

SCHWARZ CONTEMPORARY

Press release

Janne Räisänen - Janne Jazz

4 March to 9 April 2022

*So go look all around, you can try your luck, brother
And see what you found
But I guarantee you that it ain't your day
Your day, it ain't your day¹*

We are very happy to announce 'Janne Jazz' by **Janne Räisänen**. It is the fifth solo show by the Finnish artist, who is based in Berlin and Helsinki, at SCHWARZ CONTEMPORARY. We present ten new, unprimed canvases and six framed works on paper in his current show.

It is no simple task to encounter and do justice to all the characters in the exhibition - without the works' titles and the help of their creator Janne Räisänen, it isn't easy to make out and identify the numerous creatures and see what they are up to. A small seal rests on the head of the seated figure wearing woollen socks and looking into the world with a melancholy air in the drawing *Pullervo* - a nickname for a small seal, threatened by extinction, that lives in lake Saimaa in Finland. On the canvas entitled *Erwin-Wurm-Studie*, we also encounter the small seal, even less shapely, on the protagonist's head in the centre of the work, whose right leg is in trousers with red dots, or perhaps is covered in pustules, and who casually dominates the pictorial space. Under worm-shaped, tent-like structures fox, dog and reindeer scrimmage about; two creatures seem to amuse themselves by assisting each other in practicing handstands.

The artist's Helsinki-based friend Pietari is captured in the drawing *Pietari auf dem Lande* (Pietari on the countryside) with clunky hipster shoes, a Vivienne Westwood hat, and a pitchfork. He looks attentively at the canvas *Judith und Holofernes* on his left in a salon hang. Judith, wearing a cartwheel-sized hat and a festive dress, holds a tray. The small head lying on it, in the form of an amused rubber bouncy ball, unlike the deceived and killed Holofernes, has not died gruesomely.

¹ From the song 'Jimmy Jazz' by The Clash, on the 1979 album *London Calling*; the title of the exhibition 'Janne Jazz' alludes to this song.

Hats, caps, seals on a head, also *Tonttu*, a small elf, which in Nordic culture are good-natured, human-like creatures and assistants to Father Christmas, soberly looks at the beholders. With his bloodshot eyes, he is anything but cute, but with his red hat and further companions on his neck, chest, and arms, he is immediately likable. In *Selfportrait as a little Girl* we recognise a young Janne Räisänen, completely dedicated to punk, here with a red anklet, dress, and a small figure with red hair that supports him as a second leg.

On the left, the *Emperor* has joined the group of pictures and looks at the world as it is, a melancholy ruler with flowers, sketched in charcoal, whose thoughtful gaze and tranquillity are more than moving.

Räisänen's creatures like this one do not conform to any ideals, they are put into the world, and always part of a traceable process of distortion and development. Räisänen's works initially start out without any figuration; in the case of the largest canvas *Middle-Aged Mutant Ninja Shaman* in the second room of the gallery, we might at first think we are looking at a map, or an icy, northern Finnish landscape from a bird's eye perspective. The composition in a landscape format only slowly reveals figures and objects, on top of the central figure (is the figure wearing a helmet with a visor the middle-aged shaman with magical skills alluded to in the title?) lies a reindeer, figures stroll about, surrounded by fir trees, through a frosty, icy-blue world.

The opening reception is on 3 March 2022 from 6 to 8 pm at SCHWARZ CONTEMPORARY, Sanderstraße 28 in Berlin-Neukölln.

The exhibition is on view until 9 April 2022 (Wednesday to Friday from noon to 6 pm, Saturday from noon to 4 pm, and by appointment).

We are happy to provide images and further information. Please contact us at: mail@schwarz-contemporary.com