

Press Release - 12 July 2018

David Czupryn: He She It
28.10.18 - 06.01.19

Abstract:

The Kunsthalle Darmstadt installs the first institutional solo exhibition *He She It* for painter and draftsman David Czupryn (* 1983 Duisburg). Beginning with carpentry and sculpture, he turned to painting during his studies at the Art Academy in Düsseldorf. In his works, trompe-l'œil, the art of visual deception always known in painting, celebrates an unexpected comeback. However, he does not shy away from bright colours. Box-like spaces are reminiscent of stages, where enigmatic objects and mysterious figures appear. In dialogue with other arts, painting becomes a visual spectacle in David Czupryn's work.

The exhibition shows paintings of the past few years (2014-2018) together with new monumental canvases that deal with artificial creativity, underground and mainstream. *He She It* will feature 20 large-scale canvases (oil on canvas) besides 20 smaller works on paper (mixed media).

Unabridged text:

After presenting Florian Süßmayr's *Bilder für Deutsche Museen II* in 2016, the Kunsthalle Darmstadt, under the direction of León Krempel, is once again featuring a painter in a solo exhibition. David Czupryn (* 1983 Duisburg) began as a sculptor and in 2012, while still studying at the Düsseldorf Art Academy, switched to painting without losing sight of the neighboring discipline. Already his first painting, *Skulptur* (2012), represents parts of a work he had previously created *Ohne Titel* ("Untitled," 2010, figs. 1, 2) – a practice that he repeatedly employs.

One preeminent characteristic of David Czupryn is his use of the trompe-l'œil, the technique of visual deception known to painting from time immemorial and now celebrating an unexpected comeback. In a downright provocative manner, brush and paint simply depict surfaces, so that handwriting and gesture are negated as the principal emblems of painting. This gives the impression that the artist's pictures have been cast as a single element, so that they appear sculptural and not photo-realistic. Their space is shallow, box-like, enclosed by walls.

Czupryn's consistently large-format paintings evince a well-planned organization and meticulous equilibrium through translucent, layered colors; harmonious contrasts; quiet backgrounds and bases; motifs of movement enhanced by arrows (fig. 3) or far-reaching limbs (fig. 4); broken symmetries; falling and weightless aspects (fig. 5); linked, intertwined, opened and transparent elements; pictures within the picture; and arrangements resembling still lifes.

When his pictures contain figures, these tend to be reminiscent of phantasms, jointed dolls or toys improvised out of all sorts of objects. The paintings have a disquieting more than an entertaining effect. For the artist, they can serve as the vehicle for a story without beginning or ending. They present quite varied personalities, as is illustrated by a juxtaposition of *Figure of Speech* (2014) and *Soul Full of Poison* (2016) (figs. 6, 7). David Czupryn attempts to approach them, to find appropriate attributes for them. Their character issues an invitation to speculation. Could it be that vampires are lurking about and waiting for us?

Enigma also surrounds the many various objects out of which the artist's painted installations are composed. They are based on photographic models from his collection. These often include interpretations of works of art. Thus in *He She It* (2017), David Czupryn integrated a *Head* by Naum Gabo, a *Folding Sculpture* by Lygia Clark and a *Corner Counter-Relief* by Vladimir Tatlin (fig. 8). Are allusions such as these a matter of hieroglyphs with concealed meaning, art-historical cross-references, tributes to esteemed artists or decorative accessories?

The Kunsthalle Darmstadt is proud of the opportunity to present, with a selection of some twenty-five paintings done between 2014 and 2018, the first comprehensive overview of the creative output by an artist who knows how to entice painting out of its reticence and to transform it into a visual drama in dialogue with all the arts, not only with sculpture.

The exhibition will feature several large formats including the programmatic picture *Alternative Lifeforms* (fig. 9), on which David Czupryn is currently working. The theme of the picture is the arts of sculpture, literature, music and painting; it has to do with the abandonment of the body and the search for alternative lifeforms. Also in a state of development are two paintings that make reciprocal reference to each other. David Czupryn is copying the painting *Coups de Bâtons* ("Sticks," 1937) by the Egyptian Surrealist Mayo in order to proceed from there to a memento of the Love Parade.

Also on display in addition to paintings will be about twenty out of hundreds of works on paper which David Czupryn produces casually day after day and then combines into series. They bear witness to his interest in the portrait and the tronie (a work with striking facial features). Proceeding from broad art-historical sources but also from facial composites done for police investigations, he designs grotesques

that lay claim to a place between Arcimboldo and Thomas Schütte (fig. 10).

He She It is curated by Dr León Krempel, Curator and Director. The exhibition is accompanied by a catalogue published by Snoeck and a programme of talks and events in the Kunsthalle.

Biography:

Born in 1983 in Duisburg, David Czupryn studied with Prof. Georg Herold at the Düsseldorf Art Academy from 2008 to 2011. In 2011, he switched to the class of Prof. Lucy McKenzie; from 2013 to 2015, he attended the class of Prof. Tomma Abts. He has participated in numerous exhibitions in Italy, Germany and Switzerland, Great Britain and the USA. David Czupryn lives and works in Düsseldorf.

Text: Dr León Krempel; Translation: George Frederick Takis

Facts and figures

Curator:

Dr. León Krempel, Director

Title and exhibition runtime:

David Czupryn: *He She It*
28.10.18 - 06.01.19

Catalogue:

David Czupryn: *He She It*, Kunsthalle Darmstadt 2018, edited by León Krempel, Köln: Snoeck, 2018; ISBN 978-3-86442-263-8
German/English, approx. 24 pages, 20 colour images, Date of publication: 26 october 2018; Price: approx. 26 €

Press Preview:

Thursday, 25 october 2018, 11am

Opening:

Saturday, 27 october 2018, 7pm

Address & opening times:

Kunsthalle Darmstadt, Steubenplatz 1, 64293 Darmstadt
info@kunsthalle-darmstadt.de, +49(0)6151-891184
Tue/Wed/Fri 11am-6pm; Thu 11am-9pm; Sat/Sun, holidays 11am-5pm

Admission:

5 €; 3 € reduced (students, trainees, ICOM members, members of Verband Deutscher Kunsthistoriker, groups from 10 people) Free admission for members of Kunstverein Darmstadt and ADKV, children under the age of 18, refugees, owners of a TeilhaberCard and ALG II receivers.

Images

David Czupryn: He She It

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1

Skulptur, 2012

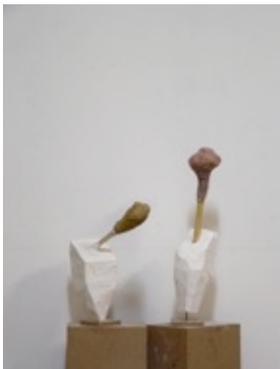
Oil on concrete, 100 x 45 cm



2

Ohne Titel ("Untitled"), 2010

Plaster, wood, plastic



3

Pseudo Twins, 2017

Oil on canvas, 200 x 150 cm



4

Both at Once, 2016

Oil on canvas, 250 x 180 cm



5

Well Triggered Lifeforms, 2017
Oil on canvas, 180 x 130 cm



6

Figure of Speech, 2014
Oil on canvas, 185 x 130 cm



7

Soul Full of Poison, 2016
Oil on canvas, 180 x 130 cm



8

He She It, 2017
Oil on canvas, 180 x 150 cm



9

Alternative Lifeforms, 2018

Oil on canvas, 280 x 480 cm



10

Martin Luther (after Lucas Cranach d.J.), 2014

Watercolor, graphite, colored pencil on hand-made paper, 24 x 17 cm



Press Contacts & Images

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