

Sies + Höke Galerie

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MEESE SUD de LARGE.

First of all, AMAZONENGOLD de LARGE is a total work of art, so what it is about is the search for art's original place. Art's original place is the treasure or Atlantis or the No Man's Land where art was born, and art is the place where the future is forged.

And the amazons are archetypes, they are no longer individuals, but archetypes, like Lolitas, or like art soldiers. It is important that this is a total work of art. And all of this also interlocks with the materials.

So in the window space of the gallery you can see three large paintings, you see two writing boards and then you see a self-portrait: Meese as Jesus but also again as Hagen von Tronje or as the devil or also as Nastassja Kinski. It also says on the painting *Reifezeugnis*, meaning maturity certificate. And this painting is of course a declaration of love to the best "Tatort" (German TV series) that has ever been filmed, which I watched the day before I painted the picture, that is the episode with Nastassja Kinski. And such a film is no longer possible today, right? Well, it would most likely be censored, because it was so free in in spirit, and it told a story – that was a total work of art.

In this picture there is also the basis for the Turin shroud. Yes, it's also about the propaganda colors black, white and red. And then there are also yellow elements, so there is a scar. This figure has attained art's maturity certificate through battle, through the scar. And the writing boards are a reference to Beuys, who also created writing boards, and who also spoke very strikingly about art. But it is a declaration of love to the artist Beuys, but not to the politician Beuys. These two boards are an absolute indirect declaration of love to Joseph Beuys, and it says on them "everything for art" - we have to give everything for art, not just a little, we have to give everything. Art is 100% or 1000% and not just 1% or 99%, that is not enough. We couldn't do one percent politics and 99% art, then would no longer be art. It has to be 100% art. Art is the portrait of Dorian Gray, and that is basically what this painting, *Reifezeugnis*, is about: that the child within us must be kept awake, that we have to care for and love this child within us, otherwise we will not get any further – if we become ideological, if we grow up, then we can no longer make art.

And there is of course a declaration of love to the amazon, the archetypical amazon, or to the archetypical Lolita or Nastassja Kinski – but these are objectified figures, they are no longer individuals. They are no longer woman, man, child, but they are factual, objectified. These images are all objectification, just like the sculptures and the masks: they're about the object and not the subject. The subject has been grazed, there's nothing more to gain, it's limited. The self is exhausted.

Also with Beuys, please, objectification! Also objectify Joseph Beuys, otherwise we get no further. In "The Portrait of Dorian Gray" reality ages, but art does not: art just does not age. There are references to Richard Wagner, also timeless. What remains it is a volcano of art.

This painting, *Reifezeugnis*, is also an imprint of a face. It may be a bit tattered and dissolves, but for me it is a declaration of love to the Turin shroud. It is basically a print, the face is also very print-like as a cross, there is so much in there.

Art and religion ultimately have nothing to do with each other, because religion serves a certain window in time and art is timeless. Religion needs a God, art doesn't. So art created gods to play with and bring to the world, but only as effigies of art. God in art is playing material. The religions are images of reality. Humorless. In art you can saw off the branch you are sitting on, you can play with God, yes, there is no blasphemy in art either, because God is only a pawn in a game, and in a game you can target anything. It's interesting that in religions there has always been this desire to have control over art. That's why so many artists were summoned to the Vatican, and artists were commissioned to create relics, but also to create works of art. But only what is not a relic, what has outgrown itself, what not only served its time, but was timeless, has remained art: work by Michelangelo or Leonardo da Vinci survived as art. So what if the Vatican dies religiously and disappears? Then the art will remain. Yes, we can be grateful to churches for commissioning art, but they basically live off art because art is stronger than any religion. All religions have their time and will disappear at some point. There have been millions of gods, but they are only a masquerade of art; art created every religion and all deities, so that you may play with them. But we shouldn't take them seriously and create an ideology. Unfortunately we did just that. You must never make an ideology out of anything, including politics. Politics belong to the stage, not to reality. There must be no censorship of any kind, including of ideas, and everything must be allowed in terms of words and gestures. If we allow for censorship, then we will be political and religious and then we are moving away from art.

