

SELECTED POEMS

Martin Gross

September 30, 2022 – Januar 15, 2023
G2 Kunsthalle, Dittrichring 13, 04109 Leipzig

Opening hours:

Wed. 3–8 pm / Fri–Sun 12 am–5 pm

Public tour:

English: Thu 4 pm (only with prior registration)

Entry:

G2 Kunsthalle: 5/3* euros

*Discount for schoolchildren and students, free admission for children under 12, art and fine arts students and registered school classes.

With **SELECTED POEMS**, the G2 Kunsthalle presents the first institutional solo exhibition by Martin Gross in Leipzig. The artist, who studied in London and Leipzig, reflects the ambivalent identity of the present, shaped by digitalization, in multimedia forms of expression in his works. In addition to numerous works on paper, Gross is showing a space-specific typographic installation, as well as an auditory work made for the G2 Kunsthalle.

Recurring motifs in Gross's works, besides to pop cultural themes and art historical references, are the data and information structures of the Internet, as well as social media, blogs, and news portals, as predominant, participatory, and anonymized venues for sociopolitical events of the 21st century.

Gross uses contemporary digital visual vocabulary from memes, emojis, icons, or user interfaces and transfers them into the analog world.

The works on paper, which formally oscillate between painting, drawing and print, bundle information as a simultaneous preservation of events on the pictorial surface.

The daily flow of information that impacts us and is exponentially increasing due to developments of digitalisation is woven into impenetrable textures and complex networks in Gross's works through clever layering of written elements, shapes, silhouettes, and figurations.

Depending on the viewer's own biography, individual elements are perceived more prominently than others.

The works thus activate perceptual strategies that are intended by social media and applied onto the analog object in Gross's work. The combination of writing and image as a predominant contemporary communication strategy, which we encounter again and again in the digital sphere, enters into a reciprocal relationship with one another: writing is visualized and images are written.

In LA LA LOST, LOST IN THE SKY [► 1] Gross applies this principle, dividing the image horizontally and illustrating the physical awareness of one's own existence in an underlying mood characterized by lethargy and disorientation.

Gross artfully contrasts the multi-layered, overloaded surfaces of his paper works with the wall-filling installation IMMERISWAS [► 4]. (There's always something.). The concrete typographic lettering, which stretches across three walls of the first room of the exhibition, confronts the viewer with an inflationarily used phrase of collective linguistic usage, potentiates it, and thus skillfully rhythms the spaces of the G2 Kunsthalle. Gross reflects both the relation of the viewing subject to the spaces and its use and utilization of language. Gross reflects both the relation of the observing subject to the spaces as well as his use and application of language. The use of vinyl film in combination with the heightened proportions open up associations with bold and attention-grabbing advertising and marketing strategies.

The two predominant techniques in Gross' works on paper, oilsticks and oil pastels, emphasize the ambivalent nature of digital content between lush interest and endless availability. The use of resistant oilsticks allows the artist to layer layers that are invariably captured on canvas. Contrast this with the paintings in which Gross uses oil pastels, which are composed side by side rather than on top of each other. These vibrating pictorial compositions, which are theoretically shapeable and variable, often also represent art-historical references.

The work PHASEVIOLET [► 7], for example, convinces with its small-scale surface structure, which creates a dense, haptic noise. The picture-in-picture composition is suggestive of pop-up windows and the claim to manage parallel processes.

Gross's fragmented use of language repeatedly shows references to concrete poetry and Dadaism. Titles such as COLLAPSE, RELAX, DINGSDA [► 12] allow for a purely auditory Dadaist reference. Collapse a term frequently used in reference to collapses of political and financial systems in recent years is juxtaposed with Relax, which can be read here as a call for relaxation, calm and level-headedness and at the same time for the collective feeling of powerlessness, ignorance and numbness in the face of omnipresent global crises.

In COLLAPSE, RELAX, DINGSDA, the viewer looks through a tunnel that reminds one of the representational forms of early computer games, at the end of which a promising nothingness beckons, drawing the viewer into the spider's web that lies in front of it. Global networking as a deceptive trap in front of an undisclosed space.

The sound work THE SKY ABOVE THE PORT [►13], attached to the biggest wall of the second room, permeates the entire floor and addresses various sound pieces from functional funnel speakers down to the viewer. The hearable texts which occupy the rooms of the G2 arbitrarily and without context, repeatedly take up themes of our day-to-day present. Gross, for example, gives Daft Punk's iconic *Technologic* (2005) Lyrics in Cloud it, Blur it, Dull it, Fake it an uncanny update, communicating like a present-day mantra, dictatorial commands dealing with anonymized hatred and the addiction to digital incentives on the Internet.

Another musical piece, 12:12, a collaboration between the artist and the Chinese punk band HARDCORE RAVEN in Tears, provides a spherical soundtrack to the exhibition, only to be broken in the next moment by Tired Eyes, an overdrawn advertising jingle.

