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The Gas Natural Fenosa Contemporary Art Museum inaugurates the 'This is not an exit' exhibition from artistic duo Muntean/Rosenblum

- After travelling to some of the most prestigious galleries in the world, like the Tate Britain in London and MoMA in New York, Markus Muntean and Adi Rosenblum arrive to the MAC in A Coruña with their new project that will bring the world of parkour into the museum.
- The exhibition, open to the public until 16 September, features a selection of more than 30 recent pieces from the Austrian-Israeli artistic duo.

01-03-2018

Today the Gas Natural Fenosa Museum of Contemporary Art (MAC) is inaugurating the new exhibition ***This Is Not An Exit***, from the artistic duo **Muntean/Rosenblum** formed by Austrian Markus Muntean and Israeli Adi Rosenblum.

Running until 16 September, this MAC show features recent works by the artistic duo, including two new series. The first, *Self(ie) Series*, conceptually confronts two different attitudes through portraits made from selfies. The second series uses images taken from viral videos with over 100,000 views on YouTube.

The title of the exhibition, ***This is not an exit***, comes from the last line of Brett Easton Ellis's novel *American Psycho* (1991) and refers to the goal of a parkour runner: to find a way through. Parkour is the training discipline of moving through obstacles in an urban or natural environment. Muntean/Rosenblum see parkour as similar to the work of contemporary artists, who must also imagine solutions to traverse and get through certain contexts, reflect, and make decisions.

Markus Muntean (Graz, Austria, 1962) and **Adi Rosenblum** (Haifa, Israel, 1962) have collaborated as an artistic duo since 1992. They live and work between Vienna, London and Tel Aviv. In 1995 they founded Bricks & Kicks, one of the first artist-run exhibition spaces in Vienna, which was in operation until 1998. Muntean/Rosenblum are internationally renowned for conceptual works that combine references to art history and popular culture. In 2001 the artistic duo were awarded the prestigious City of Vienna Prize for Visual Arts.

After showing at some of the most prestigious galleries in the world, like the Tate Britain in London and MoMA (Museum of Modern Art) in New York, Markus Muntean and Adi Rosenblum have come to MAC in A Coruña with their new project that sets reason against imagination: looking at things from a logical and balanced perspective while comparing them to a painful and chaotic present.

In the words of MAC Director **Carmen Fernández Rivera**: “These artists have developed a unique style and signature, appropriating a classical language to represent the subjects of their pieces while seeking ambiguity between absolute banality and spiritual pathos.”
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This is not an exit: Parkour arrives to the Museum

Painting is one of the central aspects of Muntean/Rosenblum's work, but it gets more complex from there: they also create drawings, text collages, photographs, and even large installations with sculptural elements that become the backdrop for performances and film projections. Their paintings mostly feature groups of young people in leisurely situations who seem to be bored or melancholic, fluctuating between the everyday and familiar, and the mysterious and ambiguous. These situations take place in bedrooms, public spaces, or in landscapes. The subjects are positioned to mimic the postures seen in fashion magazines and historical European paintings, from the Renaissance to the 19th century, so that ultimately these unfinished and ongoing situations appear theatrical, like a frame from a film.

Their paintings are framed by white edges as if part of a comic strip, and this sensation is enhanced by adding texts, not directly related to the scene, suggesting new levels of meaning. These phrases and aphorisms are taken from books by prestigious and prolific authors. This serves to literally underline that images should be read or interpreted, and to unseat the represented image from its place of hierarchical importance and replace it with the context of the specific installation.

Muntean/Rosenblum paintings are untitled, although they are identified by the beginning of the phrase that appears in them, in parentheses. The lack of more explanatory titles adds to their ambiguity. There are also colour paintings that are not entirely naturalist, as well as others in black and white. This is another reference to cinema and photography and gives the images, with their artificiality, an ambiguity in time.

Muntean/Rosenblum's work is a kind of image science with no traces of historiographical, formalist, or iconographic simplifications. They are more interested in the meaning of things, considering the power of images and how they transform over time to constitute a labyrinth of collective memory. Muntean/Rosenblum see things from a rational and balanced perspective, combined with a complete identification with a sometimes chaotic and painful present, tightening the binds between reason and imagination. This tension, which gives their work its characteristic irresolution, and even discomfort, is also what makes it so attractive and stimulating.

Gas Natural Fenosa Museum of Contemporary Art (MAC)

The Gas Natural Fenosa Museum of Contemporary Art (MAC) is a multidisciplinary centre for contemporary culture. It is a dynamic, flexible and open space that combines exhibitions with public involvement and participation, in order to stimulate artistic creation in all areas of culture.

The Museum of Contemporary Art (MAC) has been establishing itself over the years not just as an exhibition venue but as a meeting place too for artists, art-lovers and the public, offering an extensive programme of cultural, educational, social and artistic activities that include temporary exhibitions, lecture series and workshops for schools and professionals.

The Gas Natural Fenosa Foundation has shifted its activities towards more social issues, which is why it has grouped all its cultural activities together and integrated them into the museum. The Museum of Contemporary Art is now part of the Gas Natural Fenosa Foundation, joining the ranks of the Gas Museum in Sabadell and the Bolarque Hydropower Plant Museum in Guadalajara.

Imagen

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Muntean/Rosenblum: *Mirror of Thoughts*

Städel Museum



Muntean/Rosenblum, *Untitled ("Knowledge would not necessarily...")*, 2023. Oil, pastel chalks on canvas, 195 x 293 cm. © Muntean/Rosenblum. Photo: Sandro E.E. Zanzinger Photographie.

May 3, 2024

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Muntean/Rosenblum
Mirror of Thoughts
May 3–December 1, 2024

Städel Museum
Schaumainkai 63
Frankfurt am Main 60596
Germany

T +49 69 605098200
F +49 69 605098111
info@staedelmuseum.de

www.staedelmuseum.de
Instagram / Facebook / YouTube / TikTok

The Städel Museum is dedicating a solo exhibition to the artist duo Muntean/Rosenblum, featuring a video work and eleven large-format paintings—including two new works—whose settings are places of transit: shopping centres, airport terminals, hotels, or offices. Immersed in their own thoughts, the young protagonists stare intently at their smartphones or gaze into the distance, are in motion or look out at the viewer with boredom or irritation. Set against anonymous urban backdrops, they look like isolated extras in a contemporary stage play. Strange and at the same time familiar in their composition, the paintings reflect an atmosphere of lethargy and indifference. It is a painful yet liberating moment that marks the transition from adolescence to adulthood—a state of limbo. As if looking through a magnifying glass, Muntean/Rosenblum address central themes of our time: the ambivalence of human existence, the growing insecurity of the individual, and a pervasive sense of transience.

“Non-places underpin Muntean/Rosenblum’s working principle, which is primarily concerned with the possibilities of figurative painting. The artist duo’s decision to draw their motifs from an archive and to abandon their respective identities in favour of a joint signature already poses a challenge to painting, namely the lack of authorship. The concept of non-places is the logical extension of these considerations. As Muntean/Rosenblum take great care to deprive their works of a thematic statement, the viewer is challenged in his or her own perception: What does one want to see? How does one interpret the scene? What is real and what is not? The painting unfolds in this field of tension, between these poles, and is thus perhaps even closer to abstraction than to figuration,” explains Svenja Grosser, Head of the Contemporary Art Collection and curator of the exhibition.

The two artists Markus Muntean (b. 1962) and Adi Rosenblum (b. 1962) have been working together since the 1990s. In their primarily painterly oeuvre, they impressively combine their identities to create one artistic signature. Their work fluctuates between the influences of past art periods and contemporary pop-cultural phenomena. While their compositions are firmly anchored in the pictorial memory of art history, referencing well-known masterpieces from the Renaissance to Modernism, their figures are taken entirely from the present. They stem from an image archive established over many years, fed by photographs from lifestyle magazines, the Internet, and their own photo shoots. The artist duo uses this rich pool of images as a basis for creating peculiar scenes through the medium of painting.

Philipp Demandt, Director of the Städel Museum: “With their interlinking of past and present, the works of the artist duo Muntean/Rosenblum fit perfectly into the Städel Museum’s collection, which spans more than 700 years of art. As a museum of pictures, we focus on painterly positions with regularly changing exhibitions in the Contemporary Art Collection and thus follow how painting expands, redefines itself, and breaks new ground across epochs. The art of Muntean/Rosenblum epitomises this borderline and tightrope walk of painting in contemporary art: drawing on photographs, they create surreal, collaged paintings at the interface between conceptual art and figurative genre painting.”

Recently, Svenja Grosser (b. 1991) took over the position as the new Head of the Städel Museum’s Collection of Contemporary Art. At the Städel Museum since 2018, she has been responsible for the scholarly aspects of the collection as deputy director for the past three years and has curated numerous exhibitions—most recently *Victor Man: The Lines of Life* and *Ugo Rondinone: Sunrise. East*. Her research interests include contemporary painting, 20th and 21st century staged photography, museology, and gender theory.

Director: Dr Philipp Demandt

Curator: Svenja Grosser (Head of the Contemporary Art Collection, Städel Museum)

Press contact: Pamela Rohde (Head of Press and Online Communication)
presse@staedelmuseum.de / T (+49 69) 605098 170

Press material: [here](#) (texts and images for download)



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Muntean/Rosenblum Mirror of Thoughts

3 May 2024–1 Dec 2024



About the Exhibition

As if looking through a magnifying glass, Muntean/Rosenblum address central themes of our time: the ambivalence of human existence, the growing insecurity of the individual, and a pervasive sense of transience. The two artists Markus Muntean (b. 1962) and Adi Rosenblum (b. 1962) have been working together since the 1990s. In their primarily painterly oeuvre, they impressively combine their identities to create one artistic signature. The Städel Museum dedicated a solo exhibition in its Contemporary Art Collection to the artist duo, featuring a video work and eleven large-format paintings.

