

Raffi Kalenderian

Memoranda

29th May – 24th July 2010

Opening: Friday, 28th May 6 p.m. – 8 p.m.

Galerie Peter Kilchmann is pleased to present the second solo exhibition by American artist Raffi Kalenderian. Alongside paintings on canvas and paperworks, the exhibition "Memoranda" for the first time features paintings on wood.

For the most part, Raffi Kalenderian depicts young people from his immediate environment. They often lie on a sofa or sit on a chair within a familiar surroundings. Some figures stand in gardens. Only in some of the works, is the person not painted as whole body. The drawing *Untitled (Resting)*, for example, shows the face of a young man with his hands folded and eyes closed (see invitation). Next to the face, a second face can be made out, sketched with just a few lines. This second face seems to be on a different level and appears to be a soul become visible, as if it were proof of a different state of perception. Its eyes are open.

In Kalenderian's works everything plays on the foreground. There are no horizons and no perspective. The artist reveals his world directly to us, showing us his friends, as if he had no secrets. His friends often seem melancholic while their environment is very colourful. Colourful details of clothes, materials or furniture seem to be striving to attract the spectator's attention and distract from the figures. We often encounter the figure Shanti. Shanti is the artist's brother. He is painted as a young man, sometimes almost androgynous, sometimes like a tough guy. It remains uncertain whether Kalenderian wants to reveal something to us about Shanti, Frankie or Elizabeth with his paintings. None of the figures look directly at us, but all of them seem to be in contact with us. We are the witnesses of their existence.

In *Kate Wolf (Pink Green)* a young woman is lying on a purple sofa. Her face is pale, her eyes are black and her head is resting on her arms. She is lying on her stomach with her legs dangling in the air. The painting is more than just a snapshot. It seems designed to freeze an eternal and timeless situation. It seems that Kalenderian idealises the features of the real Kate Wolf and endows the painting with autonomy. Doing this, he takes liberties which we perceive as formal pleasures. For example, when highlighting the green stripes on Kate Wolf's pink skirt or when illustrating the sofa cushions that mould with the lines of the body or when stressing the wrinkles of her white T-shirt. Raffi Kalenderian encourages the spectator to get lost in those details and to become immersed into his own cosmos.

"Memoranda", the title of the exhibition, can be likening portraiture to notes and memos kept for history, but not too specific to take away from someone's own unique experience. In fact Kalenderian's works are, as the artists himself states, a proof or better an evidence of existence.

Raffi Kalenderian (1981, born and living in Los Angeles) graduated in 2004 with a BFA from the University of California in Los Angeles. Within the scope of his exhibition, a catalogue will be published at Nieves Books, Zurich, with a text by Doug Harvey.

The artists will be present at the opening in Zurich. For further information or press photos please do not hesitate to contact Annemarie Reichen (a.reichen@peterkilchmann.com).