Again and again, desires for infantile, undefined dreams, longings, and desires appear in Gross' works. In NEWNEWNEW [► 2] the lettering Kids with dreams glows on a noisy, nebulous background reminding of interference signals of old TV sets. Whether Gross prophesies dream or nightmare remains open.

Text by Leo Wedepohl

Martin Gross (b. Plauen, 1984) studied painting at the Academy of fine arts, Leipzig, from 2007 to 2013, where Annette Schröter was his teacher, from 2009 until 2013. And from 2014 to 2017 he studied at the Royal Academy School in London.

Selected prizes and awards: 2014 Kunstpreis der 21. Leipziger Jahresausstellung; 2013 The Woodmill Residency #4, The Woodmill GP, London, UK; 2011 Studienpreis des Freundeskreises der HGB; 2010 Kunsthüttenpreis, Neue Sächsische Galerie Chemnitz, Germany.

Selected solo shows: 2020 HYPNAGOGIA, Kunsthalle Rostock, Germany; 2019 PARADOX LAKE, K11 Art Foundation, K11 Art Village, Wuhan, China; 2017 TELEVISION, Smac, Berlin, Germany; 2015 TRANSIT, Kunstraum Ortloff, Leipzig, Germany.

Selected group shows: 2020 LICHTPARCOURS BRAUNSCHWEIG, Braunschweig, Germany; 2019 REALITÄTSHECK, Kunstraum Potsdam, Germany; 2018 PING PONG BASEL, Projektraum M54, Basel, CH; 2018 CHUMMING, Glasgow International 2018, Glasgow, UK; 2018 THE ART OF RECOLLECTING, G2 Kunsthalle, Leipzig, Germany; 2018 FOLLOW THE LINE, Kunsthalle der Sparkasse Leipzig, Germany; 2017 DEAD HEAT, Kunstraum Ortloff, Leipzig, Germany.

Exhibited works

1. LA LA LA LOST, LOST IN THE SKY, 2022, Oilcryon on Paper, 84 x 70 cm, Courtesy of the Artist & Galerie EIGEN + ART Leipzig/Berlin
2. NEWNEWNEW, 2022, Oilcryon on Paper, 70 x 90 cm, Sammlung Hildebrand, Leipzig
3. SOFT CITY, 2021, Oilcryon on Paper, 60 x 50 cm, Sammlung Moritz Aurich
4. IMMERISWAS, 2022, Vinylfolie, 1600 x 370 cm, Courtesy of the Artist & Galerie EIGEN + ART Leipzig/Berlin
5. FLOATERS, 2021, Oilstick on paper, 196 x 160 cm, Sammlung Hildebrand, Leipzig
6. SURE, FINE, WHATEVER, 2021, Oilcryon on Paper, 60 x 50 cm, Sammlung Hildebrand, Leipzig
7. PHASE VIOLET, 2022, Oilcryon on Paper, 60 x 50 cm, Courtesy of the Artist & Galerie EIGEN + ART Leipzig/Berlin

8. RAIN IN THE SOUTH, 2022, Oilstick on paper, 196x160cm, Courtesy of the Artist & Galerie EIGEN + ART Leipzig/Berlin

9. UNTIL TOMORROW, 2022, Oilcryon on Paper, 60 x 50 cm, Sammlung Hildebrand, Leipzig

10. ARROGANT MOON, 2021, Oilcryon on Paper, 60 x 50 cm, Sammlung Hildebrand, Leipzig

11. GELBE WIESEN, 2022, Oilcryon on Paper, 60 x 50 cm, Courtesy of the Artist & Galerie EIGEN + ART Leipzig/Berlin

12. COLLAPSE, RELAX, DINGSDA, 2022, Oilstick on paper, 196 x 160 cm, Sammlung Hildebrand, Leipzig

13. THE SKY ABOVE THE PORT, 2022, horn speaker, cables, audio players and amplifiers, 1000 x 370 cm, Courtesy of the artist and Galerie Eigen + Art Leipzig/Berlin

- Seven Stars

read by: Jonathan Powell

text: Martin Gross

- Ja Ja Supercool

read by: Claudio Schulz-Keune

text: Martin Gross

- Clyde

read by: Anne Elmholt

text: Martin Gross

- Silent Rooms

read by: Jack Burton

text: Transscript: Last Year at Marienbad, 1961, Vorspann

- Tired Eyes

Musik und Gesang: Philipp Koller // factorue.de

text: Martin Gross

- The New

read by: Sally

text: Martin Gross

- 12:12

Musik und Gesang: HARDCORE RAVEN in Tears

text: Martin Gross

- Byron The Bulb

read by: Joanna

text: Thomas Pynchon, Auszug aus Gravity's Rainbow, 1973

- Cloud it, Blur it, Dull it, Fake it

read by: Martin Gross

text: Martin Gross

- Oh Sega Sunset

read by: Matthew

text: Martin Gross

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