



BERLIN: MOURNING OPULENCE

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Hailing from Geneva, artist Jeremy (1996) makes his debut at Peres Projects gallery in Berlin with *Mourning Opulence*, a solo exhibition which puts extravagance, fantasy, lust and sensitivity – the focal points of the artist's work – front and centre. Soaked in pink and enhanced with deliberately over-elaborate vases, the show takes viewers on a journey off the beaten track of heteronormativity, whose invisible yet omnipresent veil is subverted by a queer gloss. Drawing from both mythology and video games, the Jeremy envisions his practice as world-building. Each painting opens the door to a new territory with its own protagonists, adventures, rules and language. Large-format works alternate with smaller canvases, which punctuate the show like commas allowing for moments of pause.

Pieced together the works form a fragmented narrative and map an opulent universe of various references, motifs and colours, surrounded by a camp aura. Unsurprisingly, gender identity is central to the artist's practice, in which both the masculine body and its modes of representation become a field of thorough investigation. Inspired by the Chimera, a mythical hybrid creature, Jeremy explores the limits of anatomy through a collection of shapeshifters who populate the exhibition space and struggle to adapt to sometimes hostile environments. Resisting categorisation by giving shape to fluidity, he renders amorphous, swollen figures in metamorphosis, which boldly defy societal expectations and also distort the canons of art history. Liberating and provocative, Jeremy's body of work discloses desire and fantasies.

Sexless but sexual, although never frontal, the oozing eroticism relies on suggestive motifs, such as tumescent veins or lascivious curls. A sense of subverted innocence pervades the works, which finds its epitome in the swirls of hair that unfold across canvases. Drawing from both the manga of the 1980s and the history of drapery in painting and sculpture, hair becomes the allusive motif par excellence, the hint that draws attention to what it pretends to conceal. Drawing on sincerity and generosity, and fueled by irrepressible emotions, the artist's standards are demanding but also rewarding for those who join the dance. Despite its deathly allusions, the show is far from a *danse macabre*. More often than not, Jeremy's paintings evoke *memento vivi*, which convey an undaunted and necessary call to reclaim one's right to exist and take up space, fully and unapologetically (on through Mar 17).