

An attempt to describe the works of Jonas Lipps would go something like this: Jonas Lipps draws. He predominantly uses ink, watercolors, color pencils, and casein on heterogeneous grounds, such as paper napkins, pizza boxes or found pieces of paper, to create “worlds” often described as surreal that are situated in socially repressive contexts (schools, administrative buildings, hospitals, police precincts etc.) and reveal a fascination by the absurd to sadistic occurrences there.

Due to the variegated grounds alone, each of Lipps’ works emanates something specific; one could also say something that is concentrated in itself. These are not series of drawings, on the contrary. Lipps’ pictures/scenarios stand for themselves, go in-depth, form craters into which one is drawn, and only in a second step do they seek a conversation with the neighboring drawings. Nothing really serious is negotiated either. At least not on the first level. Instead, we encounter narrations that function as quick jokes, pop tunes or dreams. But here, witticism is only interesting as a format (the brief story) and condensation technique, it is neither meant to make one laugh nor to make laughter get stuck in one’s throat. Lipps is a bogus cartoonist.

Anyone who has ever tried to be a comedian knows how hard it is to really get the punchline right. Failure and success lie quite close to each other. But Lipps succeeds with never-ending ease. Time and time again. This may have to do with wisdom of age and oddly corresponds with the way his pictures fall strangely out of time, but also with his evidently distanced view of things (and most likely also of himself). Any kind of rummaging in one’s own sentiments appears repugnant here, so that the works mark a sort of anti-program that functions so differently than the majority of contemporary art usually does.

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