

“The Cobra Effect”

ANDRÉ HEMER

PRIVATE VIEW 7 June 2018

6:30 - 9:00PM

8 June – 21 July 2018

Here is a painting that is at once a finished work and an artist’s messy palette. It is a map, a vivid topography of colour. Petal-like daubs of paint explode in a maelstrom, and rich swathes of silk-like pigment have the shimmery sheen of smooth fabric. Elsewhere, pools of texture appear to melt into rough, liquid pumice, tempting the viewer to run their hand over its their surface. This map, this unknown country, is a heady mix of sensory colours and textural shapes. In *The Cobra Effect* (8 June – 21 July 2018) at Kristin Hjellegjerde London, Vienna-based artist **André Hemer** returns for a second show at the gallery, and his first solo, to present new works in his signature style.

For the New Zealand-born artist, the key to binding so many elements together lies in the use of light: he combines scanned images with physical paint, creating sculpted forms which are then scanned and transferred into digital images, only to be printed back again onto canvas and painted over and over again. By capturing landscapes as well as objects on a flatbed scanner in this way, he creates conflicting light sources on the canvas that actually serve to unite the disparate elements and imbues each work with an almost unreal, digital feel, as surfaces are highlighted to the point that they begin to look almost artificial. Yet, his impasto technique gives them a three-dimensional quality, the hand of the artist present in the thick swirls of pigment, but also, more subtly, in the melange of digitally manipulated images with which they are fused.

“I think when you look at the paintings, there are areas that are a little dirty in their process, a lack of perfection in the way the paint is put on,” Hemer has said. “It’s really exploring how those things can be intersected and how something can pass from a state of materiality to a digital image and then back again.” It is this intersection of the digital and the physical, the convergence of the two and three dimensional planes, that creates such a unique flattened yet vivid surface in Hemer’s works. They feel both deconstructed and reconstructed, flat yet sculptural – as if seeing time stretching and bending to encompass all dimensions and states of being at once.

This conflict – between the two and three dimensional, the digital and the painted, the then and the now – creates a state of anxiety, of tension. “Maybe that latter state is the one that most of us find ourselves occupying: uncomfortable and anxious, but occasionally finding a way to push past that into something conceivably functioning,” muses Hemer. “This is *The Cobra Effect*, to create larger problems in our pursuit of solving the original simple one. But that’s also human activity in a

nutshell, to make things better and then worse at the same time, creating more complexity, and getting somewhere.” Yet at least this process potentially leads to the creation of something new. “That might sound a little deflating,” says Hemer, “but it’s also an embrace of something essentially humanistic. Of fallibility and fragility, and a sense of constant learning.”

Perhaps *The Cobra Effect* speaks more honestly of our times than anything else, as we navigate fast-shifting socio-political landscapes and globally impactful events that seem only to rage further out of hand the more the powers that be seek to intervene in them. In the exploded paint petals of a canvas, Hemer shows us that we can see the universe in all its beauty and chaos.

‘The Cobra Effect’ runs from 8 June – 21 July 2018 at Kristin Hjellegjerde London

Information for journalists:

About André Hemer

André Hemer (born 1981, New Zealand) is a painter whose work explores the intersections between digital media and painting. He received his PhD in Painting from Sydney College of the Arts, University of Sydney, Australia and his MA from the University of Canterbury, New Zealand including a research period at the Royal College of Art, London. His works embrace and reveal the transformations and transactions occurring between the contemporary digital image and the traditional painted object. He has exhibited widely and is represented internationally in the United States by LUIS DE JESUS LOS ANGELES, in South-East Asia by Yavuz Gallery, Singapore and in New Zealand by Gow Langsford Gallery, Auckland and Bartley and Company, Wellington. Recent solo exhibitions include *The Imagist & the Materialist*, COMA Gallery, Sydney (2018), *Making-Image* at LUIS DE JESUS, Los Angeles (2018), *IRL*, Yavuz Gallery, Singapore (2017), *New Representation*, Chalk Horse Gallery, Sydney (2015), while group shows include *Watching Windows* (2016), *Te Uru Contemporary*, Auckland, *André Hemer - Paintings 2005-2015*, Pataka Art + Museum, Porirua City (2015), *100 Painters of Tomorrow*, Beers Contemporary, London (2014). In 2017 Hemer was awarded a six-month residency at the International Studio and Curatorial Program, New York. Hemer is currently based in Vienna, Austria.

About Kristin Hjellegjerde Gallery

Kristin Hjellegjerde opened her gallery in London in June 2012, followed by a second space in Berlin in 2018. Named one of the top 500 most influential galleries in the world by Blouin (2015), as well as independent gallery of the year by the Londonist (2014), Kristin Hjellegjerde Gallery showcases cutting-edge contemporary art from emerging and established international artists, with the central concern being to create an intimate space in which artists can present a coherent body of work within a focused environment. Drawing on her own international background, Kristin Hjellegjerde seeks to discover and develop new talents by creating a platform through which they can be introduced to local and international audiences and by allowing for artistic exchange. Kristin Hjellegjerde also acts as an art advisor for both emerging private and corporate collectors, and will also be curating Vestfossen Kunstlaboratorium’s summer exhibition 2019. For more information, visit www.kristinhjellegjerde.com.

For further information and high-resolution images, please contact Kristin Hjellegjerde on kristin@kristinhjellegjerde.com