
Philipp von Rosen Galerie

Stian Ådlandsvik, Are Blytt, Per-Oskar Leu
Scoundrel Days – an exhibition initiated by Arne Austrheim
Opening on June 15, 2018 at 7 pm
Exhibition from June 15 to September 1, 2018
The artists will be present

We are pleased to announce the inauguration of *Scoundrel Days*, an exhibition with the three Norwegian artists Stian Ådlandsvik, Are Blytt and Per-Oskar Leu, that was initiated by the Norwegian collector Arne Austrheim. Installations, sculptures and paintings will be shown; what all the works have in common is the involvement of their specific materiality, with a coexistence of abstraction and social topics, for example the history of socialism.

Scoundrel Days is the title of the second album of the Norwegian band *A-ha*. The artists of our exhibition feel, that this album is better than the more famous album *Hunting High and Low*, because it sounds darker and more mature. Ådlandsvik, Blytt and Leu are fans of *A-ha*, like a big part of Germany (at least the Germans used to be). *Scoundrel Days* is not just a fitting description of the current political situation of our world but also a concept, which is wide enough to serve as a shield for their three different artistic positions. Even though they have nothing to do with rogueship or the like. The fact that they are three reflecting and reflective positions suggests that they are unscrupulous in the sense that they cultivate positions that are questioning or even negating clearness.

By **Stian Ådlandsvik (Bergen, 1981)** we show four sculptures and one wall piece, which consists of one photograph and a piece of cloth placed in a big white frame. The series *Bruised Features #1-3* are life-sized sculptures that stand upright in the room, associating figures. Ådlandsvik hammered the I-beams flat in one end where one can imagine the head on a human body. Apart from the violent fantasy it is also simply a de-functionalization produced by Ådlandsvik: the I-beams, which normally have a constructive function, turn into autonomous objects, which are estranged from their original purpose. The work with the long title *A changing of his name is sufficient for the speculator who finds himself in difficulties* acts similar. What's up with the change of the name, which is sufficient for the speculator who finds himself in difficulties? Just the different use of the title, that is not explaining anymore but non-distinctive, is a reflection of the strategy of the artist. For this piece of art he had others doing the work for him on a street paneling that was obviously in the way of Oslo's drivers. With this, a collective work was created that was transferred from "junk" into a "valuable piece of art" by being chromium-plated. Transfer is also the keyword for the work *Portrait of Leibniz, after Pierre Savart*. Here a detail of an etching (a portrait of Leibniz by Savart) is converted by Ådlandsvik: in the print a piece of cloth of the philosopher's coat overlaps the frame and thus exists in two areas. This overlapping of areas is mirrored by the artwork through elements that partly come from the streets and partly have been made by the artist's order (the cloth). Ådlandsvik mixes everything up with this: the depicting photography, the actual and framed cloth (serving as a relief), and again the cloth that covers the photograph, similar to a car cover with a tear covering a car on the streets in Oslo (and like this the associative cycle in the mind of the artist was started).

By **Are Blytt (Bergen, 1981)** we show a group of four paintings that were created in the Wiels, Brussels, where he was an artist in residence during the last months. Three landscape formats and

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one portrait format, each 100 x 200 cm/ 200 x 100 cm, painted in oil and acrylic on Belgian linen, each collaged with a pigment print on paper. The areas painted in light shades of grey and pink make one associate them with clouds, fog or smoke or make one think of spills of high dissolved watercolor on paper. Abstract shapes, which first and foremost look elegant and ethereal and under no circumstance transport additional information. However, Blytt collaged a pigment print of a photography into every piece of art: of a pigeon, hardly recognizable as such, or of the view of a man's back with hands that seem to give us signs, or of a black man sitting at a table in a bar, and also of a probably naked man hiding behind a curtain. And these pictures in the picture may suggest possible approaches to the solution for a clear understanding of the works but then let them drain away. They are stumbling blocks for our perception. A painting cannot be (and should not be) only the portrayal of its painting process but be entitled to argue further. The Norwegian critic Erlend Hammer writes on Blytt's paintings, that "the medium is no longer the message, but rather a vessel, a transportation device through which all manner of information keeps flowing". The pure elegance of the painting is been questioned by this.

The works by **Per-Oskar Leu (Oslo, 1980)** refer to the French revolution, or rather to its decadent, capitalistically painful aftermaths towards the end of the 19th century. He is going to show: three reproductions of the self-portrait of Courbet *L'homme à la pipe* (1848, the year of the revolution), printed on plywood, combined with Édouard Charvet's ties and autographs (handwritten letters); an assemblage on wood, consisting of postcards (photographs of the Paris Commune), a Charvet-silk-tie, a worker's flag, a glass carafe of the 19th century in the shape of the Colonne Vendôme in combination with a Charvet-silk-tie. Courbet, a sympathizer of the Paris Commune, had proposed to pull down the Colonne Vendôme. He was punished for that but was able to flee into Swiss exile. And: At the Place Vendôme the store of Édouard Charvet is placed since 1877, the most elegant shirt and tie manufacturer in France. Leu's pieces of art are amongst other things understandable as complex and critical reflections of the fact that capitalism has beaten socialism with its fashion. The revolution failed, to put in another way, Charvet's silk-ties won.

We'd like to thank Arne Austrheim especially for introducing us to the three artists and to pursue the idea of an exhibition with young Norwegian artists in Cologne!

For further information and/or images, please contact the gallery.