The settings are places of transit: shopping centres, airport terminals, hotels, or offices. Immersed in their own thoughts, the young protagonists stare intently at their smartphones or gaze into the distance, are in motion or look out at the viewer with boredom or irritation. The work of Muntean/Rosenblum fluctuates between the influences of past art periods and contemporary pop-cultural phenomena. While their compositions are firmly anchored in the pictorial

memory of art history, referencing well-known masterpieces from the Renaissance to Modernism, their figures are taken entirely from the present. They stem from an image archive established over many years, fed by photographs from lifestyle magazines, the Internet, and their own photo shoots. The artist duo uses this rich pool of images as a basis for creating peculiar scenes through the medium of painting: Set against anonymous urban backdrops, the dramatically arranged young people look like isolated extras in a contemporary stage play. Strange and at the same time familiar in their composition, the paintings reflect an atmosphere of lethargy and indifference. It is a painful yet liberating moment that marks the transition from adolescence to adulthood – a state of limbo.

Curator

Svenja Grosser (Head of the Contemporary Art Collection, Städel Museum)

Project Coordinator

Maja Lisewski (Assistant curator, Contemporary Art Collection, Städel Museum)



Featured in
Issue 47

Muntean / Rosenblum

P BY PATRICIA GRZONKA IN REVIEWS | 06 JUN 99

Markus Muntean and Adi Rosenblum have become known principally as curators of the now-defunct project room Bricks & Kicks in Vienna, for which they organised a series of group shows within an architectonic space.

For this show, they collaborated on a series of acrylic paintings - large-scale translations of their earlier book-size images and text collages. The paintings depict young, slim, urban people, staring directly out at the viewer. Their poses and fashionable clothing suggest that they are part of the cultural scene - a typical hip gallery crowd. A young man in a cyclamen-coloured shirt, standing on a balcony above a street jammed with traffic, has the melancholy thought: 'They could arrest me for everything I like about myself'. One looks for connections between text and image, but the images are isolated, without any real narrative context. Absolute meaning is constantly thwarted, throwing the viewer back on random associations. The comic genre with which Muntean/Rosenblum play - which the German-speaking world has a far weaker tradition than in Anglo-Saxon countries - is perfectly suited to dismantling one's expectations of an image's possibilities.

Working like modern copyists who have yet to develop their own art language, the artists attempt to create new applications within existing idioms, and their formal framework makes it possible to reprieve unfashionable stylistic elements and discourses in art. In the gallery entrance stands a three-metre-high, beige-grey, baroque-like cloud constructed of Polystyrene and plaster. Muntean/Rosenblum have reanimated the once universal emblem of apocalyptic threat - the atomic bomb - giving it new meaning. For them, it is not only a lasting symbol of catastrophe anxiety, but also a sign intrinsically connected to 'big' emotions. Presenting a mushroom cloud as a monument in the gallery is of course, self-consciously cynical, but it is also a played-down gesture, as if the potential danger of today's art could easily be extinguished and banned to the realm of fiction.

In the accompanying drawing series 'Needless to Say' (1999), one again encounters lonely protagonists wearing Nikes and T-shirts. This time they are juxtaposed in almost grotesque poses with worn-out technical appliances. A girl kneels as if in prayer by a parked car; with a meaningful shrug of his shoulders, a young man opens an empty refrigerator: these pathetic physical gestures emphasise the banality of the pre-apocalyptic everyday. But as well-informed recyclers of visual codes, Muntean/Rosenblum do not confine their area of observation to conventional everyday terrain, like fashion magazines or advertisements. Rather, they incorporate the sidelined field of Christi iconography - scars and mysterious stigmata on beautiful bodies become profane variations of Christ's wounds. With this shift, which draws on the aesthetic surface of our surroundings, Muntean/Rosenblum pursue a cosmetic form decontextualisation.

Is Muntean/Rosenblu m the Instagram's forerunner?

Stefano Pirovano

*A decade before the social networks were born
Muntean/Rosenblum had questioned the
Instagram format, and predicted its
consequences.*



Muntean/Rosenblum, Untitled [The sky's a cloth...], 2018, oil on canvas, 85 × 126 cm. Courtesy of Muntean/Rosenblum, Galerie Ron Mandos, Amsterdam.

Premise. Muntean/Rosenblum is a single artist. That is to say, as it often happens in these cases (look for instance at Guyton/Walker or Lutz/Guggisberg), the creative identity which bears the surnames of the two people making it counts more than their sum, and it has become something different from them. In a recent chat we had with Adi Rosenblum, she explained us that her relationship with Markus Muntean, who is also her life partner, has generated over the years something that goes beyond the couple itself. 'We are together day and night. We share work and life. I think I could say by now that, at least on a professional level, but maybe on a personal one too, we have become one'.



Muntean/Rosenblum, Untitled („Guilt, by reminding ...“), 1999,
acrylic on canvas, 170 x 135 cm.

The recent solo-shows at MOCAK in Krakow and at MAC in A Coruña have certainly marked a turning point in Muntean/Rosenblum's work. Now the performances that 'happen' with the paintings on the opening day keep on existing independently on Youtube. The cuts on the actors' faces at MOCAK are still bleeding. 'This is something we have been interested in for a very long time. There is a deep similarity between the artistic performances and the videos a lot of people spontaneously upload on Youtube. We believe that to a certain extent this platform can be compared to a museum'. And because the public dimension of the artwork has been food for thought for Muntean/Rosenblum since their debut in the early 1990s, the choice of 'existing' on a platform like Youtube seems to come as the most natural consequence. 'At this point – explains Rosenblum – it is not even necessary to say that we are dealing with art'. They'd rather be part of the flow instead of declaring a specific goal'.

Muntean/Rosenblum. The prophecy.

From Youtube to Instagram, it is but a short step. A more controversial and interesting issue seems to be coming up here. Indeed, whoever is familiar with the pictorial work of Muntean/Rosenblum as well as with the most popular social networking platform of today (at least for the art world) may have noticed a unique similarity. Two decades before Instagram summed up Facebook and Twitter thereby achieving the best combination of image and text, Muntean/Rosenblum had already started working on this very same relationship, with a format which was very similar to the one Instagram is known for. This similarity is even more thought-provoking if you think that, at least until a certain point, Instagram used only square photos.



Muntean/Rosenblum, Untitled („Before we know it...“), 2000,
acrylic on canvas, 200 x 250 cm.

In this respect Adi Rosenblum asserts ‘the market tends to provide a far too narrow interpretation of what painting actually is’. Fair enough. Some social networks show once again how the image goes beyond the essence of the very same piece of art. The Mona Lisa ‘exists’ as an image in books, on the web, and million of people know it through channels and supports which are very different from the museum and the poplar wood panel it was painted on. The object is unique, while the image is endless. The same law generally distinguishes the object-work from its image, which is indeed protected by a bunch of negotiable rights. Social networks are thus a fundamental vehicle for the image before than for the painting, a vehicle ‘that we are interested in experimenting’ explains Rosenblum. However social networks, particularly Instagram, are something that the painting of Muntean/Rosenblum has somehow been able to predict. The arts anticipate the effects: ‘In the past many people noticed how the characters of our paintings rarely communicate with each other, not even when they are grouped together. That same form of individualism we attempted to convey can be currently found in the billion of selfies that are posted everyday on the social media’.

Moreover, Muntean/Rosenblum has always been working on the relationship between text and image too. It seems almost a prophecy. In her painting the word has always been assigned to another space, different from where the scene is happening, that looks like a sort of screen within the painting. Likewise, the social media are designed in a way that until recently you couldn't add any text to the image. Muntean/Rosenblum was already on Instagram even before Instagram was born.

With regards to the written part in the paintings, Adi Rosenblum adds: 'Text is for us what music is for a movie. It places the images within a certain atmosphere thus making them more expressive'. In this instance we have the feeling that it is about the atmosphere of a reality represented as the reality would like to be, rather than how it actually is. There is a delicate sensuality in the characters who 'are posing' like the models of the collective imagination they are based on, that of advertising and fashion shoots. 'Through the magic of painting we can create spaces which are exclusively pictorial, even when they look real' points out Rosenblum. Again, we could say the same about Instagram. Even though in this latter case it's not sure we are dealing with 'white' magic, or 'black' magic.



Muntean/Rosenblum, *Untitled (The Room was a Pool)*, 2005, oil on canvas, 220 × 260 cm. Courtesy of Collezione Giuseppe Iannaccone.

'This aspect has often been misinterpreted. Many people argued that we intended to represent a certain generation, but it isn't so. As a matter of fact, we started in the 1990s and we still paint the same themes. We have never really been interested in the generational debate. Media tend to get rid

of what is old and, on the contrary, prefer to picture youth and its beauty. This is indeed what we have tried, and we do try, to portray. We are interested in the archetypes through which society represents itself, rather than in a single individual or social group‘.

Muntean/Rosenblum and their followers.

As the characters of Muntean/Rosenblum, also Anne Imhof's ones have so far represented adolescents who are distant, unreachable, fickle (perhaps), seductive (surely), sometimes weak, sometimes gifted with extraordinary skills, nevertheless always trapped in the image of them the media convey. But the premise they come from is different, that is a society which is nowadays at the mercy of those contemporary titans that in the 1990s were above all promises of a better future. We could add to this comparison the work of the early works of photographer Ryan McGinley, who also pictured the adolescence, attempting to capture, from within and with a hint of positive nativity, its extraordinary energy.



Anne Imhof, *Angst II*, 2016, performed at Hamburger Bahnhof, Berlin. Ph. Stefano Pirovano.

Compared to McGinley or Imhof, however, Muntean/Rosenblum decides to adopt a traditionally artistic point of view, that of painting which, as such, cannot help but dealing with its own past. ‘There is something in painting that connects you directly to people’s heart, and this is what still fascinates us‘ says Rosenblum. Their figurative choice leads to emotions before than to the intellect. The source is often photography. Up to a certain point Muntean and Rosenblum turned to fashion magazines, then they searched the web, using especially Flickr and getting inspired by private archives. Every now and then they also work with models, selected through casting and agencies. Once the characters and background are chosen, Muntean/Rosenblum draws a sketch on Photoshop, then moves to painting, which at the moment is focused on shades and artificial light. While painting, Muntean/Rosenblum listens to audio-books, from where the titles of the artworks are actually taken.



Muntean/Rosenblum's studio in Wien, 2019.

