

GALERIE MAÏA MULLER

FRITZ BORNSTÜCK

J.W.D.

10.06.2017 – 22.07.2017



The objects used in Fritz Bornstück's still lifes gain new life as the artist reuses and recycles the debris of popular culture in a practice he describes as cultural recycling. Bornstück (b. 1982) is a scavenger, pulling materials from wide and varied sources – such as film noir, found footage, his immediate surrounding or even private trash – and puts the contents of his ongoing collection in formal discussions to produce dynamic aesthetic friction. The used materials communicate the artist's creative context in translation, appropriating their sources and reinterpreting them to produce an associative space for the viewer. Traces remain as the landscapes and places, which are depicted, are abandoned. Silence, Light, Reflections, stories and history are calling to be unraveled.

Fritz Bornstück **Somnambulant Bastard**

Everybody has gone, the party is over. But there are traces. Leftovers, which prove things have happened and that people have been there.

Fritz Bornstück's new exhibition at Galerie Mikael Andersen brings into play one of the most significant disciplines in the tradition of Western painting: the still life. As a whole, the paintings form an orgy of scraps and junk: light bulbs, matches, bottles, fruit, cables, a mug. Both quiet and busy at the same time, these assemblages are what is left when the focus is taken elsewhere; the often ironically displaced and dispersed items, like a pink transistor radio, coupled with the broken off top of an Ionic column, find themselves left to their own devices.

The settings depicted in the works are somewhat cryptic: they oscillate between romantic melancholia, nostalgia, horror and humour; some are bright seascapes, others darker and less decipherable. All the works contain elements of the contrast between the humorous and cheerful on one side and the uncanny and sinister on the other; between the extraordinary and the ordinary. The objects in the paintings float across a vast ocean or are placed in front of an infinite void. But on second thought it might be deception: It might just as well be the backdrop in a cheap photo portrait studio and not the starry night sky...

Fritz Bornstück combines oil painting and textile collage in his new series. Raw or thinly painted canvas remnants and found fabrics become the part of the work instead of cast aside as rubbish. The different bits and pieces are then primed and dyed using a vivid yet delicate colour pallet.

The shapes cut out of this material are pasted onto fresh, usually impasto oil paint; this technique gives a playful and almost spontaneous quality to the compositions. While the spatial depth of the painting is rendered in oil some of the central and most crucial objects and forms are collaged into the works. This contrast of depth and texture gives Bornstück's paintings a feeling of immediacy with a lively, almost hectic ambience.

The objects star in these scenes, like a grotesque cabaret; they are animated in the way they lie, stand, lean, bend towards each other and their surroundings. The instability of the environments created and the seemingly careless nature of the compositions that hold these painted worlds together, tell something beyond the bare depiction. But what, is not definite. Instead the works are somewhat ambiguous. They may call for a compassionate gaze, trigger the viewer's humour, or simply tap in to the perverse joy of voyeurism.

Sleepwalkers lurk in the paintings like monumental yet fragile scarecrow-like figures assembled in a rush from available remnants. Much like Frankenstein's monster they seem to be stand-ins for the ecstasies, desires and dreams of their absent creators. In Bornstück's paintings, however, they are also comical; perhaps less Boris Karloff and more *Young Frankenstein*.

Also like Frankenstein's monster, the paintings are bastards. They step out of different traditions to form something new, something ambiguous. The contrasting brush strokes, paint squeezed directly from the tube and textile swatches create a dynamic play on the surface.

Both the bastard and the sleepwalker are concepts that are not easily accounted for. They are glitches, mistakes almost, in the fabric of reality. And so are the objects of Fritz Bornstück's paintings. Very mundane and recognizable but also weirdly out of place.

Like debris or wreckage put together to form Rube Goldberg-like compositions, the paintings are full of contradictions and impossibilities. Light, shadows and colour don't conform to any physical logic. Instead the paintings have a dreamlike atmosphere alluding to the sensations of a sleepwalker, who awakes to find himself in a world that seems unreal; a dark yet humorous transformation of the everyday into fiction. A depraved, but still beautiful parallel world with visual cues from children's toys, cartoons and 1980s *claymation*. And from Hollywood's visions of the future in films like *Bladerunner* and *Mad Max* with their dystopian mega-cities and post-apocalyptic desert landscapes. Not hi-tech or futuristic but still something out of this world.

