

Christian Bär  
**Endlich keine Freunde Mehr**

8.1. - 5.2.2022

tell me how u really feel

There is plaster crumbling from the wall, nevertheless, the equally practised and effortless looking swirling of the bulbous glass tells us that the red wine is quite tasty. While this gesture alone says more than a thousand words, it could form the substance of a trilogy of novels, if a minimal setting would be added to it. Since there are innumerable combinations to combine information into a narrative, it is even more annoying that narrative painting is usually thought of as semi-realistic figures that stand in a local, temporal and/or modal context. A still life or an interior is still called narrative, but everything else is quickly labelled as non-narrative, contextual or, even more unfortunately, immediately as abstract, non-representational, concrete art. For centuries now, literature and songs have constantly shown that it is about how something is told, that narration is made up of sounds, scraps, fragments, impressions, that sound creates a narrative. It should be known that the how never merely includes the technically correct, fine or precise execution, but that the transmission of the amount of information must result in a suitable sound, and that this how thus coincides with an accumulation of affirming elements of the respective medium that bind the recipients, the suitable design means of all couleur. .

The fact that Christian Bär has realized that he only makes a mediocre singer-songwriter is a diverse enrichment for his paintings, because it was out of this awareness that he first spent a long time working on his sound. Sure, this sound should be contemporary, diverse, eclectic in a good sense, combining romance with irony, prosperity with fear, feel-good atmosphere with anger. After drawing from the fullness of the last century, using and processing visuals and ideas from a wide variety of eras, there was a sound in his paintings, fresh, nasty, playful, sometimes cheeky and smug, sometimes enlighteningly defining, technoid and handmade all in one, constantly searching for itself and certain that this finding of an appropriate sound is what his artistic work is all about.

Pain, sirens screaming in the ear, purple smacking on black and being pushed aside by dung brown, all blended into ochre mush, car noise and then in the background nothing but the gentle sound of the city river in the city park, calm dark blue on black, gently applied grey, catching your breath and a feeling of pleasure, then full speed and in a helicopter over the endless demonstrations, rotary sounds, red streaks and pink drops, fragments of words, echoes of slogans or declarations of love, tender green on coated fabric, mediating glazes, disgusting puddles of turpentine-distorted burgundy; a blossom emerges, there a laughter, the plants are withering and everything in the right order in the right place, roughly arranged, coherently composed.

In the past there was a reference to narration in Christian Bär's paintings, although sometimes only in the titles of the works. In the new works, however, the commitment to the narration is much greater. Figurative drawings can be discerned, texts fly around, quotations of other pictures can be seen clearly and all this decrees that every gesture, brushstroke, puddle and blob of paint, every rectangle or beam is given a role in the narrative. The obvious contingency of artistic practice being reworked into an orderly flow of phonetically interpolated elements. This is obviously an abstract narrative, lyrical thinking and depicting is shown in these paintings. Statements are being prepared, information is being compressed into plots: I know what you are feeling right now.

The countless singer-songwriters of the local scene, who still see the computer as something different, as a new tool at best, and still tried to somehow get something of the present across, have been kicked off the stage. The artificial fog and sporadic-unexpected strobo are switched on, here is now a show in which every effect device, from autotune to feedback emulator to wah-wah, can find its application. Piece by piece, a sound pattern develops that could manage to deal with parts of *everything*. Nowadays there are no more big narratives, no more truths, only singular piles of information that can be agreed upon thanks to single offers of narration. If these offers, as in Christian Bär's paintings, follow aesthetic rules and not the respective ideological principles, they can not only show and convey the world in a special and different way, they also have an inherent diplomatic capacity. Painting, perhaps the medium of expressing contingency par excellence, has always shown how information and narratives are dealt with in society, what significance randomness, as quantities of unsorted information, and truths, as negotiated narratives, have. Christian Bär's paintings have a sound that can be used to tell the stories of the present, between news feed, conspiracy fairy tales, the need for political action and moral paradigm shifts. They capture the diffuse side-by-side, summarise it and prepare it in such a way that even the gaps and contrasts can suddenly be enjoyed with understanding.

– Johannes Listewnik, 2021