I want to go back to my primordial state, I want to go back to the Big Bang. The Big Bang was created by art and not by God. No? The cosmos was created by an artistic consideration, not a religious or political one. The cosmos was created through the pressure of art, through a volcanic eruption or through an eruption of matter. A volcano does not erupt because we are evil or something, but because the pressure is so high in the boiler that it has to break free, and the Big Bang is exactly the same. It is a balance of pressure ratio. It had to happen. And it didn't happen religiously or politically, but because it had to happen. like love, which is not political and not religious, but is simply infallible power.

In these figures you can see primordial beings, archetypical samurais, archetypical amazons, archetypical playing children. I am preoccupied these days with primordial man, Neanderthals and so on. I keep buying toy figurines, because I want to get to the core. I want to know how did they dress in uniform, when did the first shaman appear, when did the first saint appear. Those were the problematic kids, yes, the shaman is nothing positive! But they were the first people who thought they were special. Being more important than other people, that doesn't exist in art. You can put on costumes to make yourself important, but there is no person who is more important than anyone else, all this pigeonholing and conceit must go. Eldorado, Atlantis, Fort Knox, No Man's Land, Wizard of Oz, Alice in Wonderland: they're all important and all have scars because they fought. And art is ostracism. Coming from ancient Rome, from Greece or from ancient Egypt, what is left? Only art, of course! And why don't we make sure to remember that? Not politics are left from that period, not religion, only art! If only art survived, it must be the strongest. I present art, make art and play. Anything goes, everything is okay.

You can call what is happening a coincidence, but it just keeps coming. It happens when there's a blotch of paint that has something inside... the greatest things have to do with children who can make anything out of anything. That is the child in us, making everything out of everything. Yes, without any requirements, they make the most beautiful things out of sand, or out of wood, chestnuts and matches, says my mother, and the grown-up ideologist has forgotten that. The ideologist always thinks that everything is set, that color is fluid, and you just use it. Painting is color on surface. No matter what kind of surface. It can be wood, it can be canvas. But it can also be cardboard or simply the ground or even water. And color can also be transparent: it can be honey, it can be acrylic, it can be oil paint. whatever it's called is just substance on something else. Then sometimes it's sculpture.

I often work starting with a blotch of color and the blotch then tells me a story. In this blotch everything is already determined. And I just have to be attentive enough to recognize what it wants: will it want to expand? Get an eye? How does it work? And when I am free and relaxed and playful then what is necessary just happens. I never serve my taste in painting, I never paint a picture that is supposed to please me. I only ever make paintings that are necessary.

In Düsseldorf you now have a large art presentation. Such a tour through art, through the art world, has very little to do with reality. But you are in a realm of art, the art kingdom unfurls and your heart opens up. The space opens up. Censorship always closes spaces, but we need to open the rooms and ventilate so that something happens again.

So you enter the exhibition and immediately see a golden devil child greeting you. This devil child is derived from the movie "Alien" of course. It is a declaration of love to "Alien", and to H.R. Giger, the incredible artist who created these figures. And it's all a declaration of love to James Bond and to Dr. No.

Reifezeugnis, I have no problem naming it, is a huge collage. It's about collaging, using everything, anything goes. Looking in from the outside, from the thoroughly ideologized street, viewers can already see the realm of art, reading the messages "everything for art" and "total work of art". And you can guess that this is not some kind of foolish dreamland, this is it something else. This isn't about measly reality, but about immersing yourself in another world. And we have to celebrate that again, this other world. In the theater and opera, this has sadly been lost, they always want to be more real than reality, terrible. We have to create dream worlds, like in ballet, we have to create something other than reality, we mustn't illustrate reality, we would only drown. We have to create a dream world. An opposing position, an opposing world, an opposing pole – if we do that, then we are in the realm of art.

Well super, Meese brew is good.