lack of hierarchy by using whatever she can get her hands on: PVC colors, cans of spray paint, colored foam clouds like you would see on T-shirt prints from the 1980s. As in her subject matter, floral patterns, graffiti lettering, and comic figures, the pleasure lies in playing on the different possibilities. Where, if not on canvas, can a cute baby dinosaur be reflected in a cloud of green spray paint? Along with motivic collage, the material seems to go beyond the surface, creating a kind of relief.

If the free approach to painting and language and a contemporary love of citation can be regarded as essential similarities, the contrast between both positions is all the more striking because of their individual approach towards to architecture of the Villa Salve Hospes that is a challenge for painting.

LEDA BOURGOGNE (born 1989 in Vienna, AT) lives and works in Berlin. She finished studying Fine Arts at the Hochschule für Bildende Künste – Städelschule Frankfurt am Main in 2017 as a master student of Judith Hopf. She has shown her works in solo shows at BQ, Berlin (2018), at Gärtnergasse, Wien (2017), at Marbriers 4, Genf (2016) and in group exhibitions such as at the De Vleeshal, Middelburg (2018), the Nassauischer Kunstverein Wiesbaden (2018), and the MINI / Goethe-Institut Ludlow 38, New York (2017).

IDA EKBLAD (born 1980 in Oslo, NO) lives and works in Oslo. She studied at the Central St. Martins College of Art in London, at the National Academy of Art in Oslo, and at the Mountain School of Arts in Los Angeles. In addition to participating in the Venice Biennale in 2017 and 2011, her works have been shown internationally in numerous exhibition such as solo shows at the Kunsthaus Hamburg (2017), the Bonniers Konsthall, Stockholm (2010), the Bergen Kunsthall (2010), and as part of a group exhibition at the Palais de Tokyo, Paris (2010).

Curator: Jule Hillgärtner

Curatorial Assistant: Miriam Bettin

IT'S NOT LATE IT'S EARLY #23

Wednesday, October 17, 2018, 7 pm

Reading Leda Bourgogne

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