

Martin Eder

Monsters of Silence

Galerie Isa is delighted to present ***Monsters of Silence***, the first solo exhibition of German artist, Martin Eder in India.

Eder is widely regarded as one of Germany's most important artists. He is concerned with deconstructing the world around him and questioning the images that are presented as icons of beauty and desirability. Eder grew up in the German countryside. To outsiders it was an idyllic haven of rural beauty. Paradoxically though, the area where he lived had one of the highest suicide and rape rates in Germany. No one discussed these alarming occurrences. Eder thinks the reason for this is so long as these things were going on behind closed doors, most people didn't have to think about or confront them. They were there nonetheless, however, dark 'monsters of silence'.

The question of how to represent something dark in the midst of something beautiful has been a constant preoccupation for Eder and a persistent motif in his practice. At times he has delved into the territory of the abject in his painting, deliberately interfacing the border between sensual eroticism and unsettling- even disturbing - personifications of human desires.

Eder is adept at creating fantastical worlds. At first glance they may appear to be luxuriant, dreamy visions, but closer inspection usually reveals them to be dystopian nightmares; edgy, ugly and dysfunctional playgrounds that have become prisons for their protagonists. Whatever the situation though, the environment Eder creates is always consistently believable. As a teenager he was fascinated by the glitter balls of local discos. These moments served as a means of escape for him, where he could focus on the music, the refraction of the light on the people in the room and the throng of bodies. This short time period became a world in itself, an alternate reality that the young Eder could inhabit. The artist is still fascinated by the possibility of parallel universes as proposed by the quantum physicist Hugh Everett III, who argued that parallel universes are created every time we make a decision.

Eder's interest in science and nature has long underpinned his work. As a musician as well as an artist, he is intrigued by chaos theory: a study of the how simple patterns can be generated by the complicated underlying behaviour of individuals within a system. An investigation of nature and the relationship between certain, symbolic animals such as the owl, and gargantuan depictions of flowers - that though beautiful, are rendered threatening because of their monstrous proportions - form the basis of this exhibition. The resulting eight paintings divide between representations of these symbols which can be interpreted as epitomising the essence of (in the case of the owls), night and winter, and (with the flowers), day and springtime.

Though the paintings have a definite beauty, as is to be expected of the keen-eyed, thought-provoking Eder, all is not what it seems in these visions of Eden. Look closely and you will discover that an intruder has broken into Paradise and darkness has crept - albeit silently - into its ecosystem.

Jane Neal