

'The Evacuated Heaven'

Kunsthalle Erfurt

January 21. - April 2. 2018

Opening 20. January 2018

Press-conference 18. January 2018, 10:30 am

Where are the gods if not in our heads? Do they walk among us as spectators? What is their relevance? What do our feelings look like? Does my loneliness have the same shape as yours? Is darkness scary or is it soothing like a mother's embrace? The Berlin based artist Ruprecht von Kaufmann does not shy away from narrative in his art. He continues to defy the art market's trend towards abstraction. He courageously and boldly asks questions in his figurative paintings - but instead of answering them, he raises a thousand more.

Art can be seen as manifestation of our interior (interior hatte ich hier extra gewählt als Referenz zu 'In the House'). Manifestation is derived from the Latin word manifestare - 'making something tangible'. As much as von Kaufmann's dreamscapes do manifest in his giant oil-paintings, playful watercolours, sculptures and studies - they remain fickle mirages. It may seem like they do open doors and gateways and like were obvious answers to interpretation. Alas, at second glance we are only entangled further in the thicket of introspective uncertainties. The spectator remains searching, new crossroads appear around every corner. Answers that just seemed obvious and clear vanish into thin air.

For the first time the enigmatic work of Ruprecht von Kaufmann can be seen in a massive solo show featuring nearly 200 works. Erfurt, the state capital of Thuringia, has invited von Kaufmann to curate his own selected of works spanning nearly two decades. He used this unique opportunity to create nothing short of an artistic labyrinth. At the end of this labyrinth he has not, narcissistically, placed himself as the mighty minotaur but has instead opened an exciting artistic maze of introspection.

Especially for this solo show von Kaufmann created the monumental oil-painting 'In the House'. It visualises the path to all insight into ourselves. It can be seen as the story of an absurd introspective, that only leads to us seeing ourselves as we desperately press our faces against an opaque window, trying to peer inside. Starting out in a seemingly trivial staircase we begin to encounter strange light, colours and plays of perspective - something is off. Bedroom and bathroom, the most intimate interior spaces do not surrender any secrets. But what if we allow ourselves to expand these spaces by letting our mind drift and wander? Is it possible that we are only able to push open the doors in our dreams? And if yes, can we hold on to what we see? Decide for yourself.

"The Evacuated Heaven" will be on show at the Kunsthalle Erfurt from the 21st of January through to the 2nd of April and invites the visitor to go on a quest for their own 'otherworldly' and universal manifestations of the soul.