

JONATHAN MEESE
A.R.T. IS TOTAL "FAMILY-BUSINESS"!
AGRIPPINA=ARTMOTHERZ
NERO=ARTSOLDIER
(CÄSAREN-ROULETTE, NO PROBLEM, YEAH)
10 February - 27 April 2024

Tim Van Laere Gallery presents Jonathan Meese's sixth solo exhibition with the gallery as well as his first show in Rome.

Jonathan Meese (b. 1970, Tokyo, lives and works in Berlin and Ahrensburg) is known for his versatile oeuvre, which includes exuberant paintings, extravagant installations and ecstatic performances, writing, as well as impressive sculptures in various media. With its rich and personal mythology, bursting with symbols, neologisms and metaphors, the artist's multimedia work arouses fascination.

Seemingly effortlessly, Meese manages to distinguish himself in each genre with an independent and unique vocabulary that allows his works to exude a visual energy, which, according to curator Robert Fleck, is unparalleled since Picasso. His practice is rooted in the German traditions of Dada and Expressionism and the artist's work should be seen as a dialogue between images; focused not so much on the individual works, but on their cumulative impact and their interrelationships. This is intrinsically linked to Meese's core idea of *Diktatur der Kunst*, a new world order in which art is the legislative power, and is the basis of all life and creation. This utopian approach runs like a thread through his oeuvre, bringing together the individual parts of his oeuvre into a *Gesamtkunstwerk*.

For the solo exhibition at *Palazzo Donarelli Ricci*, Jonathan Meese draws inspiration from the powerful imperial dynasties of Ancient Rome. Through new paintings, drawings, sculptures, a video installation and manifestos, the viewer gets a glimpse of the prototypical Caesar, his environment, behaviors and family. Among them Agrippina, Nero, Caligula, Drusilla, Commodus, Galba, Julius Caesar, Claudius, Tiberius, Nero's cat, Agrippina's dog, Caesarion, Cleopatra, the gladiators and many more. Characterized as GESAMTKUNSTWERK ITALIA, GESAMTKUNSTWERK ROME, GESAMTKUNSTWERK "TOTAL EMPIRE OF ART," the entire exhibition acts as a tender declaration of love to Ancient Rome and its rich history.

Meese demands for GESAMTKUNSTWERK EUROPE, THE GESAMTKUNSTWERK PLANET EARTH, WE NEED THE GESAMTKUNSTWERK COSMOS, in which the world of art knows no boundaries, and all disguises or role-playing is permitted and even necessary. Art is total freedom, an arena in which anything can be used and transformed. Censorship has no place here; after all, art is free of any ideology. Art, as total leadership of love, is the force that destroys ideologies to usher in a new world order of total wonder and triumph. Art is the undisputed ruler of a glorious future!

Jonathan Meese has exhibited worldwide in museums and leading art galleries, including solo exhibitions at Pinakothek der Moderne, Munich; Kunsthistorisches Museum Wien, Vienna; CAC Málaga, Málaga; Deichtorhallen Hamburg and Schirn Kunsthalle Frankfurt.

His works are included in numerous international collections, including Centre Pompidou, Paris; Kunsthistorisches Museum Wien, Austria; Harald Falckenberg Collection, Hamburg; Holstebro Museum, Holstebro; Louisiana Museum of Modern Art, Humlebæk; Essl Collection, Vienna; Museum of Contemporary Art, Miami; SMAK, Ghent; Statens Museum for Kunst, Copenhagen; Taguchi Art Collection, Tokyo and Musée d'art Moderne et Contemporain, Strasbourg.