

SCHWARZ CONTEMPORARY

Press Release – June 2022

Marlon Wobst – TARTAN

11 June to 16 July, 2022

We are pleased to present the seventh solo show of Berlin-based artist Marlon Wobst at SCHWARZ CONTEMPORARY.

Rubber, sweat, and scrapes are inextricably linked to a tartan track. The characteristic track surfacing made of polyurethane often turns running tracks brightly red. Tartan is the title of Marlon Wobst's solo show at SCHWARZ CONTEMPORARY. And in terms of subject matter, the artist engages with bodies, exercise, playing, and sports.

At SCHWARZ CONTEMPORARY, Wobst presents new works on canvas as well as a large felt work. At the centre is figuration: sometimes large bodies fill the entire canvas, sometimes they are tiny, or just dimly hinted at. The focus is here not on their face or character; rather, they seem like neutral dolls, and we can watch them, sometimes naked, sometimes dressed, as they exercise: doing gymnastics, having sex, doing high jumps, or playing tennis. Distorted and excitingly intertwined, standing on their head or weightless, wrestling, swimming, or smooching. The large felt work, where Wobst refers to an earlier painting, shows physical exercise: weightlessly, numerous bodies float in turquoise water.

The protagonists (and their limbs) form a dynamic tussle that is often reminiscent of a game of 'Twister'. Playfully, the artist combines lilac and pastel shades with a strong orange or an apocalyptic red. Rather tongue in cheek, he turns the high-jump rod into the horizontal line, which can frequently be found in his works, or presents the results of a competition of making snowmen. The works are similar to snapshots. Hence some people are cut off, as if they were about to leave the picture.

In general, allusions are key to these works: reflections and shadows allude to bodies, interferences become end points that are needed to make the paintings perfect. The artist says that the finished paintings often need a certain 'kick'. Formally, too, we can follow numerous traces: on the canvas, thick layers of paint and structures from earlier paintings underneath shine through. During the painting process, figures are added or erased, and the artist intentionally leaves their remnants. The gnarled underground, which at first sight might seem careless or provisional, reveals the layered history of the paintings.

In this jumble of allusions and references, Wobst represents some details remarkably clearly: a bright pair of gym shorts, a hairdryer, or tiny spots of paint that mark the rupturing of a net, all form an exciting contrast between the virtually endless space of the pictorial space and a pointedly positioned focus.

These contrasts make the works so interesting: gentleness and aggression, joy and pain, lightness and collision, self-optimization and imperfection perform team work in Wobst's works. As concrete as these scenes are, they always leave enough room for associations and interpretations. This creates an identification with the people depicted: we sweat, feel cold, groan, and enjoy life with them. With pleasure, we think of our own physical escapades between drizzling rain, tennis court, and tartan track.

Text: Julia Meyer-Brehm

Translation: Wilhelm Werthern

The opening reception is on Friday, 10 June 2022, from 6 to 8 pm.

We will gladly send you further information and images. Please contact us at mail@schwarz-contemporary.com or phone +49 - 30 - 612 89 902