

## ULRIKE THEUSNER

04.11.2015

*Tell us about yourself and your work.*

I'm a visual artist from Germany and studied Fine Art at the Villa Arson Nice and the Bauhaus-University Weimar, where I have my working studio. Besides that I'm working in Berlin and Leipzig. My work ranges between painting, etching and drawing. I'm focused on large sized ink drawing and Drawing series. Ink on paper is radical – it forces me to decide quickly and allows me to use vivid expressive lines without the possibility of return.

*Where does the inspiration come from?*

Art is another form of a diary. Inspiration comes from daily life, travels, Museums, the daily News – these are personal experiences and social observations that I reflect in my artwork. Right now I'm working on a new drawing series called "The Gasping Society", a reflection on our deeply disturbed, decomposing, affluent society based on my daily experiences. Inspiration comes also from art and I think its very important to study the Old Masters, not only to learn their techniques but also to create a relevance between archetypal images and contemporary art. My series "A Rake's Progress" for example relates to William Hogarth.

*Which is the need of your art?*

Creating a specific image is like a riddle that I need to solve during the process. I don't have an entirely finished intellectual concept before I start working. I think I wouldn't create anything if I knew the answer before, there's no need anymore. Artists have a certain sensibility in their perception of reality, that leads to an impulse to express and to visualize their ideas and observations before anybody else could describe exactly what's going on – they're just like attentive seismographs. Edvard Munch's famous painting "The Scream" is one example: he seemed to feel the nearby apocalypse of the 20th Century crawling up in the blood red sky. It's a non-describable feeling, only pictures translate it in a language, that everybody understands. I was 14 when I saw this painting in the Munch Museum in Oslo and I felt that art – one single painting – really gives an impact to the spectator. I believe that Art is not only reflecting society but also contributing in its change and this experience encouraged me in being an artist.



Die Parade, Ink on Paper, 65 x 50 cm, 2015, Ulrike Theusner

*Tell us about your experiences in art fairs, exhibitions and others.*

For me, the whole artworld is an interesting mixture – in the same time inspiring and repulsive. I expressed my experiences in the artworld in a drawing series called “Hey! The tragic life of desperate artbitches”. One drawing says: “I’m not interested in your art, I just wanna eat your pussy!” – I think I’m not exaggerating, claiming that it’s more difficult for female artists to succeed in the artworld than for their male colleagues. Woman-art values less. It’s been a lot worse in the past and things might change slowly in the future. I believe that women need to create a better network and support each other more.