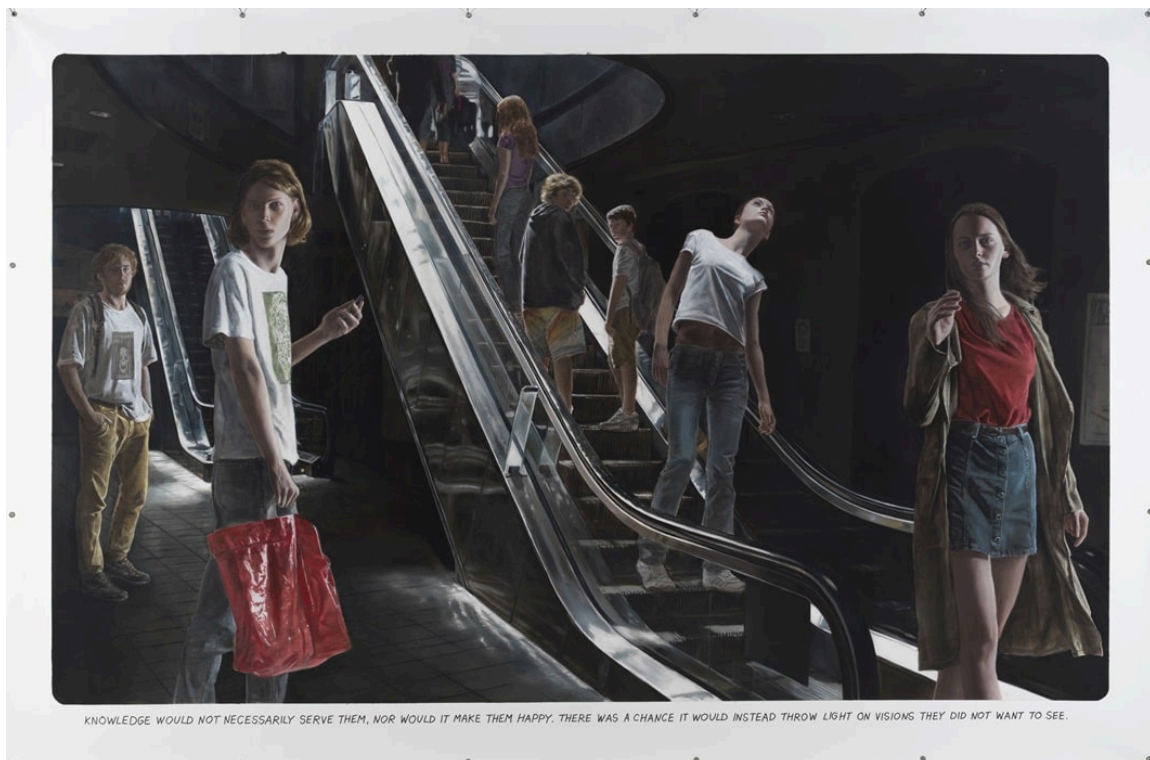
The Art Newspaper from Berlin

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INSTITUTIONS MUSEUMS

MIRROR OF THOUGHTS. Muntean/Rosenblum – Städel Museum | 03.05.-01.12.2024

By SK - Redaktion 18. May 2024 0 437



Städel Museum is currently showing the exhibition **MIRROR OF THOUGHTS** by the artist duo Markus Muntean and Adi Rosenblum. The two artists Markus Muntean (b. 1962) and Adi Rosenblum (b. 1962) have been working together since the 1990s. In their primarily painterly oeuvre, they impressively combine their identities to create one artistic signature. The Städel Museum is dedicating a solo exhibition in its Contemporary Art Collection to the artist duo, featuring a video work and eleven large-format paintings – including two new works – whose settings are places of transit: shopping centres, airport terminals, hotels, or offices. Immersed in their own thoughts, the young protagonists stare intently at their smartphones or gaze into the distance, are in motion or look out at the viewer with boredom or irritation.

*Image above: Muntean/Rosenblum (both*1962), Untitled ("Knowledge would not necessarily..."), 2023, Oil, pastel chalks on canvas, 195 x 293 cm, Jorge M. Pérez Collection, Miami, © Muntean/Rosenblum, Photo: © Sandro E.E. Zanzinger Photographie 2023*

The work of Muntean/Rosenblum fluctuates between the influences of past art periods and contemporary pop-cultural phenomena. While their compositions are firmly anchored in the pictorial memory of art history, referencing well-known masterpieces from the Renaissance to Modernism, their figures are taken entirely from the present. They stem from an image archive established over many years, fed by photographs from lifestyle magazines, the Internet, and their own photo shoots. The artist duo uses this rich pool of images as a basis for creating peculiar scenes through the medium of painting: Set against anonymous urban backdrops, the



dramatically arranged young people look like isolated extras in a contemporary stage play. Strange and at the same time familiar in their composition, the paintings reflect an atmosphere of lethargy and indifference. It is a painful yet liberating moment that marks the transition from adolescence to adulthood – a state of limbo. As if looking through a magnifying glass, Muntean/Rosenblum address central themes of our time: the ambivalence of human existence, the growing insecurity of the individual, and a pervasive sense of transience.

Philipp Demandt, Director of the Städel Museum: 'With their interlinking of past and present, the works of the artist duo Muntean/Rosenblum fit perfectly into the Städel Museum's collection, which spans more than 700 years of art. As a museum of pictures, we focus on painterly positions with regularly changing exhibitions in the Contemporary Art Collection and thus follow how painting expands, redefines itself, and breaks new ground across epochs. The art of Muntean/Rosenblum epitomises this borderline and tightrope walk of painting in contemporary art: drawing on photographs, they create surreal, collaged paintings at the interface between conceptual art and figurative genre painting.'



Exhibition view Muntean/Rosenblum. *Mirror of Thoughts*, Photo: Städel Museum – Norbert Miguletz

Svenja Grosser, Head of the Contemporary Art Collection and curator of the exhibition, adds: 'Non-places underpin Muntean/Rosenblum's working principle, which is primarily concerned with the possibilities of figurative painting. The artist duo's decision to draw their motifs from an archive and to abandon their respective identities in favour of a joint signature already poses a challenge to painting, namely the lack of authorship. The concept of non-places is the logical extension of these considerations. As Muntean/Rosenblum take great care to deprive their works of a thematic statement, the viewer is challenged in his or her own perception: What does one want to see? How does one interpret the scene? What is real and what is not? The painting unfolds in this field of tension, between these poles, and is thus perhaps even closer to abstraction than to figuration.'

The pictorial worlds of Muntean/Rosenblum oscillate between reality and illusion. While the scenes in their paintings appear to be coherent at first glance, certain details reveal that they could never have taken place in this way: the looks and actions of the people portrayed deviate unnaturally from one another, overlap, and do not fit into the depicted situation. This effect results from the process of creating the paintings, in which material from the artist duo's image archive is first combined into a digital collage and then transferred to the canvas. The artist duo rarely stretches the canvases, which can measure up to five metres in width, on frames, but instead pins them directly to the wall. The reference of their compositions to important works of art history is sometimes more, sometimes less obvious, for example through the use of concrete motifs or subtle allusions, such as the use of central perspective as the greatest achievement of painting since the Renaissance.





Muntean/Rosenblum (both*1962), *Untitled ("Nothing fixes a thing...")*, 2010, Oil on canvas, 62 x 60 cm, Private collection, Vienna, © Muntean/Rosenblum, Photo: © Jens Preusse

Muntean/Rosenblum's depictions are not to be understood in terms of photorealism. The framing with a white border, similar to a comic strip, further emphasises the illusionism of painting as a 'window to the world'. In the lower part of the paintings, succinct quotations from literary works by authors such as Fyodor Dostoyevsky, Deborah Levy, Rebecca Solnit, and Virginia Woolf open up a further, fascinating level, which, however, does not establish a direct link between image and text and thus denies any reliable approach to interpretation. Instead, it invites the viewer to fill and expand the space created with his or her own thoughts and associations. The title of the exhibition at the Städel Museum is taken from the work *Untitled ("The earth is literally a mirror ...")* (2019). It is a quotation from Saul Bellow's 1970 novel *Mr Sammler's Planet*: 'The earth is literally a mirror of thoughts. Objects themselves are embodied thoughts. Death is the dark backing that a mirror needs if we are to see anything.'

The places of transit, as they appear in the works in the exhibition *Mirror of Thoughts*, are also referred to as non-places. According to the French anthropologist Marc Augé, they have neither an identity of their own nor a specific history or relationship. They harbour a certain ambivalence, which is reflected in the concept of the works. People who spend time in airports, waiting rooms, tube stations, hotels, or offices, enter into a contract – for example, when they buy a plane ticket. They lose their status as individuals and become guests, passengers, or customers.

The young people in Muntean/Rosenblum's paintings also have no identity. They have been erased in the working process: deprived of their original task, they are not assigned a new action in the new pictorial context either. For example, the posture of the central figure in *Untitled ("What lies ahead ...")* (2023) does not fit into the situation at the airport. In the works of Muntean/Rosenblum, inconspicuous details suggest a transformation from individual subject to pure object. The emergency exit sign in *Untitled ("To hope is dangerous ...")* (2023), for example, is addressed to every person who sees it, and the ATM in *Untitled ("It's the tragedy of ...")* (2016) also

communicates equally with everyone. An enigmatic hotel scene in *Untitled* (“To go wrong ...”) (2010) shows the extent to which the resulting anonymity can be associated with loneliness. Although the two figures are in a private space, there is no personal relationship between them. With the open-plan office in *Untitled* (“Nothing fixes a thing ...”) (2010), the artist duo provides a fitting stage for the objectification of the human being, who here becomes a mere employee without a personality.



Ausstellungsansicht Muntean/Rosenblum. Mirror of Thoughts, Foto: Städel Museum – Norbert Miguletz

Muntean/Rosenblum’s oeuvre also includes performance and video art. The film *This Is Not An Exit* (2017, 3:13 min.), presented in the exhibition, tells the story of how much strength and effort it can take to develop and shape one’s own identity. On an abandoned building with its modern architecture, the artist duo stages two parkour runners who at times appear serious and exhausted. They can be seen during breaks or shortly before their actual activity, accompanied by a specially composed, repetitive soundtrack that reproduces fragments from Gertrude Stein’s novel *The Making of Americans*. Published in 1925, the story focuses on the history and development of American families and individual personalities, making the point that a person’s identity is determined not only by their individual characteristics, but also by the relationships and connections they have with other people.

