

Ellen Gronemeyer

Bochum

April 29 - June 17, 2017

Kimmerich gallery is pleased to present *Bochum* by Ellen Gronemeyer, her third exhibition with the gallery.

Building upon her characteristically dense color palate and use of caricature, *Bochum* consists of eleven oil paintings created this year. Midsize canvases range in dimension from an intimate portrait on canvas board to a larger wall-filling scene. Walking around the gallery's single room, the viewer finds an array of vantage points into Gronemeyer's whimsical universe. As Gronemeyer layers dark blacks and grays atop coats of bright colors, a soft glow emerges from the dark canvases.

Bochum refers to the song by Herbert Grönemeyer, the chart-topping, German rock star with a last name similar to Gronemeyer's. Frequently asked if she is related to the singer, Gronemeyer playfully named her show after one of his biggest hits and used its lyrics to title her paintings. Through this appropriation, Gronemeyer frames questions of identity and surveillance that are central to her paintings.

"I'm interested in who is looking at who," Gronemeyer comments, "I try to call out this dynamic of mutual observation and surveillance between the painting and the viewer." Eyes populate her paintings as starry shapes or in a vacuous gaze. By assigning these empty orifices to human and anthropomorphized figures, Gronemeyer offers "an ambivalent exploration of consciousness."

Gronemeyer's paintings are often read in dialogue with Art Brut, as her dense canvases and deranged portraits recall the work of Jean Dubuffet and Madge Gil. The eyes that populate these works also evoke the disembodied eyes obsessively etched by Yayoi Kusama. Building upon this cannon, Gronemeyer's paintings exist in a landscape that she identifies as a twilight zone between light and dark.

Ellen Gronemeyer (b. 1979, Fritzlar, Germany) graduated from the University of Fine Arts Hamburg and has shown in numerous solo exhibitions in Germany and London and group exhibitions internationally. She lives and works in Berlin, Germany.