

SILKE SCHOENER



MALEREI / *PAINTINGS*

SILKE SCHOENER



SPECTACLES OF LIFE

In painting, the ability to use white in reverse is considered as an expression of high expertise. Apart from artists like Kasimir Malerwitsch, Angelo Savelli, Robert Ryman, Raimund Girke, Peter Royen, Herbert Zangs, and others – who partly use(d) the colour white in the attempt to argue on the foundations of painting in particular and art in general – for many other artists it effectively was and is a (crafted) challenge not to relinquish the clearest, purest, brightest, sometimes loudest tone in the colour spectrum to the first glance. All the more surprising in this context is that Silke Schoener's paintings find their place.

Tents float like lifeboats in a sea of white expanse; strangers merge into an entity in glaring hot white; people pose on imaginary white furniture; cows rest in the center of endless white; the red roof of a boathouse floats almost sunken on a white stream, too far away from any shore; framed in dazzling white, actors perform a sinister historical drama. Silke Schoener's paintings cover a wide motivic repertoire.

"I always need a distance", says Silke. This distance is provided by the partly immense white space that she places around her painted elements with great compositional aptitude – more precisely, she simply lets it stay, as no additional white paint is applied. Hereby, not only an actual spatial distance is evoked – the motive's size on the rectangular canvas certainly makes a contribution. Primarily, a distance to the motive's identity is created, and maintained to the end. The scenes and landscape excerpts, the people, and the groups observed from a distance are neither places nor names, have neither biographies nor histories. At first, this seems to be contradictory.

When Ms Schoener selects photographs of Syrian refugee camps or scenes from a performance of Arthur Miller's "The Crucible" as the subject for a painting, it is precisely these motives that always convey her real story, because that is the reason – or rather the cause – why the photograph exists. On the other hand, she does not comment the proceedings. Neither by means of overstated artistic rhetoric – e.g. extreme close-up, gestures, or different colours – nor by positioning her paintings in the viewer's reality. All remains in an approximate, almost pure space that is therefore open to everyone and everything – and thereby attracts one's full attention. Insofar, Silke Schoener's white space paintings are similar to some of the work of the artists mentioned above. They were also concerned with making things visible, by concentrating on essential aspects, e.g. of painting, of art, of function, of deconstruction.

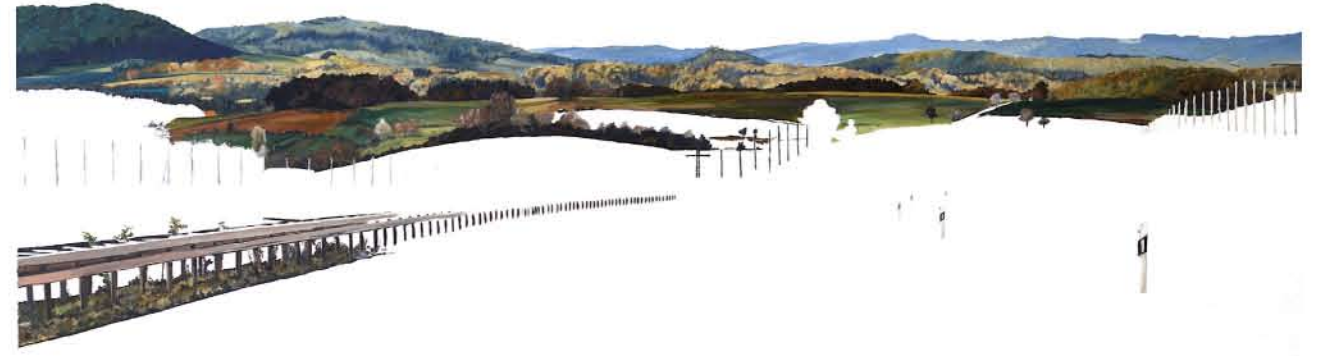
But that is what can be experienced by a viewer who is touched by their work. He or she will, perhaps, interpret the paintings as a challenge, will permit thoughts in one direction or the other, and might possibly even take action. In my opinion, however Schoener's motivation is different. "I am interested in finding out how to represent something without showing it", she describes the impulse for painting her current motives. This brings us to the basics of art. Initially, there is the every-day search for new pictures. Hereby, the word pictures includes feelings, relationships, themes such as love, war, peace, and displacement. Next, if not even at the same moment when the new picture has revealed itself to the artist, the question of implementation arises. In Silke Schoener's case, this involves painting, use of the means at her disposal, the manner or representation, as well as colours, spaces, and fantasy. Silke Schoener works concentratedly, with great sensitivity for details, leaving away what is (no longer) important to her. She simply stops painting when everything essential is on the canvas. Interesting to note that her stopped pictures express more and evoke more with the viewer than many other 'finished' works of art.

