

Galerie Francesca Pia

Emil Michael Klein

Mono Cross

Opening Thursday February 20, 6–8pm

February 21 – April 09, 2020

Tue–Fri 11am–6pm

Sat 11am–5pm

Galerie Francesca Pia is pleased to announce the third solo exhibition of Emil Michael Klein at the gallery. The exhibition *Mono Cross* includes twelve new paintings.

Emil Michael Klein was born in 1982 in Munich, he lives and works in Zurich. Most recently, Klein has had solo exhibitions at Federico Vavassori Milan (2019), the Kunsthalle Zürich (2017) and the Museum Bellpark, Kriens (2017).

Selected group exhibitions include the Contemporary Art Center, Riga (2019), Istituto Svizzero di Roma, Rome (2018), Braunsfelder, Cologne (2018), Museum für Neue Kunst im Augustinermuseum, Freiburg (2017), Istituto Svizzero, Milan (2016), Kunsthaus Hamburg (2016), Stella, Madulain (2016), Astrup Fearnley Museet, Oslo (2014), Centre d'Art Biel, Biel (2013), Fri Art, Fribourg (2013), Federico Vavassori, Milan (2012), La Salle de Bain, Lyon (2012), Kunsthal Charlottenborg, South Galleries, Copenhagen (2011), Kunsthaus Glarus (2010), New Jersey, Basel (2009), MAGASIN CNAC, Grenoble (2008), Tbilisi 4, Georgia (2007).

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Until A New Sun Rises
On Emil Michael Klein's New Works

Our homes will enclose us
until our New Sun rises.

These words belong to a longer message from the Aztecs' leader, Cuauhtémoc, in his surrounding to Hernan Cortes, in 1521. This New Sun that will come is not the start we know. This New Sun has been imagined by many million readers surely as intense, intense in its rage, in its violence, in its force, a force capable of reversing the wrong doings that cause the loss of an Empire by the force of another... We read these words and our senses sense a red as intense as madness, capable of radiating life to death so that a new life begins. But this is only a chimera: a thinking just based on dialectical antagonisms between elements, elements and forces, forces and forms, forms and contents... A thinking that sees in contraries power, that sees the red of Cortes as the cross of the Catholic Spain ruling over the Sun of Cuauhtémoc, now just pale light with the mere function of creating days that can be distinguished from nights.

But imagine the Sun that Cuauhtémoc is conjuring as a new grace: attention. It is easy to imagine unbelievable intensity of the curiosity, the obsessive interest that possesses all the organs in encountering these humans coming from afar to fight and to take. So if the Sun should come again—first and foremost to satisfy this curiosity, to elevate you to a state of grace from where—like a deity—you could produce the rarest and purest form of wisdom capable of allowing for a new chance, one that is not oriented towards destruction, but towards worlds unknown under the new light.

Attention is a primary element in the work of Emil Michael Klein. Simone Weil wrote: „Attention, taken to its highest degree, is the same thing as prayer. It presupposes faith and love. Absolutely unmixed attention is prayer. If we turn our mind toward the good, it is impossible that little by little the whole soul will not be attracted thereto in spite of itself.“ It is undeniable that in our officially secular Western societies the rise of interest towards meditation has to do with the possibility of exchanging concentration with prayer. A prayer, of course, has the goal just to talk to ourselves and not to God. An act, that, if you want, has turned concentration—and attention into a commodity—the trait that marks an idea of success, not because your prayers are answered but because you are able to be in control and command of your life. This gesture of turning attention towards us has been greatly received and exaggerated by digital technology and culture where the phrase „pay attention“ has never seemed more apt. So, there is a new revolution that is not political in the sense of the rights it claims, but in the traits it puts forward. The need to take attention to the outside, the importance of making us attentive to substances that are remote from the concrete things, desires or intentions. That's why, I think, these new works of Emil Klein are exalted. Yes, they are. They need to be. The elements we see in them we recognize from previous paintings, previous states in his work, and yet, here the line and the use of color, and how they affect the composition on canvas take something of an erudite voice. It is as if these paintings know deeper. What is it that they know better? That art has been historically the ground, the language where to present intuitions so profound that they slowly made their way into our minds, making them move in ways that affect the development of ideas, the production of a whole new episteme, a new way of knowing. Imagine how many scientists now are certain that there is an interspecies communication, and yet this communicative exchange cannot happen with words. How else if not minds and intelligences connecting in ways unknown but real can this be thinkable and possible? And so, a certain take on painting, already historically, has been invested in conveying that art is a language bound up with

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transcendence. Bond to one another, having as a function to give pure expression to ‚otherness‘.

There is nothing mystical about it, yet it is. In these works of Emil Michael Klein inhabits a reflection on the final consequences of abandoning a transcendent image of language. This abandonment is now not a trait of spirituality—or not only—but a trait painting certainly can share, for the first time in history with science, with deep learning and all those doing research on AI. It is impossible, to uphold meaning in any art without a wager on „real presence“, on a cosmos of intelligible interconnectedness. And this is the presuppose of many—from political philosophers like Hannah Arendt that elucidated on amor mundi—until all science that encourages an imagination of active and productive intelligences in non-human forms of life.

Chus Martínez