



Martin Eder, *Lunacy*, 2018. Oil on canvas. 2850 x 3800 mm

## **Parasites: a solo exhibition of paintings by Martin Eder at Newport Street Gallery**

16 August 2018

Newport Street Gallery will present 'Parasites' a solo exhibition by Berlin-based artist Martin Eder (b.1968, Augsburg), featuring major new paintings alongside work spanning over a decade of Eder's career. Eder's paintings examine beauty and ugliness, depicting kittens and wide-eyed puppies alongside uncompromising nudes and more sinister and surreal encounters. Featuring over forty works, the exhibition will take place from 26 September to 13 January at Newport Street Gallery, London, and is Eder's largest solo show to date.

'I look for beauty in filth. You find the most interesting colours at motorway service areas and in the bushes. A mixture of crisp packets, trainers, vomit and tufts of hair. These are colour combinations that artists seldom look at. Poetry lies hidden beneath the kitchen sink. The world is raging under my fingernails.' (Eder in conversation with Thomas Girst, 2018.)

Conducting an almost scientific enquiry into his medium, Eder has dedicated his career to exploring the illusory possibilities of painting and its meaning. In preparation for 'Parasites', Eder shut himself away with sketchbooks, drawings and paintings dating back to the beginning of his artistic career. This period of reflection allowed him to trace numerous threads and shifts in his practice, leading him to complete a new series of works, some of which are based on ideas conceived years previously. These are shown alongside significant early works and examples from Eder's recent series of male nudes, among others.

Eder explodes accepted ideas of what 'fine art' should be, subverting received hierarchies of image and subject. An uncompromising, and equal, attention to detail is brought to undulations of flesh, the teased fur of a freshly groomed poodle and the shining edge of an axe. Informed by diverse movements, including the



Baroque and Surrealism, his paintings place the sentimental, squalid and the sublime side by side, recasting the tropes of classical history painting. In **The Inescapable Unity of Love**, 2010–2018, an oversized Cavalier King Charles spaniel, sporting a doleful expression, poses on an antique sofa, towering over a seemingly unaware guitar-playing woman, cast against a foreboding stormy sky. Such complex compositions hint at narratives but thwart easy readings.

Looming large, Eder's visions veer close to nightmare. In **den Nachmittag geflüstert/Whispers in the Afternoon**, 2007, shows a menacing hybrid creature, representing death, embracing a naked woman. Snakes recur, slithering across the bare feet of an adolescent girl (**Erkenntnis/El conocimiento/Knowledge**, 2016), around the neck of an armed woman (**Black Rain**, 2016) or slipping between the lips of an athletic man (**Schlangenbiss/Snakebite**, 2017). Eder's world, however, is not restricted to the otherworldly. Eder incorporates dystopian elements of the everyday – from internet porn to omnipresent kitten memes to fantasy role play. Of his 'Those Bloody Colours' paintings of Joan of Arc-style figures, a number of which feature in 'Parasites', Eder states: 'Pseudo-religious images, costumes, fantasy world, role playing. The iconography is right on the border between car bonnet painting and Renaissance.'

The exhibition will be accompanied by a catalogue featuring an essay by curator Jane Neal and a conversation between Eder and Thomas Girst.

## About Newport Street Gallery

Newport Street Gallery opened in Vauxhall, south London, in October 2015. Spanning five buildings, the gallery presents solo or group exhibitions of work drawn from Damien Hirst's extensive Murderme art collection, which he has been building since the late 1980s. Hirst's interest in curating dates back to the beginning of his artistic career and his organisation of the groundbreaking 'Freeze' exhibition in south London in 1988.

The gallery is the realisation of Hirst's long-term ambition to share his extensive collection of art – which includes over 3,000 works – with the public. In October 2016, the gallery was awarded the respected RIBA Stirling Prize for the UK's best new building of the year.

Entry to all exhibitions is free.

### Opening times

Tuesday–Sunday 10am–6pm

Closed Mondays

Please see website for details of bank holiday opening times.

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