

Liminal Experience – Peer Boehm

Paintings and Drawings

Exhibition from 19th January to 27th February 2021,
extended until 13th March 2021

During the lockdown, the exhibition can only be visited on our website.
The gallery's office is, however, staffed. You can reach us by phone and email.

Gipsstraße 3

10119 Berlin-Mitte

Germany

T +49 30 261 70 91

F +49 30 284 96 211

galerie@poll-berlin.de

www.poll-berlin.de

Tues – Sat, 12 to 6 pm

and by appointment

Galerie Poll is presenting the painter and graphic artist Peer Boehm for the first time in a solo exhibition entitled *Liminal Experience*. The artist, from Cologne, previously appeared at the Galerie Poll in the thematic exhibition *remember – dream – draw* during the summer of 2019.

Working on canvas, in watercolour and in drawings made with ballpoint pen, Peer Boehm links memories with images of journeys and urban spaces. His motifs are based on photos he finds in photo albums from flea markets or on the internet.

For this exhibition, Peer Boehm searched specifically for photos related to the city of Berlin as it was divided by the Wall. The image from which the exhibition takes its title is composed of two superimposed scenes. One layer, dark blue, shows shadowy cars waiting at a checkpoint – Checkpoint Charlie. The other visual layer, red with human silhouettes, reveals a throng of journalists pointing their cameras at two men who are solemnly greeting each other. On the left is Leonid Brezhnev; opposite him is Walter Ulbricht – or is it Erich Honecker? The viewer must decide. The Berlin Wall, too, can be located only after taking a closer look: a red line runs diagonally from the left to the right edge of the image, with a propeller aircraft gliding over it.

The image *Tug of War*, in landscape format but also concentrated on the colours blue and red, is grounded in blue by Pariser Platz with an indication of the Brandenburg Gate, overlaid by the outlines of children at play in a tug of war. The title can also be taken as a reference to the decades-long showdown between the Eastern Bloc and the West.

Boehm follows his intuition in selecting the photographs on which his images are based. But there are recurring motifs: he is as equally interested in the depiction of events stored in a

society's collective memory as he is in personal memories of his origin, childhood, and family.

Sometimes Boehm names the places being represented, for example, in *Berlin-Müllerstraße*. On the narrow vertical format image with transparently applied ink and watercolour, passers-by are reflected in the puddles of the rain-soaked pavement. In *Home Is Where It's Most Beautiful*, Berlin's shopping mile Tauentzienstrasse is recognizable with an old double-decker bus, as is the now-demolished pedestrian bridge that crossed this busy street for many years.

Characteristic of Boehm's visual language is the principle of erasure, which allows his motifs to emerge from contrasts of light and dark. For this purpose, the artist uses a computer to reduce his photographic source material to what he sees as its essential forms. The empty spaces open up fields for individual associations. Peer Boehm sometimes draws on found objects such as sea charts or individual pages from ledgers, often then mounting the works on wood for presentation. Origins and home, travel and distance, are among the themes that run through his work. This is made clear by the constantly recurring titles, *Home Is Where It's Most Beautiful* and *Elsewhere*.

Peer Boehm, born in Cologne in 1968, studied art history, archaeology, and German language and literature at the University of Cologne from 1990 to 1994. In 1997 he co-founded the producer gallery Kunstgewinn and in 1999 the artist group itinerarti in Cologne. In 2006 he founded the artist group Die Kunstkreditkarte – Was Schönes für unterwegs, and he has been a member of the art association 68elf e.V. since 2011. Peer Boehm lives and works as an independent artist in Cologne.

Exhibition Catalogue

Grenzerfahrung – Peer Boehm

Malerei und Zeichnung

with a text by Jochen L. Stöckmann and numerous coloured illustrations

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