Markus Muntean (b. 1962 in Graz, Austria) and Adi Rosenblum (b. 1962 in Haifa, Israel) have been collaborating since 1992 and live in Vienna. Their work has been presented internationally in solo exhibitions, including at the Albertina, Vienna, Austria (2022); the Museum of Contemporary Art, Kraków, Poland (2018); the Museo de Arte Contemporáneo, A Coruña, Spain (2018); the Parkview Museum, Beijing, China (2017); the Galerie für Zeitgenössische Kunst, Leipzig, Germany (2007); and the Museo de Arte Contemporáneo de Castilla y León, León, Spain (2006). The artist duo is represented in numerous collections, including those of The Museum of Modern Art, New York, USA; the Museo de Arte Contemporáneo de Castilla y León, León, Spain; the Museum of Contemporary Art, Kraków, Poland; the Museum Kunstpalast, Düsseldorf, Germany; the Tel Aviv Museum of Art, Tel Aviv, Israel; and the Museum moderner Kunst Stiftung Ludwig Wien, the Belvedere 21er Haus, the Albertina, and the Museum für angewandte Kunst, Vienna, Austria.

WHEN?

Exhibition period: Friday, 3. May until Sunday, 1. December 2024



ART IN REVIEW

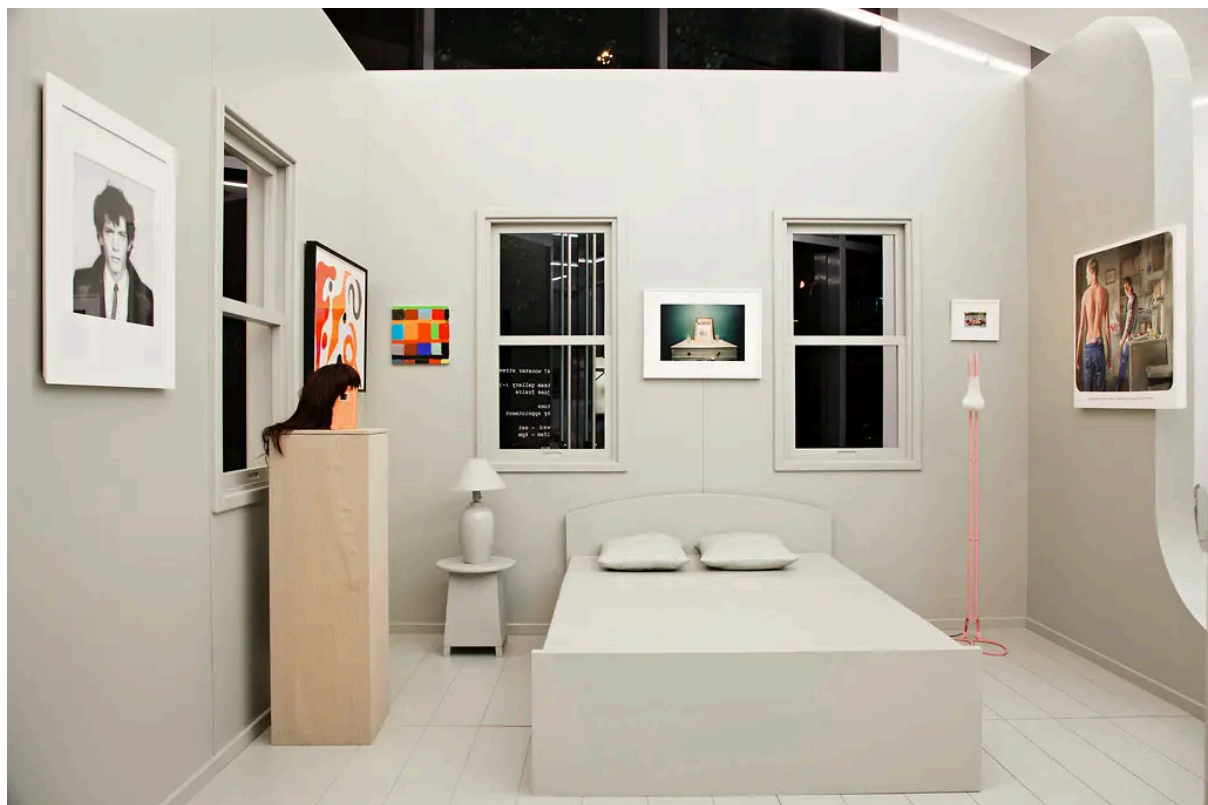
Muntean/Rosenblum: 'The Nemesims'

By Ken Johnson

Nov. 22, 2012

*Team Gallery**47 Wooster Street, SoHo**Through Dec. 21*

The London and Vienna-based team of Markus Muntean and Adi Rosenblum are well known in Europe for downbeat, existentialist one-liners in the form of painted and drawn images with enigmatic captions. A painting in this show pictures two young men standing in a room, one shirtless, in a disconsolate mood. The text reads, "On the surface an intelligible lie; underneath, the unintelligible truth." Along with works by Robert Mapplethorpe, Gilbert & George and Raymond Pettibon, among others, the Muntean/Rosenblum painting is incorporated into a neatly constructed, walk-in installation. Painted entirely battleship gray, it mimics the simplified interior and cutaway exterior of a suburban home from *The Sims*, the popular computer game.



The walk-in installation in the Muntean/Rosenblum show, "Nemesims," at Team Gallery.

Team Gallery, New York

Players of the Sims game move in a virtual environment where by doing the right things they acquire the means to construct, furnish and decorate their own homes and thus increase their general happiness, as quantified by the game's metrics. The fun is not in beating competitors but in the exercise of increasingly complex managerial capabilities. Since the only conspicuous signs of life-enhancing achievement in the gallery are the actual artworks, the whole installation becomes a satire of art collecting as a form of domestic consumerism and, more broadly, of capitalist determinism. But because the message is so obvious and the Sims ecology only superficially evoked, the installation as a whole falls flat. With little conceptual payoff for much investment in the theatrical setting, it is too much and not enough.

A version of this article appears in print on , Section C, Page 32 of the New York edition with the headline: Muntean/Rosenblum: 'The Nemesims'



כולן תמיד יכללו שני תווים: תו העצב ותו הכאב

אני זוכר את הפעם הראשונה שנתקלתי בעבודות של צמד האמנים **מונטאן ורוזנבלום**. זה היה בתל אביב, בגלריה זומר, בראשית שנות ה-2000. הייתי עדין בגיל 20 ומשהו, והיה משהו בעבודות שלהם שמאד דיבר אלי. עבודה אחת זכורה לי במיוחד, אני זוכר שהיא ממש ריגשה אותי. היה משהו בבחור ההוא שישב על קצה המיטה, עם המבט החולמני (או המיוסר), בקומפוזיציה עם השידה והמנורה, שפשוט דיבר אלי וריגש אותי.

גם הטקסט שליווה את הציור היה מובן מצד אחד ועלון מצד שני, בתרגום חופשי משהו כמו "יש אנשים שלעולם לא יבינו את היופי הטראגי של הארעי, הזמני, ושל זה שימות בקרוב". אני זוכר שאפילו השתמשתי בציור הזה לתרגיל באחד הקורסים בבצלאל, כשהיינו צריכים לקחת עבודת אמנות כלשהי ולצלם אותה מחדש או משהו כזה... ואפילו מצאתי את הגלויה ששימשה כהזמנה לתערוכה ושמרתי אותה עד היום (אני מתנצל על האיכות)

