

ROBERTS PROJECTS

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
August 26, 2019

Lenz Geerk
Mixed Blessings
September 14 - October 12, 2019
Opening Reception: September 14th, 6-8pm



Lenz Geerk *The Croissant*, 2019
Acrylic on canvas, 31.5 x 45.28 in (80 x 115 cm)

Robert Projects is pleased to announce an exhibition of recent paintings by Swiss artist Lenz Geerk. Geerk is a figurative painter whose subjects of portraits, landscapes and still-lives are portrayed in exceptional intensity and luminosity. He manipulates traditional techniques to bring distinct render to every figure through soft acrylic color. The nearly monochromatic palettes, only occasionally warmed by other colors, add an aura of heightened emotional tension.

Geerk's new series is an insightful examination into the undercurrent of the threat, uncertainty, and fear of the current day. Unlike "The Table Portraits", Geerk's first solo show with the gallery, there is no formal link between the individual works of this show. What ultimately connects the works on view is an underlying feeling of domestic suspense, fueled by an unsettling lack of faith in larger institutions.

Today's world is one defined by perpetual struggle. It is dystopic, unequal and harsh. The contours of a new age have taken shape, the result of an unpredictable sociopolitical climate, the distribution of wealth – or rather the lack of it – a cumulative sense of loss of opportunity and perhaps more importantly, the loss of agency in a world in which globalization has moved faster than the individuals upholding it. The direct consequence of this is the unsettling collapse of boundaries on a global scale.

Not everyone takes this affront the same way. Fascinated by spectacle, some enjoy. Some have no other recourse than to trudge through it, in high dudgeon. Others build fortresses, either mentally or physically or both. Among those predisposed to the leisure-luxury life, there is the enjoyment in the impermeability of the domestic sphere to curtail the outside world and its harsh realities: breakfast in bed on china, fine art on the wall, beautiful expensive jewelry. A golden leash, but a leash nonetheless.

Approaching the exhibition room as a mutable space that is highly charged with the potential, Geerk's staging suggests a setting in which these motifs in the work are mirrored within the emotions experienced from the show. The lighting is deliberate and forceful. Black – the void – predominates the painting frame. Here, the shadow is as important as the light, for not more. Light is used to bring into focus the smallest of objects, gestures, emotions. With the addition of abstract shadows, the effect is far more powerful and the sense of unease that much stronger.

Perhaps one of the most key visual techniques Geerk employs, in addition to lighting, is his use and manipulation of perception through perspective. We simultaneously look both at and down at his subjects, so far as we see all of them, bare. This intensified sensibility is both seductive and disturbing. The subjects in the paintings look past each other, looking expectant, their relationships endlessly complicated.

Geerk's paintings should not be read as pessimistic. Rather, they are a cautionary tale in self-reflection and positive action. How to process mourning when the rift is still yet to be defined. On the precipice of change, there is one last, small realization that the future has yet to be decided, and that there is no way but in.

Lenz Geerk was born in Basel, Switzerland in 1988 and grew up with a fondness for classic modern art and comic books. He studied painting at Kunstakademie Düsseldorf (2008-2013). Recent solo exhibitions include Galeria Acappella, Naples; Galerie Valentin, Paris; Galeria Mascota, Mexico City; Gerhard Hofland Gallery, Amsterdam; The Cabin, Los Angeles, among others. Geerk resides and lives in Düsseldorf, Germany.

Mixed Blessings is the artist's second solo show with the gallery.

For additional information, please contact Camille Weiner at +1.323.549.0223, camille@robertsprojectsla.com.

Gallery hours are Tuesday - Saturday, 11:00am - 6:00pm.

Roberts Projects is located between Fairfax Avenue and La Cienega Boulevard.

Parking is available on the street and at Dunn Edwards located 1/2 block east of the gallery.