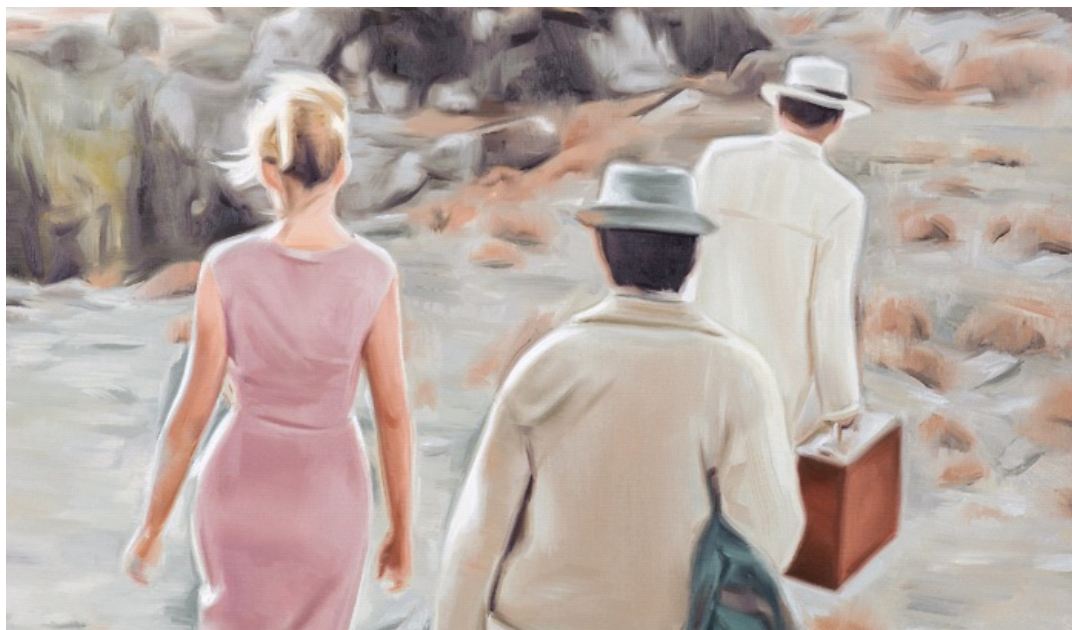


MARCIN MACIEJOWSKI

DIMMED COLOURS

SALZBURG VILLA KAST

29 Aug 2016 - 19 Nov 2016



Opening: Monday, 29th of August, 6pm

The artist will be present.

Galerie Thaddaeus Ropac presents its third solo exhibition by Polish artist Marcin Maciejowski – his first exhibition in the Salzburg premises. Maciejowski is a brilliant observer of modern life. He converts apparently unremarkable everyday scenes, photographs forgotten in archives and historical publications, into realistic paintings. *Fleeting* photographic pictorial worlds are *decelerated* through the analogue process of painting. In his typical virtuosic act of simplification and reduction, he combines a sometimes brash, comic-strip effect with a smooth, meticulous style, pastose in places, almost reminiscent of the Old Masters. In the early 16th century, the writer Baldassare Castiglione (1478-1529) established the term *sprezzatura* to describe the ability to carry out arduous tasks without apparent effort. Art historian Werner Busch once used the term in a lecture he gave in Berlin, to characterise the courtly ease of Rembrandt's late work. It is precisely this ease, this elegance, that represents the ideal to which Maciejowski aspires.

The exhibition title *Dimmed Colours*, says the artist, refers both to the palette he uses in these new works, and to his view of the current scenarios in international politics. Typically laconic, in this new series he mixes political slogans heard on the radio as he works, with motifs taken from his daily life or from the field of the *art world*; political statements often sound to him like the platitudes of an art critic. Here, the interplay of political rhetoric and artistic practice and their interpenetration is the leitmotiv. Minor personal concerns are mixed with fundamental political themes.

In Maciejowski's works, everyday scenes from the Cracow art scene are juxtaposed with art-historical icons which he tries to reproduce in painting, viewing them with admiration. "Maciejowski approached this new reality [of the cultural and political system changes since 1989 in Poland] with his trademark lack of pretension. He became an observer of contemporary life in both its banal and its official capacities, foregoing a close inspection of the world in favour of presenting its image, which he collects without feeling any urgent compulsion to compile them into a whole and comprehend them. [...] [The artist's] individuality and originality emerge in the selection process. After all, 'we only see what we're looking at', as John Berger once wrote." (Marek Swica)

Macrin Maciejowski was born in Babice near Cracow in 1974. From 1994 to 1996 he studied Architecture at the Polytechnic University and from 1996 to 2001 Graphic Arts at the Academy of Fine Arts in Cracow. Together with Rafal Bujnowski, Marek Firek, Wilhelm Sasnal and Josef Tomczyk, he founded the *Grupa Ladnie* (Pretty Group), which denied the myth of the artist as a creative genius, and questioned the power of art to change society.

Since the beginning of the 2000s Maciejowski's work has been exhibited internationally, and is represented in distinguished public collections such as that of the Belvedere/Vienna, Gallery for Contemporary Art Bunkier Sztuki/Cracow, Schauwerk/Sindelfingen, Astrup Fearnley Museum of Modern Art/Oslo, Centre Georges Pompidou/Paris, Whitney Museum of American Art/New York, San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, Thyssen-Bornemisza Collection and Los Angeles County Museum (LACMA).

The National Museum in Cracow held a comprehensive solo exhibition of Maciejowski's work from March until May 2010. This was followed by solo exhibitions in July/August 2010 in the Ostdeutschen Galerie/Regensburg and February - June 2013 in the BALTIC Centre for Contemporary Art/Gateshead.

Macrin Maciejowski lives and works in Cracow.