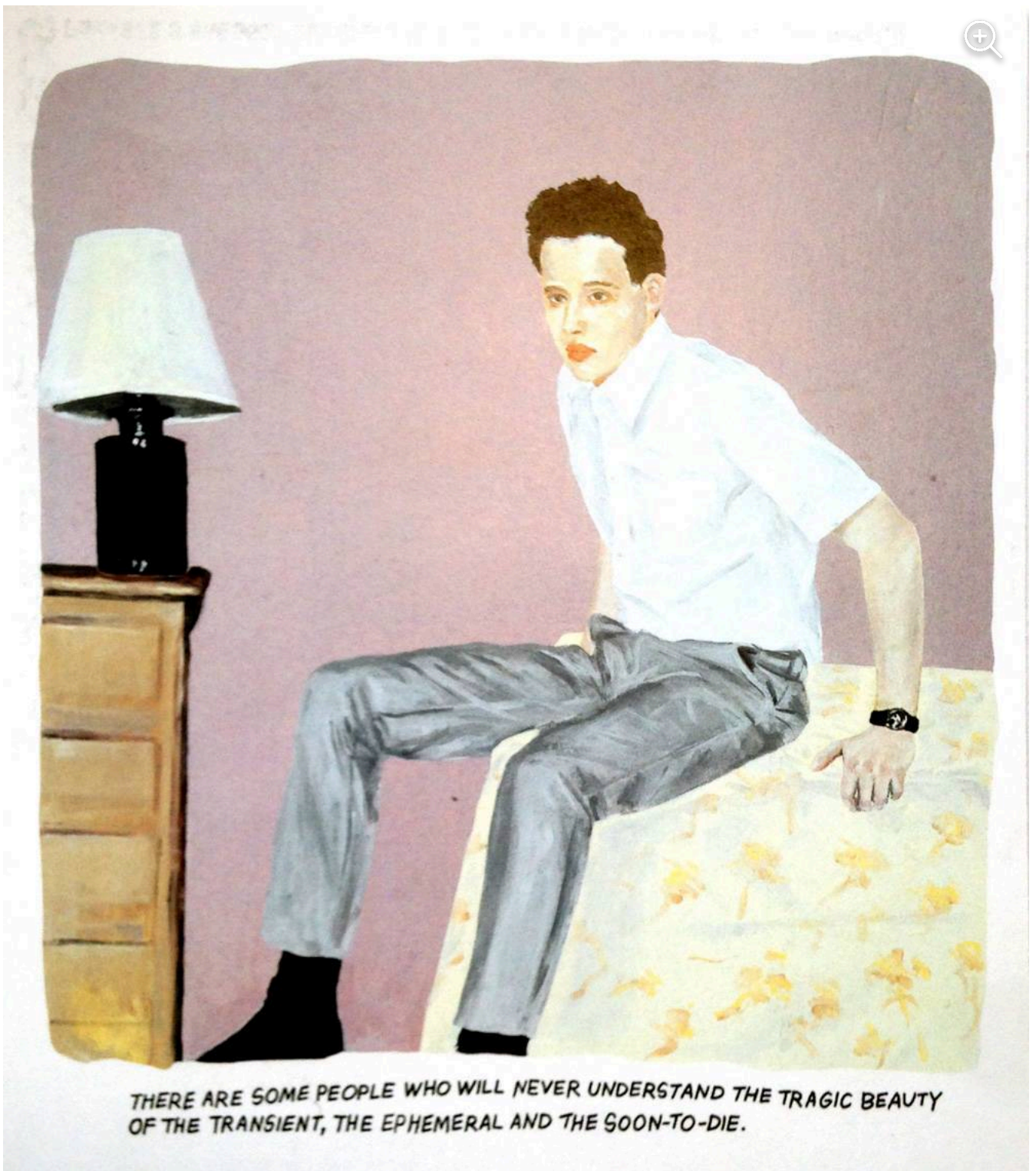
חינור זה מהמצדדארשואה

תכנית להקטבת אקדפאים
להוראת אפנויות



ההרשמה בעיצומה

הפקולטה לאמנויות
המכללה האקדמית בית ברל



לכן, שמחתי לשמוע שביום חמישי הקרוב הם יתארחו במוזיאון תל אביב לאמנות במסגרת סדרת שמונה שיחות עם אמנים על אמנות (ולא רק שהם מגיעים לתל אביב, הם עוברים לגור בישראל, אבל על כך בהמשך). לטובתם צמד אמנים (Muntean&Rosenblum) מי שלא מכיר אפשר לספר שמרקוס מונטאן ועדי רוזנבלום היוצרים בווינה ובלונדון, ושכאמור בקרוב ישתקעו ויעבדו בישראל. מונטאן נולד בגראץ שבאוסטריה בשנת 1962 ורוזנבלום נולדה בחיפה באותה השנה. השניים נפגשו בשנת 1992 במסגרת לימודיהם המשותפים בביה"ס לאמנויות בווינה ומאז הם יוצרים יחדיו במדיות שונות, כגון ציור, צילום, וידאו ומיצב.

היצירות המפורסמות ביותר של השניים כוללות ציורים גדולים בסגנון הדומה לקומיקס, של צעירים בסיטואציות יוצאת דופן. עבודותיהם – שעוסקות במוטיבים כגון נעורים, אסתטיקה, פאתוס, מודרניזציה, ריקנות, ניכור, מלנכוליה וחרדה – מעלות לדיון נושאים הקשורים בחברה ובזהות האישית של הפרט בעידן תרבות

הצריכה. בימים אלה צמד האמנים עובד על סדרת עבודות חדשה בשם **סלפי 2015**, שתעסוק בדיוקן בזווית ראייה של המציאות העכשווית ותציג עבודות המבוססות על תמונות קלפי.



NOTHING IS WHOLLY OBVIOUS WITHOUT BECOMING ENIGMATIC. REALITY ITSELF IS TOO OBVIOUS TO BE TRUE.

שנה לאחר המפגש הוא עם העבודות שלהם, שאלתי את רוזנבלום מה השתנה – מבחינת הנושאים 15 שמעניין אותם לעסוק בהם, אמירה תרבותית, מושאי הציור וכן הלאה.

“לפני הכל צריך לומר שאנחנו שמחים, ואפילו קצת מתרגשים, לשמוע שהמפגש הראשון שלך עם העבודות שלנו ריגש אותך. זה משהו שאנחנו שואפים שיקרה, כי אנחנו עדיין מאמינים שבתמצית, זה תפקידה של האמנות: לרגש ולנגוע, ודרך הנגיעה ליצור דיאלוג, לגרום לצופה לשאול מי אנחנו, ומה ולמה אנחנו עושים, ובאותה שניה באופן אוטומטי השאלה מופנית אליו חזרה.



הצטרפו לקבוצת הווטסאפ השקטה של [פורטפוליו]

עדכונים, הטבות ומידע על כל מה שחשוב ויפה

“כחלק מהקונספט הכללי שלנו, וכדי לשקף את העובדה שבעידן המודרני מושג האני הוא בעצם מאמץ מתמיד של בנייה (constructive effort), יצרנו ישות חדשה. זה ברור שבעידן הנוכחי, שברירים שרירותיים שנראים כבונים ישות, לא מתווספים יותר יחדיו למבנה קוהרנטי לכיד. התוצאה היא מצב של לימבו, שבו האוטנטיות של הפעולה שלנו ושל דרכי ההבעה שלנו מועמדת תמיד בסימן שאלה. אנחנו חושבים שזה חשוב לצלול לתוך הלימבו, ולא לנסות לברוח ממנו. אנחנו מנסים לבוא עם סטרוקטורה של דו משמעות, 'אי בהירות מדויקת', שמרשה לנו להתמודד עם פאתוס ומחווה רגשית ככלי חיוני ומהותי לרגש, ולנגוע בצופה; ובאותו רגע לאתגר ניגודים שכיחים כמו מלאכותי לעומת טבעי, רציונלי לעומת רגשי ועוד”.

מה חשוב לכם במיוחד שיקרה אצל מי שמביט בעבודות שלכם. שיבין? שירגיש? שיתרגש?

“דיברנו על התרגשות, אז כן, חשוב לנו שזה יקרה באופן ישיר ומיידי עם העבודות שלנו, לנגוע, בנקודת 'הכאב הקיומי' של הצופה; הכאב כמקום אחיזה אחרון של האוטנטיות שלא ניתן לזיז. אם מדמיינים פס קול שמלווה את חיינו כמוזיקת רקע עם מלודיות שונות המורכבות מתווים, בכולן תמיד יכללו שני תווים: תו העצב ותו הכאב. זה גם המקום שבו אנחנו מתחברים אחד לשני באופן תת מודע, וכל תחושת שמחה כבר מהולה בו. את הרגע שבו מרגישים את הניגודים כמעט כאחד אנחנו מנסים להעביר.

“בחרנו במדיום הציור הפיגורטיבי דווקא בגלל שהוא נראה לנו מדיום כמעט בלתי אפשרי. פאתוס בציור פיגורטיבי נחשב באמנות המודרנית כמעט לטאבו; הוא מקובל רק במופשט. לעומתו, עולם הפרסום שהוא בעיקרו של דבר 'מכונה' שבאופן מודע מחקה ומזייפת משמעויות ומובהקות, משתמש בדימויים שכאלה. כך נוצר מצב שגורם לאמנים לפקפק ביכולתם של דימויים פיגורטיביים לעורר מצב רגשי. אנחנו מצידנו רוצים לחלץ ולהציל את האפשרות לפנות לצופים במישור זה.

“אפשר לומר שהאמנות המודרנית איבדה לגמרי את הפאתוס שעבר למרחב עולם הבידור והפירסום, אבל אנחנו דוחים הגיון שכזה. אחרי הכל, באופן פרדוקסלי, למרות הריבוי של אמצעי התקשורת, הדבר היחידי שאנחנו באמת שואפים לשתף אחד עם השני הוא הכאב, אבל הוא נשאר דבר שאי אפשר כמעט להעביר במילים, וההתנסות בו נשארת משהו פרטי שלא ניתן לחלוקה עם האחר.”

“החברה הצרכנית העכשווית יוצרת לנו תחליף לאני ‘אותנטי’ ומנסה להתכחש לרגשות ולכאב של הפרט. המציאות התקשורתית בנתה בעבורנו סמלי סטטוס וחוויות אסתטיות שהפכו אצלנו לקיימות מראש: אנחנו מתכננים את חיינו בהשראת תוכניות ריאליטי ורשתות חברתיות, ואנחנו שופטים את חיינו וחייהם של אחרים לפי עקרונות אסתטיים. אנשים מרגישים מחוייבים לחוות כמה שיותר, אף אחד לא רוצה להיתפס כמישהו שחי חיים משעממים.

“המציאות התקשורתית הפכה למרכיב יסודי וחיוני להווייתנו, שבה אנחנו אוספים לשווא ולעד חוויות וניסיונות שמלכתחילה ממוסגרים ומוגדרים בפורמט קיים מראש, וללא הזמן הנחוץ לעכל ולהבין מה באמת קורה. עודף הצבירה של חוויות כאלה כרוך בחוסר משמעות אישית, שמוביל לתחושת שביעות יתר וריקנות. התוצאה היא שעמום אקזיסטנציאלי, ושוב הכאב. בכל פעולה שלנו טמון כבר זרע השעמום שבסופו של דבר יבוט וישתק אותה.”



מה אם כך האלטרנטיבה או התגובה שאתם מציעים באמנות שלכם? ובסדרת העבודות החדשה?

“בציורים ובסרטים שלנו הדמויות מסודרות לרוב כקבוצות של יחידים מבודדים: כל אחד מהם הוא אי, אין ביניהם תקשורת אמיתית, הם כמו קובץ של סלפיז. הדבר היחידי שמשותף להם ושהם מחלקים אחד עם השני

הוא הסביבה הצרכנית עם כל המאפיינים שמוכרים לכולנו. כך, לאחרונה התחלנו לעבוד על סדרה חדשה בשם 'סלפי'. הכוונה שלנו היא להעמיק, לרדת לשורש היחסים והאפשרויות בין הציור לבין המציאות, התרבות, התקשורת העכשווית, בהתמקדות על ז'אנר הפורטרט הנושן, מנקודת מבט שלוקחת בחשבון את המציאות התקשורתית העכשווית.

"אנחנו מציעים לצייר פורטרטים שמבוססים על תמונות סלפי שנלקחו בידי אלה שאותם נצייר. במקום לעקוב ולנהוג במסלול המסורת הקלאסית, להזמין את מושאי הדיוקן לשבת כמודל בסטודיו, אנחנו מורידים בדרגה את המנעד הראשוני של הבחירות האסתטיות שלנו, ומציגים את אלה של המושא עצמו, ותוך כדי כך גם את 'ההתנהגות' התקשורתית שלו.

"נושא הסלפי יהיה גם המרכז במיצבים ובמיצגים בתערוכות הבאות שלנו. ניצור חללים פנימיים, לדוגמה חיקוי חלל של דירה פרטית אחרי מסיבה, שבו במשך הפתיחה יערך מייצג לייב. השחקנים ינועו בתוך המיצב כשעל גופם פצעים ודמעות שמזכירים איקונוגרפיה מציורים היסטורים ויצלמו את עצמם בטלפונים. את הצילומים הם ישלחו מיד וישירות לחשבון אינסטגרם שנפתח במיוחד בשביל זה עוד החודש, יוקרנו בפורמט אינסטגרם על מסך מחשב כחלק מהמיצב, וישארו כווידאו במשך התערוכה".