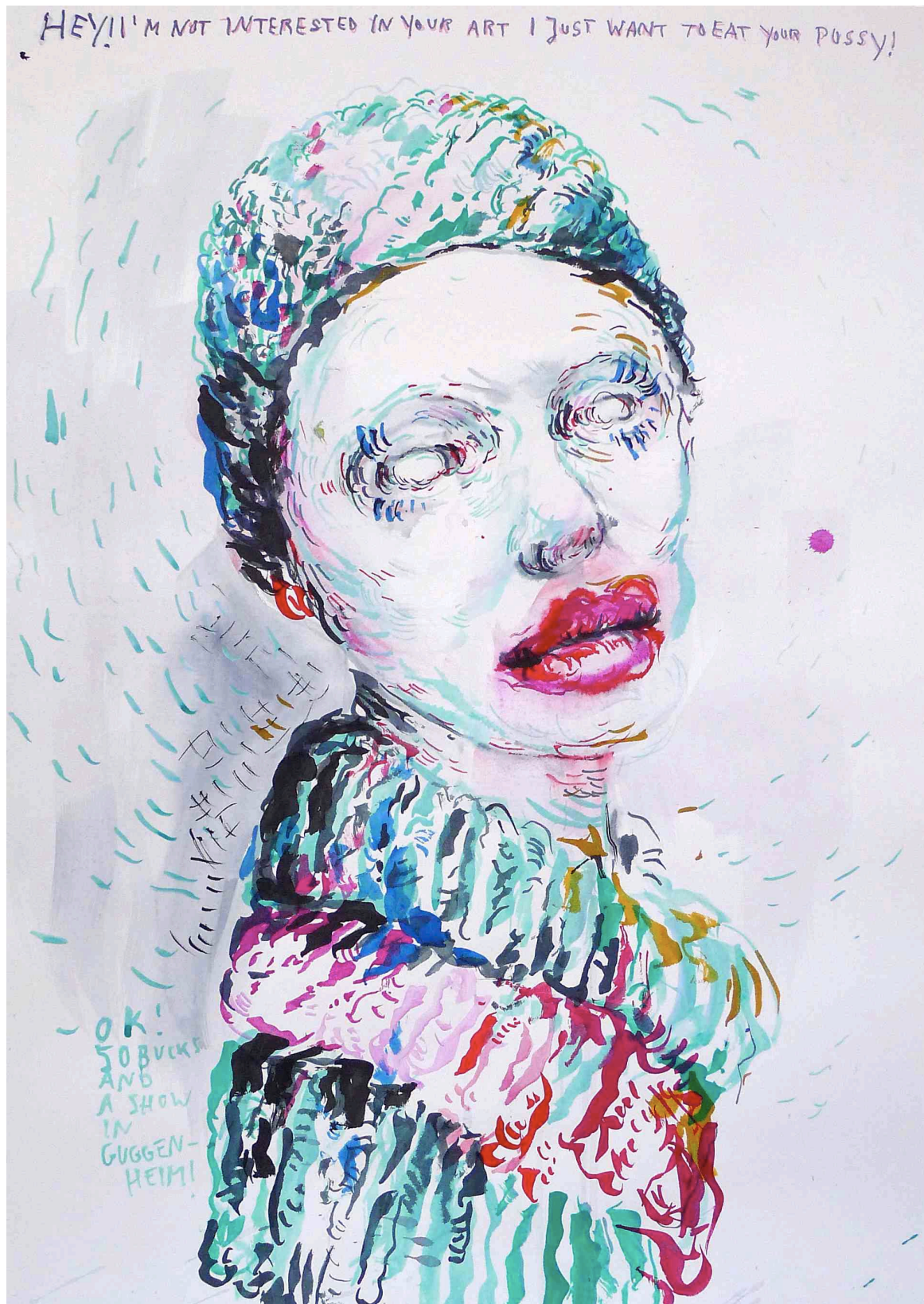
Artfairs are an exclusive, elitist event and a good excuse for the rich jetset to party in a bohemian atmosphere. I don’t blame them and also the fact, that art becomes more of a decorative investment case. I’m more worried about all those young artists who try to adapt in the markets need, creating banal “Zombie-Formalism” (to use the words of Jerry Saltz) and art without relevance.

Artcritics, curators and even galleries don’t play their important role anymore – private, Art-advisors, Collectors and doubtful artflippers are gaining significant influence in the artworld. The value of an artwork is measured only on a monetary scale. That’s why I believe that noncommercial institutional shows, the Documenta and Biennials have an important role, and I hope they will stay as independent as possible in the future, curated by bright minds like Okwui Enwezor (Venice Biennial) or Carolyn Christov-Bakargiev (Istanbul Biennial).

*What does art mean for you?*

I believe that art is absolutely necessary – art is about humanity. I know, it does sound a bit elevated – but I think we are lost, when we stop doing art.





Hey! I just wanna eat your pussy, from the series The Tragic Life of desperate artbitches, Ink on Paper, 70 x 50 cm, 2014, Ulrike Theusner

*What do you think about the art system in your country?*

Germany offers a lot of work-stipends, residencies, financial aids and grants for artists and international renowned prizes like "Preis der Nationalgalerie" in Berlin or the "Villa Massimo" -Residency in Rome. It's not completely impossible to get a stipend, but there are big differences between the single provinces, who provide a different cultural budget. Germany offers a good education system, public art colleges with star professors like Peter Doig in Düsseldorf, formerly Neo Rauch in Leipzig and Olafur Eliasson in Berlin. Also, we are lucky to call Berlin the "Art Center of the World" right now, with a huge international art scene – but I think its last days begun, since money is slowly taking things over and replaces cheap living conditions and non commercial off-spaces with an saturated, elitist environment that



doesn't allow any development or innovation.



Hey! I'm the king of inner Devils, from the series The Tragic Life of desperate artbitches, Ink on Paper, 70 x 50 cm, 2014,

*What is the future of art?*

There will always be Art. And there will always be Painting. The famous Saatchi Slogan "The Triumph of Painting" in the early 2000, announcing the resurrection of painting (after it has been presumed dead for a long period) was only good marketing. Painting has never been dead, and never will be dead.

