

Greg Parma Smith

“ In a Station of the Metro

*The apparition of these faces in the crowd :
Petals on a wet, black bough .”*

(Ezra Pound, 1913)

16.05 – 15.06.2013

Balice Hertling is pleased to announce « *In a Station of the Metro*

The apparition of these faces in the crowd:

Petals on a wet, black bough. », an exhibition of new works by Greg Parma Smith. For his first solo show in Paris, Parma Smith continues his investigation into art subcultures that exist outside of art history. While previous series have explored such subcultures as academic figure painting and comic book animation, these works draw on graffiti art, craft, and Orientalism.

The title of the show quotes the entire Ezra Pound poem “In a Station of the Metro” (1913) which describes a moment that Pound experienced in a metro station in Paris. The poem recently appeared in the Manhattan subway as part of the MTA Poetry in Motion project which aims to bring poetry to the masses.

Two oil paintings (« 1913, I » and « 1913, II ») depict spray paint caps painted from life. While graffiti artists originally used spray paint made for industrial painting, these works show the diverse array of spray paint colors which are now manufactured specifically for graffiti and street art. Embedded beneath the layer of oil paint, elderly “faces in the crowd,” real plastic masks, disrupt the smooth surface of the picture plane.

Like graffiti art, the craft of origami is valued aesthetically and economically according to rules outside of contemporary art. Stacks of patterned origami paper, the patterns designed by Parma Smith himself, appear in two oil, acrylic, and metallic leaf paintings (« Xanadu I » and « Xanadu II ») in the show.

The Asian theme continues in two oil paintings (« On a wet, black bough I » and « On a wet, black bough II ») depicting animals, their style influenced by the simplicity and naturalism of Song Dynasty scrolls. Both paintings feature images of black bows relating to the “wet, black boughs” in Pound’s haiku inspired poem. These black trees also appear in a wall painting, invigorating the game of references initiated by the artist.

Greg Parma Smith (born 1983) lives and works in New York. He received his MFA from Columbia University in 2007.

Solo exhibitions include: “GPS.NYC.MTA.CNC.DIY.WTC “ at Vava, Milan, (2012), “Life Drawings, Poseurs, and “thirteen oil paintings on canvas”, BaliceHertling & Lewis, New York (2012), “Dick Blick meets Herr Boesner “ (with Emil Michael Klein), Everest/Fondation Gutzwiller, Zurich (2011).

Group exhibitions include “Standard Operating Procedures” (curated by Piper Marshall), Blum and Poe, Los Angeles (2012), “The Panel Discussion, The Tennis Match, and A Bodegón “ (collaboration with Nicolás Guagnini), Andrew Roth Gallery, New York (2011), “Greg Parma Smith & Zin Taylor”, Front Space, Contemporary Art Museum St. Louis, St. Louis, USA (2009), “REGIFT” (curated by John Miller), Swiss Institute, New York (2009), ““Desired Constellations”, Daniel Reich Gallery, New York (2007).

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