מעניין אותי גם מה השתנה אצלכם ובאמנות שלכם מבחינת הגיל, בכל זאת אתם מבוגרים (כמו כולנו...)
ב-15 שנה.

"כמו שאמרת, ברור שהתבגרנו ב-15 השנה, ואולי יותר נכון לומר הזדקנו... משהו שאנחנו כולנו, בעצם, לפי האמת הרשמית, אמורים להתבייש בו, מנסים להסתיר ולהכחיש, ולכן נמנעים מלהגיד. זה גם חלק מהאמירה האמנותית שלנו: נסיון ליצור חורים זעירים במרקם של הגירסאות הרשמיות של אמת בחברות קפיטליסטיות מאוחרות.

"באופן עקרוני קשה לנו לדבר על השינויים בעבודה מהזווית של הגיל, בלי להסביר מה שזה עושה לנו באופן אישי. בסופו של דבר העבודה היא גם הדרך, והדרך היא חיינו. יש לזה צד חיובי, מהאספקט של הפרספקטיבה המורחבת, של אפשרות ראייה יותר כוללת, עם הרבה יותר קונטציות וקישורים; מה שהופך הכל להרבה יותר מעניין, אבל באותה מידה הרבה פיכחון, שיכול לעיתים יותר קרובות להיות קשה מנשוא. ויש גם את אבדן התמימות, שכל כך נחוצה כדי להמשיך הלאה, כדי ליצור מוטיבציה עצמית, בייחוד בעולם שנמשל על ידי קריטריונים של השגיות והצטיינות רדודים.

"אבל הנפלא הוא שכאמנים, בתחילת היצירה אנחנו עדיין תמיד מלאי תמימות שכזאת, שוב, לנסות עוד ועוד. מה שנשאר תמיד ביצירה הם הנושאים העיקריים שלה, בווריאציות שונות. אם יוצרים בתהליך מתמשך של שנים, זה לא פלא או מקריות שנושאים מסויימים תמיד נשארים, והם מהות הרוח של היצירה. זה לא אנחנו שמתעסקים בנושאים האלה, הם אלו שמתעסקים איתנו".



I DON'T WANT TO REPEAT MY INNOCENCE, I WANT THE PLEASURE OF LOSING IT AGAIN.

הבנתי שאתם עוברים לגור בישראל ותהיתי מה את יכולה לספר על ההחלטה, ואיך את חושבת היא תשפיע על הקריירה שלכם – לא מבחינה כלכלית אלא דווקא מבחינה אמנותית, יצירתית.

במשך הקריירה שלנו כאמנים, וינה היתה הבסיס ומרכז מגורינו, אבל גרנו במקביל גם בערים אחרות. עד שנת 2010 גרנו גם בלונדון, אז הרגשנו שמיצינו מבחינה אישית את השהייה שלנו שם. האופן שבו לונדון התפתחה בעשור האחרון, עם הכלכלה הטורבו-קפיטליסטית, שהורגשה ביותר גם בתחום האמנות, ממש לא התאימה לנו ולהשקפות חיינו. חזרנו לוינה, 'היפיפייה הנרדמת', אבל הרגשנו שחסרה לנו תחושת הקצת זרות שעוזרת לראות דברים מהצד.

“החלטנו שאנחנו רוצים, ולמזלנו גם יכולים להרשות לעצמנו, לחלק את חיינו עם עוד עיר, תרבות ושפה נוספת, והגשמו חלום ישן לעבור לגור גם בתל אביב. אנחנו מחזיקים בדעה שזאת עמדת מותרות לחיות בין תרבויות ושפות שונות, כי על ידי החילופים ביניהן נוצרות זרות ומוזרות כלפי המילים שגורמות לחשוב הרבה יותר על מהותן. דברים ורגשות מקבלים ישות חדשה ושונה בכל שפה ותרבות.

“כפי שצינתי בתחילת הראיון, חיים שכאלה מדגישים את מצב הלימבו שבו אנו נמצאים ושבנו אנו מעוניינים. שאלת אם החיים בתל אביב יהיו מקור השראה לאמנות שלנו, אבל קשה לי לענות, מכיוון שברור שכל מה שקורה בחיים שלנו משפיע גם על האמנות, אבל מכיוון שאנחנו נמצאים בתוך התהליך אין לנו את הפרספקטיבה של החוץ לשפוט איך.

“אנחנו מקווים בעיקר ששוב זה יאתגר אותנו לשאול שאלות על עצמנו ועל הסביבה. אנחנו מקווים גם, שאולי יתאפשר לנו להגשים פרוייקט להביא משהו מהתרבות ה'רדומה' של וינה, את הקצב היותר איטי, ואת הגישה הקצת מיושנת(שמתחיל להכחד גם שם), כדוגמה למודל אוטופי. בקשר לקריירה שלנו, המעבר לא היה צעד מודע לקראת משהו מסוים, ובעצם מעולם לא תכננו את חיינו מזווית שכזאת. פשוט גם כאן נמשיך ליצור, כמו תמיד נעבוד יום יום, ונמשיך ללכת בדרכנו.”

מה צפוי בהרצאה ביום חמישי במוזיאון?

“החלטנו להמיר את ההרצאה לעבודה בפני עצמה שמדגימה את השיטתיות ואת הפרקטיקה שבהן אנו עובדים. כמו שכבר ציינתי אנחנו מנסים לנסח צורה של דו-משמעויות, אי בהירות 'מדויקת' במבנה רב שיכבתי (מישורי) ואקווילנטי. לכן יצרנו להרצאה מבנה בשלושה קולות: ישנו זרם מתמיד של צילומים המתעדים מגוון רחב של עבודות ללא שיטה כרונולוגית או סדר, אלא מין מיון שרירותי כמו שקורה במכונת חיפוש. אנחנו רוצים להמנע מגישה דידקטית ומעוניינים בתוצאות המקריות שמדגישות את הניגודים ויוצרות סימוכין.

“המישור השני הוא הטקסט המדובר (הקרוא) שמורכב מתצהיר שלנו על עבודתינו, ומציטוט של שלושה טקסטים של סרטים שלנו. הטקסט נקרא בקולות מחשב. שוב, ברובד הזה יש ניגוד בין ההצהרה האישית שלנו לבין הפאטוס של טקסט הסרטים, למרות שהם נקראים באותה מונוטוניה. ולבסוף, כקול שלישי, מוסיקה בעלת אופי מופשט יחסית, אבל עם השפעה רגשית גבוהה.”



THE MYSTERY LIES IN THE HERE AND NOW, THE MYSTERY IS: WHAT IS ONE TO DO WITH ONESELF?



Muntean/Rosenblum

1962

[Follow artist](#)

Lives in Vienna, AT. Works in Vienna, AT.

Represented by: [Galerie Ron Mandos](#)

Markus Muntean was born in 1962 in Graz, Austria. Adi Rosenblum was born in 1962 in Haifa, Israel.

Muntean/Rosenblum live and work in Vienna, the city where they met while studying at the end of the 1980s. The artists have collaborated since 1992.

Large-scale painting is one of the core aspects of their practice. However, they often expand their work by creating large installations with sculptural elements where performances are staged or films screened. In addition, they make drawings as well as collages with texts and photographs.

In their work, Muntean/Rosenblum mix references to art history and present-day popular culture. They mostly depict groups of apparently lethargic or melancholic young people in idle situations, which are either ordinary and everyday or mysterious and ambiguous. The often-dreamy scenes take place in rooms, public spaces or landscapes as if part of a film, presenting unresolved situations in the making. The characters seem to adopt postures copied from fashion magazines, or from paintings originating from the renaissance to the nineteenth century. Their work is frequently accompanied by captions or texts not-directly relating to the

^ [Show less](#)

Artworks by Muntean/Rosenblum



Untitled („W...
2020



Untitled („M...
2023



Untitled („As...
2023



Untitled („An...
2023



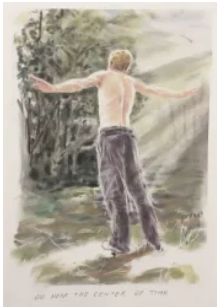
Untitled („Th...
2023



Untitled („Pa...
2023



Untitled („It i...
2023



Untitled („Go...
2020
€ 1.000 - € 2.000

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ראו את האור: צמד האמנים מונטאן/רוזנבלום במוזיאון ת"א

צמד האמנים שמציגים עתה במוזיאון, מציירים דמויות צעירות מעולמות הפרסום והאינסטגרם. "אנחנו מנסים לשים מראה מול התחושה שהיום כולם מחפשים אותנטיות, אך נראים אותו דבר"

רעות ברנע 28.08.19 09:09

תגיות: [אמנות](#) [פנאי](#) [תערוכה](#) [מוזיאון תל אביב](#) [רותי דירקטור](#)

[מונטאן/רוזנבלום](#) [מרקוס מונטאן](#) [עדי רוזנבלום](#)

הדבר הראשון שמבחינים בו בציוריהם הענקיים של מונטאן/רוזנבלום הוא האור הבוקע מהם. אף שהם דו־ממדיים כמו בקסם הם שולחים אל הצופה קרני אור בזהירות שגורמות לו לסינוור רגעי, דומה לזה שחוות הדמויות המצוירות.

העבודות שלהם, שמתארות סצינות שונות של צעירים בסיטואציות אורבניות, מוצגות בימים אלה במסגרת התערוכה "יש עידן חדש: על הרוחני באמנות" במוזיאון תל אביב שאצרה רותי דירקטור.

קראו עוד בכלכליסט:

- [כולנו רקמה אחת: Adish הוא מותג אופנה ישראלי-פלסטיני יפהפה](#)
- [ביטן ואקדח פלסטיק: כך ממסמרים נאמנות](#)
- [בציר טוב: בוגרי אמנות בולטים ב-2019](#)

מונטאן/רוזנבלום הם צמד אמנים: מרקוס מונטאן (Markus Muntean) האוסטרי ועדי רוזנבלום הישראלית במקור (שניהם בני 57, זוג גם בחיים), שחיים ועובדים יחד בווינה מאז 1992. העבודות שלהם, הן רובן בקו אחד מבחינה טכנית ותמטית ומהתחלה הם עובדים כצמד, כאשר שניהם יוצרים ומציירים על הבד בו זמנית, ללא חלוקה מסוימת של תחומי אחריות.