Even though they are built from banal everyday items, Fritz Bornstück's still lifes hold secrets: big ones, little ones, weird ones. Their manifestations are riddles that feed the imagination of the viewer while refusing to give away any answers. Instead the narrative is left open to interpretation.



Fritz Bornstück - Resume

*26.06.1982

2003 Studied mathematics und philisophy
2003 Studied fine art with Prof. Friedemann Hahn in Mainz
2005 Studied fine art at the UdK in Berlin with Prof. Leiko Ikemura
2006 Studied also with Björn Dahlem, Felix Schramm und Tillmann Küntzel
2009 Meisterschüler of Thomas Zipp
2010 - 2012 Postgraduate Studies at De Ateliers – Amsterdam

Lives and works in Berlin

Solo Shows

2017 ZOB! , Galerie Greulich, Frankfurt (upcoming, 09/2017)
2016 Transatlantic Hokusfokus, Galerie Börgmann, Mönchengladbach
2016 Nevernore Ranch, Hermann Germann Contemporary, Zürich
2015 For the Birds, Galerie Mikael Andersen, Copenhagen
2015 Zustand33, Keith, Berlin
2013 Endless Nameless, Galerie Mikael Andersen, Copenhagen
2012 Intentional Stance, De Ateliers, Amsterdam
2012 When the sun comes up, I promise, I'll be true, SPG, Stockholm
2010 My Love For You Is Like A Japanese Car - GMA, Copenhagen
2010 Dawn of the Living - Fabrikken For Kunst Og Design, Kopenhagen
2009 Der Mittelpunkt des Universums, Wewerkapavillon2, Muenster
2008 Two holes in the Bottom of the Sea, Galerie Mikael Andersen, Copenhagen
2007 „ein Leben ohne Milchzähne“, K.R.2.0, Berlin

Selected Groupshows

2017 Jokes on Paintings, Schaufenster, Berlin
2017 Junge Prager, Junge Berlin, Cermak & Eisenkraft, Prag und Berlin
2017 Raushole, Projektraum Pool, Karlsruhe
2016 Quattro Formaggi, Galerie Jochen Hempel, Berlin
2016 Salon der Gegenwart – ebd., Hamburg
2016 The Joy of Overpainting – Keith, Berlin
2016 Die Geschichte hat einen Fehler, zu viele Erzähler, Kunstverein Gütersloh
2016 Spiegelgasse 1, Galerie Börgmann, Mönchengladbach
2016 Where are We Now?, NBK, Berlin
2016 Your Light is My Darkness, Feinkunst Krüger, Hamburg
2015 Die Augen verfolgen den Satelliten, so wie auch der Satellit die Augen verfolgt, Adler, Düsseldorf
2015 Painting Show, Galerie Patrk Ebensperger, Vienna
2014 Ship of Fools, De Dokzaal, Amsterdam
2014 Painting Causes Paintings – Schwarzwaldallee, Basel
2014 Was und Trend – Haus Bethanien, Berlin
2014 Candy Colored Clown, Hermann Germann Contemporary, Zürich
2014 Sorry, we ate your Brains – Club, Das Motobol, Berlin
2013 Batman Elektronik, Galerie Mikael Andersen, Berlin
2013 Future Red Flowers, Späti Multikulti, Berlin
2012 Koninklijke Prijs voor Vrije Schilderkunst 2015
2012 It takes two to tango, Herrmann Germann Contemporary, Zürich
2012 Bait and Tackle, Galerie Mikael Andersen Berlin
2012 Three artists walk into a bar..., De Appel, Amsterdam
2011 ABC - About painting, abc, Berlin
2011 Berlin Klondyke 2011, ODD GALLERY in Dawson City, Yukon
2011 Picasso in Parijs – Van Gogh Museum, Amsterdam
2010 The Royal Bobs - Schloss Wiepersdorf

Stipends, Scholarships and Prizes

2017 Casa Zia Lina, Insel Elba, Italien
2015 Arbeitsstipendium des Senats, Berlin
2012 Buning Brongers Prize (Mondrian Foundation), Amsterdam
2010 De Ateliers, Atelierstipendium, Amsterdam