

Mickael Marman
zeit und gefühl

March 21–April 27, 2024

Television, Facebook, bestsellers, maps and newspapers; the creation of global narratives goes back to the very beginning of Mickael Marman’s artistic practice. How is identity produced? What narrative is one a part of and who’s the one to tell it? These questions run through Marman’s abstract reality, touching upon the history of painting, educational matters, and personal issues.

I first met Mickael at a bar following an opening in Copenhagen, around a decade ago. He had his statements, I quickly realized. While sharing a drink, the discussion turned to his top of mind: Frankfurt, Art School, and the traveling life of an Artist. Still an Art Student, Marman used his humorous way of describing the prestigious Städelschule, where he was a student, as a sinking ship with no future and full of desperate people trying to hold on to something already lost. What he declared stuck with me. It was 2015 and I was dreaming of entering the world of international contemporary art that he’d just outed.

Beginning with the above anecdote has nothing to do with the actual state of the Art School, nor do I mean to hold Marman accountable for something he once said. It was a time, it was a feeling, and it was kind of on point.

A few years later, I went to the launch of *Notes Toward* (2018), a beautiful blue covered book and Marman’s first publication comprised of travel descriptions, diary notes, drawings, and reproductions of his painterly work. Through poetic cynicism he reflected upon tourism, individuality, global infrastructure, love, capitalism, and hustlers—topics that are integral parts of his practice. The publication was my entry into this Norwegian born artist’s elegantly raw, and politically engaged skill set of connecting Knausgård to the everyday life and artistic communities in the Gambia, where his father’s family lives. Seeing oatmeal, cereal, and plastic bags included in Marman’s paintings brings a more materialistic and interconnected world view than what the literary genre of autobiography offers.

Marman’s new paintings for “zeit und gefühl,” his first solo exhibition at 47 Canal and first presentation in the United States, follow paths of playful expression and move towards sensitive

notions of things being hidden. A pond of questions emerge. Grids, repetition, framing, feelings, and dots combine with the opacity of oil, pigment, sand, and blurred newspaper to communicate a jumble of possible readings. The color palette, convincingly chaotic, incorporates a touch of Scandinavian 19th century landscape painting and Parisian fauve. This unexpected presence of tradition within Marman's work gives awareness to its claustrophobic trappedness. Haunted by its own image, his paintings keep being silently loud.

The application of newspapers collected from last autumn onwards functions significantly as documentation of Marman's methodology, not unlike the inevitability of everyday life colliding with human catastrophe. Marman's work resists stylistic categorization, but subscribes to different genres and historic periods, raising questions about painting's political potential. Abstract Expressionism intertwines with experimental attitudes, hinting towards the German art scene and painterly development since the 1960's—a time when painting as artistic medium and the capitalistic object were re-evaluated in terms of its lack of political engagement, due to its role in bourgeois discourse.

By making the abstract nuanced, Marman's paintings touch on very concrete (subject) matter. What we see is not fiction. While addressing the relationship between time and feelings, Marman creates a place in his paintings where this space has collapsed. The painting becomes a situated metaphor of our time, where opacity and transparency "seem" to co-exist.

Excitingly, and perhaps due to contemporary German practices, from Sigmar Polke to Jutta Koether, Marman elaborates on color and composition with enthusiasm and an awareness that abstraction can be as intimately more personal and powerful than the literary forces we're constantly exposed to.

—Mai Dengsoe, art historian and curator

Mickael Marman is a Norwegian-Gambian artist currently based in Berlin, Germany. He was educated at Staedelschule Frankfurt and HFBK Hamburg. He is the founder of bbberlin, a nomadic art project.