ציור של מונטאן/רונזבלום. "יצרנו פרסונה משותפת, ולרוב אנחנו עובדים בארבע ידיים"

"שנינו מאמינים בציור הפיגורטיבי" מסבירה רונזבלום, "וחושבים שיש לו הצדקה גם היום בעידן הצילום המיידי. מהרגע הראשון החלטנו לחפש דרך לשתף פעולה באופן שיאפשר לנו להתרחק קצת מהקונספט של 'האמן הגאון'. ברגע שאנחנו יוצרים פרסונה משותפת, שהיא לא אמיתית, יותר קל לנו לצייר ציורים פיגורטיביים. ברגע שאנחנו יחד, יותר קל לנו להביא לידי ביטוי את הוירטואוזיות הכרוכה בציורים הללו".

מה מנחה אתכם מבחינת נושאים בציורים?

רונזבלום: "מאז שנות ה-90 יש הרגשה כאילו אסור להביע רגשות גדולים בציורים. אנחנו החלטנו ללכת דווקא בקו הזה, לנסות לפנות לקהל שלנו בצורה רגשית. בגלל שמהתחלה אנחנו עובדים בעיקר על דימויים שניכסנו מפרסומות ומגזיני אופנה, הרשנו לעצמנו לייצר מהם פאתוס. עם השנים, דרך האינטרנט, התחלנו לעקוב אחרי הצורה שבה אנשים מציגים את עצמם. זה היה עוד לפני עידן הסלפי והחלטנו לשים מראה אל מול התחושה הזו שכל אחד עסוק בעצמו. מצד אחד כולם נראים אותו דבר ומצד שני כולם מחפשים אותנטיות, כך שהמלאכותיות הופכת להיות האותנטיות היחידה שנשארה".

למה הדמויות הן תמיד של צעירים ובני נוער?

"ככה אנחנו רואים את הדמות הקולקטיבית שכל הזמן מציגים לנו בכל מקום. האימג'ים ששולטים היום הם של אנשים צעירים. אנחנו מתעסקים בעבודה שלנו המון עם יוטיוב, למשל, ומדהים לגלות כמה מעט אנשים לא־צעירים הם חלק מהפלטפורמה הזאת. אנחנו בעיקר מתעסקים בעניין הסימבולי, לפיו כולנו מתבגרים נצחיים".

לצעירים היום יותר קשה מלצעירים של פעם?

"אולי יותר קשה להם כי הם באמת עמוסים כל הזמן בדימויים ומאוד קשה להם להמציא משהו חדש. יש קושי לשמור על ערך כי הכל אפשר להשיג בכל רגע. ההגדרה של אושר היא כמעט בלתי אפשרית עבורם ובגלל זה בעיקר אני מרחמת עליהם אבל אני לא חושבת שהם בהרבה רחוקים מאתנו, הדור שנולד בשנות ה-60 אבל אולי בגלל שבתור אמנים אנחנו תמיד מרגישים אוטוטיידרים, במובן החיובי, מעולם לא היינו במיינסטרים, יותר קל לנו להזדהות איתם".

התהליך בו עובדים הזוג מתחיל באיסוף של תמונות וטקסטים.

"יש לנו ארכיונים של אימג'ים ושל טקסטים, ואז אנחנו מרכיבים במחשב קומפוזיציה מצילומים שמעניינים אותנו בעזרת פוטושופ. אחר כך אנחנו מקרינים את הדימוי על בד ומציירים קווי מתאר, ובגלל שהציורים בדרך כלל מאוד גדולים, אנחנו כמעט תמיד עובדים במקביל, בארבע ידיים. פיתחנו טכניקה שבה אנחנו מציירים את שכבת הציור הראשונה בשמן ואז עוברים על כל הציור עם גירים פסטליים. האבקה של הגיר שמעובדת עם דבק מאפשרת לנו לסיים את הציור הרבה יותר מהר וגם האור נופל עליה בצורה אחרת, כך שדמויות נראות מוארות מבפנים".



עדי רוזנבלום ומרקוס מונטאן. חיפוש אחר משמעות בעולם שטחי

צילום: גיא יחיאלי

by Taboola

שלוש שאלות וגלה כמה יעלה לכם לעבור לענן

|OMC Cloud

ממומן

ימי המכירות של פולקסווגן מסחריות חוזרים!

|Volkswagen Commercial

ממומן

בגיל 52 ביטלנו את ביטוח הבריאות הפרטי - מסתבר שיש אפשרות חסכונית יותר

פרקטי - התנהלות כלכלית נבונה

ממומן

מה משמעות הטקסט שבתחתית כל ציור?

"זה תמיד מגיע באופן ספונטני, אנחנו מחפשים משהו שמעניין ונוגע בנו, ולעתים מערבבים שני טקסטים יחד. הרבה פעמים הם לקוחים מספרות גבוהה שאנחנו מאזינים לה בספרי שמע בזמן העבודה, ואנחנו מוציאים אותם מההקשר".

איך כל זה מתקשר לנושא הרוחני באמנות בו עוסקת התערוכה?

"אחד הדברים שמעסיקים אותנו הוא ההתמודדות של הפרט בעולם פוסט־מטפיזי ופוסט־דתי, החיפוש אחרי עומק ומשמעות בעולם שחי רק על פני השטח. הסתירה בכך שאין משמעות קוהרנטית לקיום אלא רק שברים שלה. העובדה שבמיוחד בעשור האחרון יש געגועים וצורך לחוות רגשות 'עמוקים' יותר הפכו לגורם כלכלי ממדרגה ראשונה עם כל תנועות הוולנס (Wellness) שהן בעצם דרך של השיטה הקפטילסטית לנצל את הריק הנפשי שלנו כדי שוב למכור לנו את מה ש'חסר' לנו".

In the Studio Muntean/Rosenblum, Vienna



»Painting is our obsession.«

Markus Muntean and Adi Rosenblum have been an artist duo since 1992. As conceptual artists, they bring together motifs from art history and popular culture in their drawings, paintings, performances, and installations. Here they continually play with lifestyles of a youthful society, one that never wants to grow old. By appropriating and interweaving images from different sources, they critically reflect, especially with figurative painting, a (media) world of influenceability.

Adi, Markus, how did you get into art?

Adi: I have been painting since I was a child and was always fascinated by art ... So it was a romantic idea from the beginning to become a painter, inspired by masters like Caravaggio. I grew up in Israel and there were very few originals to see in museums, there weren't that many travelling exhibitions then either, but being able to see them was very important to me. From the beginning, figurative painting was in the foreground for me. There were times when I tried something else, but in the end I decided on figurative painting. Figurative painting creates a specific meta-level for me – the painted view can be more emotionally moving and mysterious than any real situation.

Markus: For me, there are two main strands; on the one hand, the realization very early on of not wanting to fulfill social expectations and seeing oneself as an outsider in a positive sense, and on the other hand, an early

Collectors Agenda



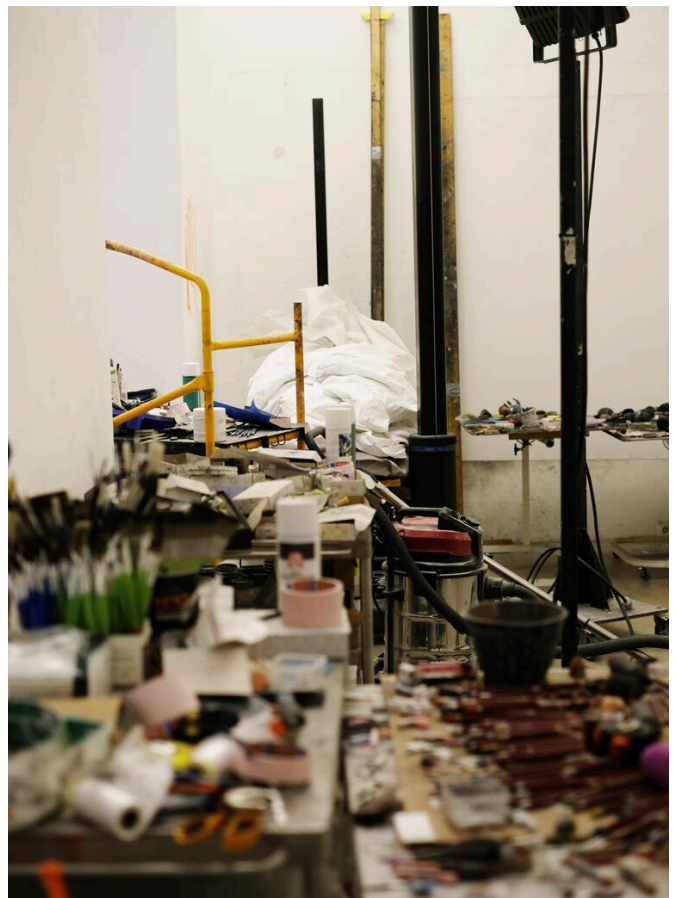
You studied at the Academy of Fine Arts in Vienna and joined forces as an artist duo in 1992. How did that come about?

M: We shared a studio and there was this period of working side by side, where everyone produced works for themselves. But then it slowly grew together organically, so that one intervened in the other's work or that there were overlaps. It was largely a case of luck, although there were discussions on the approach to deciding upon the compositions, but apart from that there was no disagreement, and that's what made the collaboration possible in the first place.

A: When we met, it was also the great love and we were interested in the same thing and had common goals.



Collectors Agenda



When people talk about you, they often say “one work two artists”, “four-handed painting” or “double authorship”. What is your position on this?

A: We studied at the same time, in the late 80s, and at that time there was this cult of painter princes and we thought it was ridiculous. In the 90s, art was dominated by conceptual approaches and painting had rather taken a

M: I'm amazed at the tenacity of these artists' work, such as the spontaneity, the pouring over the canvas. This new persona is an evolved structure for us and also fits into our concept, like the questioning of the contemporary ego structure, what is the ego anyway? Because we paint portraits, but are they really portraits ... It's a game with identities and we have developed a signature style that is practiced by two people.

Does that mean there was never any thought of a loss of identity for you?