In the same way that our eyes are able to complete an unfinished line, in our mind we complete these paintings and fill the white space: We long to return to our homeland. We perceive loss and need. We appreciate the beauty of a landscape. We take part in the spectacle of life.





Wohin - Woher / Where to - where from, oil on canvas, 110 x 160cm / 43" x 63", 2014



Abschied / Farewell, oil on canvas, 180 x 160cm / 71" x 63", 2008





ART PERFORMANCE "FREE FALL", 2014



The subject of men, women, and children who have been forced to leave their home countries because of hunger, war, or political persecution, has touched me deeply. In my "Free Fall" art performance, I intend to make paintings of people with such a history, using oil colours on a white background, thereby showing them in free fall. Also visitors, who can identify with this homeless or "groundless" feeling, are welcome to participate.

At the venue, visitors who express their interest will be photographed as they jump off a chair. I will then use these photographs as templates for oil paintings. Work on the paintings will start on-site immediately, and they should be finished about three hours later.

In this way, the exhibition wall will gradually be filled with painting of "groundless" people - symbolic for the arrival in various locations (countries). The White Space in my paintings always remains unnamed.





LEBENS LAUF / VITA

- 1968 Born in Krefeld / Hüls
1988 - 1994 Studies at the Kunsthochschule Kassel with Dorothee v. Windheim
1990 bis 1991 Guest studies at the Kunsthochschule Dresden with Johannes Heisig
seit 1994 Freelance artist

AUSSTELLUNGEN (AUSWAHL) / EXHIBITIONS (SELECTION)

- 2013 Galerie Freitag 18.30, Aachen (G)
2012 Galerie Freitag 18.30, Aachen (G)
Dillon Gallery, New York (E)
Foyer Opernhaus Kassel (G)
AU Gallery, Boston (E)
2011 Dillon Gallery, New York (E)
Galerie Oliver Ahlers, Göttingen (E)
2009 Dillon Gallery, New York (E)
Galerie Strenger, Tokyo (E)
2008 Galerie Strenger, Tokyo (E)
2007 Dillon Gallery, New York (E)
2005 Galerie Oliver Ahlers, Göttingen (E)
Galerie Ulrich Gering, Frankfurt (E)
2000 Galerie Fondermann, Holst. Schweiz (E)
1999 Galerie Hafemann, Wiesbaden (G)





© 2014

galerie | freitag 18.30

Robert Mertens
Steinkaulstr. 11
D-52070 Aachen

Tel +49 (0)163 60 66 622
Web www.freitag1830.de
Mail mail@freitag1830.de

Our special thanks applies to
Silke Schoener, Hannah Hiecke, Gerd Plitzner,
Stefan Skowron, Laura Havenith, Magdalena
Olschytzka, Jagoda Martuzalska and to our collectors
and friends of the gallery.

We also thank:

Birte und Harry,
Harald Grünhage
»plan und raum architekten«

Monika und Waldemar,
Waldemar Kliesing
Sports Physiotherapy

Birgit und Hubert,
Hubert Peters
Master and restorer
in painting and varnisher handicraft

plan und raum



HUBERT PETERS
MEISTER UND RESTAURATOR
IM MALER- UND LACIERHANDWERK

Silke Schoener

»Schauspiele des Lebens« / »Spectacles of life«

HERAUSGEBER / EDITOR

Robert Mertens, Galerie Freitag 18.30, Aachen

DESIGN / LAYOUT

Hannah Hiecke (www.HannahHiecke.de)

FOTOGRAFIE / Photography

Gerd Plitzner

TEXT

Stefan Skowron

VERLAG / PUBLISHER

Robert Mertens, Aachen

ISBN 978-3-943762-02-0