Mickael Marman

Born 1983, Oslo, Norway
Lives and works in Berlin

Education

- 2017 Masters of Fine Art, in the class of Michael Krebber, Städelschule, Frankfurt, Germany
- 2016 Masters of Fine Art, Hochschule für Bildende Künste, Hamburg, Germany

Solo & Two- Person Exhibitions

- 2023 *Gemaelde*, Kunstnerforbundet, Oslo, Norway
- 2022 *KMS/ACC/FRA/TXL/CPH.*, presented by Bizarro, 27DAGE Art Hub Copenhagen
Heimweh, Santolarosa/Centralbanken, Oslo, Norway
- 2021 *Schwarzarbeit*, with Stella Sieber, hosted by Mother Culture, Come Over Chez Maliks,
Hamburg, Germany
- 2020 *Man and Sea*, Damien & The Love Guru, Brussels, Belgium
- 2019 *Colleages*, Sangt Hipolyt, Berlin
- 2018 *Keeping Up Appearances*, with Bradley Davis, Neuer Essener Kunstverein, Essen,
Germany
- 2017 *Time Delay*, Bad Bentheim, Bentheim, Germany
- 2016 *Blackberry*, Jacky Strenz, Frankfurt, Germany
Mickael Marman, Johan, Frankfurt, Germany
- 2014 *Layer*, Johan Berggren Gallery, Malmö, Sweden

Group Exhibitions

- 2021 *Having a party (hope you will be there)*, hosted by Damien & The Love Guru, Conceptual
Fine Arts, Milan
Salon Solaire, Sun Works, Zurich, Switzerland
- 2020 *Living As*, hosted by Sangt Hipolyt, Loggia, Munich, Germany
Untitled (But Loved), Bosse & Baum, London
Architecture Now, Cucina, Copenhagen
- 2019 *Techos y Ventana*, Mexico City
Berlin Program for Artists, Beach Office, Berlin
Olje Og Begjaer, Qb Gallery, Oslo, Norway

Group Exhibitions (continued)

- 2018 *The Way Things Go Pt 3*, PS120, Berlin
- 2017 *Home Of The Brave*, MMK, Frankfurt, Germany
Die Walz 2.0, Frankfurt, Germany
Rödiger Schöttle Galerie, Munich, Germany
Core Remission, Gr-und, Berlin
- 2016 *My Third Wish Has Always Been Three More*, Infinite Berlin
More Is More, Schloss Schöngrabern, Vienna, Austria
Hoefijzerschilderij, Real Positive, Cologne, Germany
Mmmmmmmmmmmmmmm, No Place, Oslo, Norway
Neolithic Graffiti, Qb Gallery, Oslo, Norway
- 2015 *The Human Mountain (Towards the light)*, Edvard Munch's Studio, Oslo, Norway
- 2014 *Absolventen Ausstellung*, Hochschule für Bildende Künste, Hamburg, Germany
- 2013 *One Needs A Certain Amount Of Trouble*, Outpost, Amsterdam
- 2012 ----- *Last Minute Group*, Amsterdam
- 2011 *Notations*, Msg4, Amsterdam
Word Perfect, Oslo, Norway
Slumdogs not Millionares, No Place, Oslo, Norway
Let The Luv In Take A Hold One Night Only, UKs, Oslo, Norway
- 2010 *S.N.I.M*, Podium, Oslo, Norway
Oil on Wood, Dortmund Bodega, Oslo, Norway
Higher Than Hell, Galleri Knekt, Oslo, Norway
High And Luv, Galleri Tjuvholmen, Oslo, Norway

Grants and awards

- 2018 Norwegian Artists Association, Working Grant
- 2017 Bad Bentheim Ruisdael Stipend
- 2016 Norwegian Cultural Department Diverse Grant for New Educated Artists
- 2014 Norwegian Cultural Department Diverse Grant

Publications

- 2021 *Having a party (hope you will be there)*, by Olamiju Fajemisin (Contributor), edited by Mickael Marman, published by Damien & The Love Guru, Brussels, 2021

Publications (continued)

2018 *Notes Towards*, 2018

Published work

2021 Marman, Mickael, "Visitor From Another World, about Lee Scratch Perry," *Kunstkritikk*, 2021

Provence SS 2021: Scandal Issue, edited by Olamiju Fajemisin, Philip Pilekjær and Tobias Kaspar

2017 Marman, Mickael, *Home Of The Brave*, published by MMK, Frankfurt a.M.

Bibliography

2022 Jung, Nora, "Tribulations of a Child Actor", *Kunstkritikk*, February 16, 2022

2017 "Core Remission," *AQNB*, 2017