

GALERIE ANTOINE ERTASKIRAN

JUXTAPOZ

Art & Culture

Interview: Canadian Painter Kim Dorland On the "Same Old Future"

Arsenal Contemporary // March 07, 2018 - April 22, 2018

March 02, 2018 | in Painting



GALERIE ANTOINE ERTASKIRAN

Arsenal Contemporary NY recently partnered with **Edythe** for an upcoming exhibition featuring works by Canadian painter, **Kim Dorland**. On view from March 7 through April 22, 2018, *Same Old Futures* will be part of the gallery's mission to promoting dialogues between Canadian artists and their international contemporaries.

Consisting of 12 new oils that will be on display simultaneously with video piece *Synchronicity* by **Robin Meier**, the show continues Dorland's ongoing body of impasto paintings featuring wooded landscapes. For this particular body of work, the artist wanted to represent the connection between humans and the wilderness, especially the image of nature as a public dumping ground, by portraying the forests scrawled with graffiti. Using accented hues of bright, almost unnatural pigments, he constructs peculiar ambience which represent the unique mood that these settings can create.

We got an early look at all the works painted for this exhibition, and got to talk with the Vancouver-based artist about the thought process behind these paintings and his personal connection with this particular theme.

Sasha Bogojev: What attracts you to portraying the nature/wilderness?

Kim Dorland: I was born and raised in Canada and still live here. We're never very far from the woods here. It informs so much of what we do - from our taste in art to our holiday choices. For me, the woods represents nostalgia, identity and place. More recently I have found myself drawn to the woods because they seem so "now" in term of our political/social/environmental realities. For me the woods also function as a stand-in for contemporary anxiety and dislocation.



GALERIE ANTOINE ERTASKIRAN

Your color choices are creating a very spooky ambiance, is that intentional?

Absolutely. I'm more interested in creating mood or psychology than I am in illustrating a specific space.

What draws you towards using such vibrant, artificial looking tones when portraying nature (the bright pinks, oranges, even greens)?

Because I'm not trying to depict a realistic image of nature - nature is more of a stand-in, or vehicle - as a painter I have all of these things in my "toolbox" that allow for color tone, saturation, thickness - all with an aim to heighten that mood/psychology I'm after.

When did you start working on this particular body of work?

The opportunity for this show came up last fall. The idea for this series of paintings came to me quite quickly and purposefully and it just kind of flowed from there. It doesn't always work that way.



GALERIE ANTOINE ERTASKIRAN

Do you remember the exact moment when you thought of the concept of depicting forests scrawled with graffiti?

In 2007 I was getting a bit tired of painting people interacting with the woods - I felt like it was getting too literal - but I still wanted to explore those spaces and leave a trace of their presence. It also reflects the reality of the woods I grew up around, that we partied in as teenagers. They weren't pristine. They were full of traces of us.

Are they based on a certain locations or even certain scribbles you found yourself?

Some of the graffiti is made up. Some is borrowed from spaces I've seen/collected. Every now and then I'll have other people mark the trees. For this show there is also book that is a collaboration between myself (images) and my friend, the poet Andy McGuire (words). His words inspired a lot of the graffiti on the trees.

What is the idea behind these works?

For me, this show is about the allegory of being "lost in the woods" and the many different things that can mean right now. As I worked through this show a loose narrative developed in my head of a "plein air painter" wandering into the woods, first as an escape - but as he wanders deeper he gets more and more lost and eventually consumed by them. It's not literal - the paintings are not the illustration of that story - it was more of an idea to set the tone/psychology and help me work through the paintings, with the woods that the painter is wandering through representing the larger concepts of woods as escape, woods as nightmare, woods as political. The tone gets stranger as we go deeper. There are some indications of human presence, but mostly through traces that have been left behind—like the graffiti.

Who or what are the ghost-like creatures seen in some of the works?

I like to think of them as there but not there. Traces or apparitions that are purposefully ambiguous. There is that feeling in the woods that you're being watched, that you're going to see something around the next corner. For this show I didn't want the place or time to be obvious. The landscapes are imagined based on different landscapes I've got stored in my memory. I didn't want it to be obvious where or when this is happening. Is it a dream/nightmare, a memory, are these ghosts of people who used to be here, a dark premonition of the future or maybe just all in my head?

Kim Dorland's *Same Old Future* will be on display from March 7—April 22, 2018

