

GALERIAPLAN B

Adrian Ghenie

Nightscape

Opening: November 17, 18 - 21 h

November 17, 2017 – January 27, 2018

Tuesday – Saturday, 12 - 18 h

Potsdamer Strasse 77 - 87, 10785 Berlin

Galeria Plan B is pleased to announce the solo exhibition of Adrian Ghenie, to open on Friday, the 17th of November 2017.

Nightscape is an exhibition that originates from a historical account in the artist's own life. The sequence of images and situations is drawn from the City of Cluj in Romania, during a period just before Adrian Ghenie began his studies at the Art University.

Nightscape recalls both the artist's special state of mind, and a suspended, highly subjective sense of time. After the first unsuccessful attempt to join the Art University, Ghenie spent a year at his grandmother's house, situated high on a hill above Cluj and surrounded by a large garden. The house was on a street that still preserved something of the atmosphere of what it was like to live in the peripheries of a city in 'the old days'. The temporal fragments and the physical spaces depicted in these works by Ghenie are then unsurprisingly exact, in as much as the characters of his paintings are borrowed from the immediate proximity of his then situation. The dialectic between the visual mediums involved in this exhibition – drawing, collage, painting – is just as precise and explicit.

Transposed into images, the places and people gain a particular texture which distinguishes them as emerging from this highly particular context. Although his social status was uncertain during this period, Ghenie considers this year of his life to be crucially formative – it was a fertile year because of the very absence of social and educational constraints – and so the artist's memory of it became mediated by the materiality of things which he never “found again in another place”.

In contrast to the temporal and spatial precision inherent in these works, the subject is conspicuous by its absence; or, perhaps more accurately, the subject always seems to be 'somewhere' else, even in a surreal or philosophical sense: the cat is there, but sleeping, a universal beast, its dormant state suggests passivity or at least a pause. The mother is smoking (there hardly exists a more banal gesture), but the function of the pose of a person drawing on a cigarette as a symbol and metaphor for 'stepping out of oneself' has become part of common usage. Meanwhile, in a self-portrait, the artist is grilling meat in a most absent-minded sort of way, mindlessly keeping himself busy.

The mundane nature of the subjects' preoccupations stands in sharp contrast to their actual visual realisation on paper or canvas – with the baroque-like magnitude of their forms emphasised by the use of repetition and the accompaniment of a cosmic, almost saturnian atmosphere. The “disparity” between the grand physical depiction of the subject versus their banal gestures, which seem unfitting or unbecoming, is troubling but it also serves as the source of a necessary tension in the works. It irritates and it provokes but it also therefore encourages *Nightscape* to be read as an anti-narrative exhibition; one that touches instead on the universalism of shared and felt experiences rather than the telling of a story.

The source of the sublime in these works of Ghenie is not conjured up by a character, but by the relationship between all the elements in the paintings. Even death itself is represented as an ordinary, rather than an exceptional moment, and fittingly stands as the final work of the exhibition. The 'extraordinary' is anchored in the pictorial formula common to visual sources such as the Jacopo Tintoretto, Giorgio de Chirico, Otto Dix, and later transposed into the cinematic image (a source which has been a constant well of inspiration for Ghenie's painting). In this case the artist employs a technique similar to the one used by the cult director David Lynch (his filmography being one of the key sources for Ghenie's pictorial vocabulary), where the extraordinary emerges from apparent normality, then immediately the status quo is reverted.

Nightscape offers us the all-encompassing vision of a world frozen in non-action. It is a cosmic vista liberated from easy statements but amplified by its emotional content which springs from the fertile imaginings of the artist during this formative period in his working life.

Adrian Ghenie co-founded Galeria Plan B twelve years ago. He decided to exhibit these works – so defined by self reflection and intimacy – in recognition of the gallery's emergence from shared beginnings.

For further reference, the text *Rememberment of Things Past* written by Mihnea Mircan and first published in *Parkett* – The Parkett Series with Contemporary Artists, Vol. 99, 2017, will be available as an exhibition handout.

Adrian Ghenie, born 1977 in Baia Mare, Romania, lives and works in Berlin. Previous solo exhibitions include: *Recent Paintings*, Pace Gallery, New York (2017); *Darwin's Room*, the Romanian Pavilion at the 56th Venice Biennale (2015); *New Paintings*, Thaddaeus Ropac, Paris (2015); Contemporary Art Center (CAC), Malaga (2014); *On the Road to... Tarascon*, Plan B, Berlin (2013, with Navid Nuur); *Pie-Fights and Pathos*, Museum for Contemporary Art, Denver (2012); S.M.A.K. Museum, Ghent (2010); The National Museum of Contemporary Art, Bucharest (2009). Previous group exhibitions include: *Cher(e)s Ami(e)s. New presentation of the contemporary collections*, Centre Pompidou, Paris (2016); *Très Traits*, Fondation Vincent van Gogh, Arles (2016); *Mapping Bucharest: Art, Memory and Revolution 1916 – 2016*, MAK, Vienna (2015); *I will go there, take me home*, The Metropolitan Art Center, Belfast (2015); *Six Lines of Flight*, Museum of Modern Art (MOMA), San Francisco (2012); *Painting Forever*, Kunst-Werke Institute for Contemporary Art (KW), Berlin (2013); *Francis Bacon and the Existential Condition in Contemporary Art*, Palazzo Strozzi, Florence (2012).

In parallel to the exhibition at Plan B, a solo show of Adrian Ghenie is on view at Galerie Judin, Berlin, November 18, 2017 – February 3, 2018.

For more information, please contact the gallery at contact@plan-b.ro and +49.30.39805236.