

Press Release
May 2017

Tobias Pils
May 6 to June 17, 2017
39 Great Jones Street, New York, NY 10012
Opening: Friday, May 5, 6 pm to 8 pm

Eva Presenhuber is pleased to present a solo exhibition of paintings by Austrian artist Tobias Pils (born 1971). This will be Pils's first gallery exhibition in the US and also the inaugural show in Ms. Presenhuber's New York space, located at 39 Great Jones Street.

The exhibition will be comprised of new paintings. Pils complex compositions present a field that is neither entirely legible nor abstract, but rather exists (and evolves) between these seemingly disparate states of representation. The result are compositions that continually agitate and shift between surreal-like, anthropomorphic forms and more hard-edge abstractions, challenging the notion of a stable image or perception.

"His compositions of marks have no representational intent to guide them yet often result in suggestive figuration. He likens a section of one of his recent paintings to the fronds of "palms", while another, which displays a similar sequence of feather-like branching, contains a section that becomes to his eye an "arrow". An entirely natural, virtually absent-minded stroke of the brush, a gentle curving motion that seems hard-wired into the functioning of the human hand-leads to such figurative resemblance. The representational associations that appear to Pils arrive after the fact, or perhaps even during the process of painting, but without guiding the outcome. Depending on how the curves cluster or branch, they may suggest feathers, leaves on a stalk, or hair. Or nothing."¹

Pils was a recent Artist in Residence at the Chinati Foundation, which culminated in a presentation of new works at the John Chamberlain Building, Marfa, Texas. Prior to his residency, Pils presented an installation of 19 paintings, of various sizes, at Art Basel Art Unlimited 2016, Basel, Switzerland. Much like a puzzle, these paintings fit together to form a large, expansive work, where individual paintings assumed a communal role, resulting in a unified and immersive visual field. The concept of a site-specific installation, comprised of large format paintings was first explored in Pils's 2013 solo exhibition at the Secession, Vienna. Forthcoming exhibitions include a solo exhibition at the Josef Albers Museum Quadrat, Bottrop, Germany and the Kunsthalle Krems, Krems, Austria.

The exhibition in Bottrop (opening May 21, 2017) will be accompanied by a catalogue with essays by Heinz Liesbrock and Matthew Simms. On the occasion of his exhibition at Kunsthalle Krems (opening July 1, 2017) an artist book will be released with a poem by Henri Cole. In autumn 2017, Tobias Pils will present a collaborative exhibition with Los Angeles-based artist Michael Williams at Le Consortium in Dijon, France.

The current New York show is Pils's second solo exhibition with Eva Presenhuber. His first exhibition took place in 2015, at the gallery space at Löwenbräu Areal in Zurich, Switzerland. Tobias Pils was born in Linz (Austria) in 1971. He lives and works in Vienna.

For more information, please contact Christian Schmidt (c.schmidt@presenhuber.com).

¹From Richard Shiff's a succession of qualities, included in Tobias Pils's recently published book on the occasion of this exhibition.