

“Stimulus” – at the Art Institute Vienna

Curated by Synne Genzmer; January – February 2018

Press Release:

The small office of Doctor Gerald Matt underwent an artistic intervention of two balanced paintings in a distinctive play of light and proportion which break the aesthetics of the room while maintaining a contextual relationship to artworks they half cover. They tell a story of gay culture, superficial sexual “liberation”, fetishism for male dominance within the gay community and how some people’s modern found passion for the alpha role behind closed doors reflects on politics, society and culture all brought together by humour, absurdity and historical references. The figural and contextual aspects of the works aren’t presented as statements or judgments; they are merely there to present the viewer with a colourful spectrum of symbolism and characters. A direct statement, conclusion is not presented; but rather an encouragement of collective dialogue and analysis going beyond ourselves and remaining objective and courageous.

Shedding light on social adaptations of pornography, of the recently reborn obsession with physique (especially within the gay community), of religious institutions, the paintings “a tapestry of angry penises” and “concerned phallus” create a closed mutual mirroring relationship while remaining faithful to a set of ground policies regarding aesthetic, technique and elements.

Depictions of the phallus and phallic symbols are not strangers to artistic expression. Ever since Egyptian gods and Greek mythology introduced us to the notion of an oversized penis (or in the contrary minuscular one) symbolizing mostly fertility we have come long ways to re-contextualize that within the ever-changing role of pornography and eroticism. Today, an abundant fetishization of genital size reflects a deeply influenced generation that brings forth a very primitive set of values. With the help of social platforms everyone becomes a pornstar in newly built online communities like Tumblr; exciting as that may seem, a lot of questions must be asked regarding how the recently born generation perceives one another and themselves sexually and if masculine stereotypical ideals are heading in the wrong direction. Fundamentally the paintings try to question and explore if there is a visible wall between sexual practice and social as well as political existence and what, dare I say, profound significance do genitals have in our western culture.

Text by Daniel Moldoveanu

