

Pressrelease

July 2014

Steven Shearer

30 August to 25 October 2014

Opening on Friday, August 29, 6 to 8 pm, Limmatstr. 270, 8005 Zürich

Galerie Eva Presenhuber is delighted to announce a new exhibition of Canadian artist Steven Shearer.

Steven Shearer's practice encompasses many different medias, from found photography, drawing, and painting to collage and focuses on a melancholic vision of youth, tinted by strong references to the iconography of extreme metal culture. His world is one of alienation and repulsion towards the everyday, a world whose heroes are death-metal rockers, 1970s prefab boy bands and teen stars, amateur glam-rockers and guitar-wielding teenaged suburban dreamers. Shearer is not interested in the fame of his characters but much more so in their downfall. The artist applies to these themes an almost anthropological or phrenological approach, one in which he obsessively wanders and browses the internet to create a comprehensive archive of these images, organised by him within themes of his own. These subcultures are reflections of Shearer's own suburban youth, aiming at shedding light onto the insecurities and vulnerabilities of adolescents, characteristics that never quite disappear into adulthood and are at the core of the human soul.

Using this set of references as a starting point, Shearer displays in delicate drawings and extremely intricate paintings, portraits of these once famous faces, or unknown characters in a way that reminds one of Pre Raphaelite imagery. This exhibition focuses on portraiture, a development in the artist's vision whereby his imagery has overcome his archival obsession, creating anonymous, androgynous characters, whose averted gaze emphasises their objectification as well as their own self absorbed and egocentric entities.

On display is also a large group of Poems, a series of drawings that the artist has pursued throughout his career, inspired by scatological and blasphemous Black & Death Metal song titles and text written by the artist, it presents visions of the nihilistic sublime and draws attention to its operatic poetry but also to its relations with broader histories and traditions.

It is not the violence or the blasphemous aspect of these images that is most striking in these works, but indeed, Shearer's delicacy, sincerity and craftsmanship, successfully allowing the viewer to find himself in the experience of others.

Steven Shearer will have 2017 a big exhibition at the National Gallery of Canada in Ottawa. He has represented Canada at the 54th Venice Biennale, and has had solo exhibitions worldwide in institutions such as University Museum of Arts and Sciences, Mexico, 2008, New Museum, New York/NY, USA, 2008, The Power Plant, Toronto/ON, Canada, 2007, Ikon Gallery, Birmingham, UK, 2007, De Appel. Center for Contemporary Art, Amsterdam, Netherlands, 2007. Group exhibitions including his works have been held at Palais de Tokyo, Paris, FR, Seattle Art Museum, Seattle/WA, USA, Kunstforum Ostdeutsche Galerie, Regensburg, Germany, Renaissance Society, Chicago/IL, USA, Kunstmuseum Luzern, Luzern, Switzerland, Casino Luxembourg. Forum d'Art Contemporain, Luxembourg.

For further information please contact Maria Florut (m.florut@presenhuber.com) at the gallery.

Opening hours: Tuesday to Friday, 11 am – 6 pm
 Saturday, 11 am – 5 pm
 Or by appointment

Parallel shows: Wyatt Kahn
 30 August to 25 October 2014
 Löwenbräu Areal, Limmatstr. 270, 8005 Zürich
 1. Floor

Sam Falls
30 August to 25 October 2014
Maag Areal, Zahnradstr. 21, 8005 Zürich