A: Not really, otherwise we couldn't have done it. The bottom line is that they are choices and I even believe that ego is an impediment to good art and that collaboration helps you get away from that ego trip quickly and you focus more on what is really essential. Each of us knows where our strength lies, which means it's okay to admit that the other person is better at certain things, and that's a good thing. We know our capacities and we are confident enough. We have never felt that we have to realize ourselves in the sense of: This is ME. We have never been interested in that. As Markus said, it's partly a romantic idea of what the artist is or does. You create this persona, even if you work alone, and we do it together.

M: That's right, there was never much doubt. Of course there is a margin, but there was never a loss of identity. Of course there is an identity, but it's composed of many layers and that's what makes it interesting. We've created this persona, and so a signature, an individual style, which means there's the two of us, so to speak, and then there's this style that exists and that also has an identity. It's more like there's an identity that comes with it.



This Is Not an Exit , 2018, MAC Museo de Arte Contemporáneo, A Coruña, Spain



People are at the center of your work, but it is said that you only show perfect and beautiful people. Isn't there rather a criticism of our society behind that?

A: That is definitely critical. We reflect our collective visual self-perception. But this supposed similitude is only one level, on the other hand there is something that painting can do, it evokes a break and brings a depth. That's why we use painting and not photography. So the figures radiate a melancholy and forlornness. The principle of ambiguity is important here. What we've been trying to portray since the earliest times is the feeling that the whole society is becoming more infantile. Our whole culture is becoming an adolescent culture. It's interesting how people on Instagram are jumping in front of the camera like little kids and doing stupid things ... We live in a society of perpetual adolescents.

M: But also if you look at the history of art, almost all the figures that are painted are young and pretty, it's always been like that, we didn't invent this selection of beautiful people, we perform it in a critical form.

What exactly does that mean for your art, to pick up on and address this perpetual youthfulness?

M: This aspect of the repertoire also serves to draw a line of demarcation between our work and any form of "genre painting". Therefore, the backgrounds we use are so important to us. We have our repertoire of urban and landscape elements, but they are also individual to us and at the same time they're not. Also with the figures, they are portraits, individuals are clearly identifiable, with individual traits, but also certain stylizations. The youth is to be understood in this direction and not an attempt to appropriate a youth culture, but to find a contemporary formulation of figurative painting. We see ourselves as conceptual artists. That is why we use contemporary visual material that provides this form of smoothed youthfulness. However, we try to produce an opposing quality in the material itself and introduce motifs of transience and "memento mori". As Paul Celan said: You cannot reach across time, you can only reach through it.

A: In our post-religious and turbo-capitalist society, transience is almost wiped away, as if it goes on forever. The ageless and youthful, as in the images on social media, even through the use of filters, is like a shield or armor against impermanence, as if one were no longer dying. You're not really living and you're not really dying, and that's so the present *zeitgeist*. It is a basic mood that is conveyed and that's the feeling that we want to take up and convey further in our art. In this contemporary visual communication, the perfection of the body and the smooth surface are in the foreground; but all the more one seals the inside – apparently one no longer needs to be afraid of death.

Collectors Agenda



reduce the spectrum within that.



You express your themes, such as that of transience, primarily through figurative painting. How do you do it, what approach do you follow?

A: The discourse on figurative painting is unfortunately very limited. Only the “what” is discussed, but the “how”, which is inextricably linked to it, is hardly addressed; at best, it is mentioned as a secondary phenomenon.

M: That's true, and unfortunately, it is discussed the least. The transformative power of figurative painting is totally underestimated, unfortunately. It is important to us what direction to take in the activity, what to use, what style, the gesture ... Painting is our obsession.

A: We did a lot of experiments and developed our stroke together. About seven years ago, we developed our own form of mixed media, combining oil and pastel chalk in a novel way. The powder character of the chalk enhances the reflective power of light and acquires new intensities of illuminative effect.

overall staging.

How can we imagine your working process?

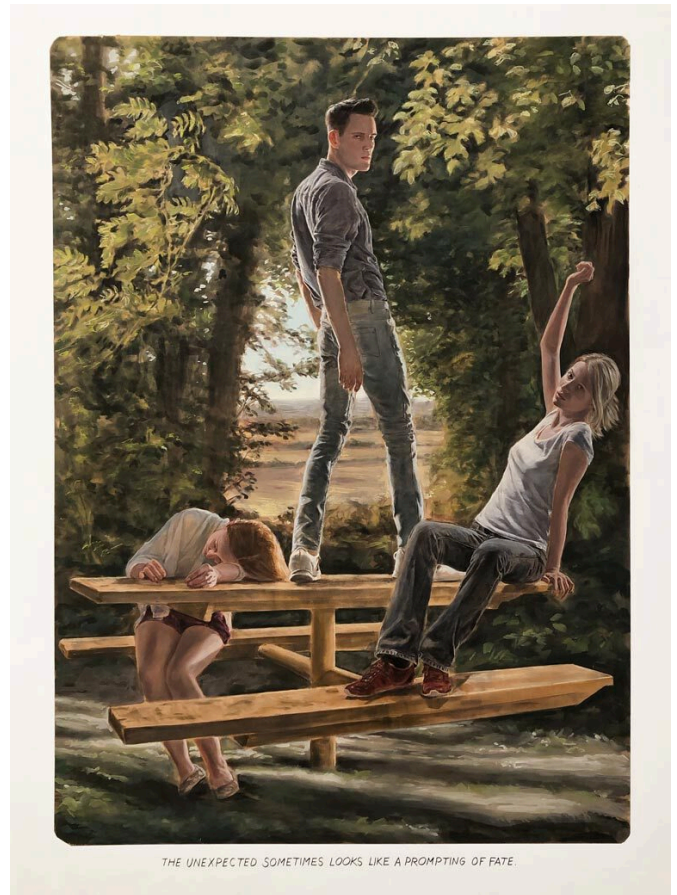
A: We are almost always working, researching and creating the image compositions on the computer is as much a part of the working process as the actual painting itself. We also deal with the many time phenomena on social media, how people represent and see themselves. These various streams and appropriated images are sources for image compositions. But we also do our own photo sessions with models in the studio and create our own staging. When we decide to paint a picture, we have a framework idea of the scenario, an assemblage of different images.

M: Ideally, it's mixed and we combine our studio shots with found footage, because certain things are almost impossible to recreate. We then make one or two sketches on the computer and project these rough outlines onto the canvas. And then we start painting together, meaning one starts and the other joins in. There are four or five phases and we take turns. So we tend to work in shifts.

A: Exactly, or one mixes the color and the other applies it and vice versa.



Untitled („Each word is a chemistry...“), 2018, Pastel chalks, oil /canvas, 212 x 286 cm



Untitled („The unexpected sometimes...“), 2022, Pastel chalks, oil /canvas, 193 x 141 cm

Your paintings don't have titles, but there are text fragments in the paintings. What meaning do these have?

M: The text is neither a title nor an explanation of the picture context. It forms its own level and is intended to open up a further field of connotations.

A: We archive a great many sentences from books and films, sentences that interest us. The sentences are meant to convey a certain atmosphere, a specific "flavor" that is situated between poetic observations and general aphoristic wisdom about life.

M: Ultimately, art serves to make life more bearable. Ultimately, art is about, because otherwise it is really pointless, moving people and triggering emotions in a justifiable contemporary form and in this sense enriching life.

Staying with consuming art, what is it like when your work leaves the studio? Do you have expectations?

A: It would be bad for us if we didn't have the opportunity to exhibit. But in no case do we want to be admired. That is not important to us. In fact, when we finish a painting, it's gone from us ...

M: It pleases me when I see a painting again after ten years, but it's not that I'm so interested in the fate of the works. In the end, you make art for yourself, and fortunately, as in our case, it appeals to people.



Untitled („We don't get to...)', 2015, Pastel chalks, acrylic / canvas, 285 × 405 cm



THERE ARE DEAD STARS THAT STILL SHINE BECAUSE THEIR LIGHT IS TRAPPED IN TIME. WHERE DO WE STAND IN THIS LIGHT, WHICH DOES NOT STRICTLY EXIST?

Untitled (There are dead stars...), 2018, Pastel chalks, acrylic / canvas, 280 x 380 cm

In retrospect, do you think earlier work of yours is looked at differently today?

A: Definitely. I think that we have really anticipated certain social developments in our work.

M: One of the main issues has always been that the characters are so isolated, each standing alone, they don't communicate and seem lost.... And now? Today you sit at a table with friends and everyone has their smartphone in their hand. Now this question doesn't come up at all. The question, and the accusation, have disappeared.

A: Much of the negative criticism that came our way at the time implied that we were formulating a fleeting zeitgeist phenomenon with an imminent expiration date. In retrospect, it turned out that we were dealing with lasting mass phenomena that are still shaping our present.

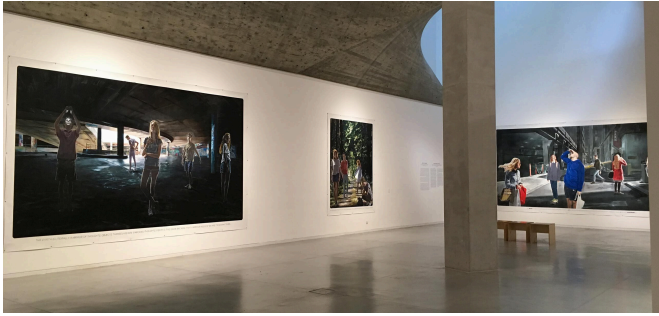
What are you currently working on, what can we look forward to?

A: We are always in a process of creation and trying out things like dealing with meta-humans, so virtual computer-generated figurations, but that is still a very new idea.

M: We had constantly emphasized that portrait commissions are not compatible with our concept. But now we have developed an approach that allows us to do just that: it is based on the concept of an extended "selfie material" that the client provides us with. We then incorporate this into our painterly world and the resulting images fit seamlessly into our other group compositions.

A: And we are looking at the exhibition at the Albertina, *Hauenschild Ritter – Muntean/Rosenblum*, which opens in October. We're excited about that, and hopefully it will be an interesting show with a good mix of paintings and drawings from different periods. There will be works from the collection, international loans and also completely new works.

Collectors Agenda



A New Age: The Spiritual in Art, Tel Aviv Museum of Art, 2019



Glaube, Liebe, Hoffnung, Kunsthaus Graz, 2018

Interview: Marieluise Röttger

Photos: [Maximilian Pramatarov](#)

Links:

- [Muntean/Rosenblum's website](#)
- [@appropriateallemotions](#)



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