

## Armin Boehm

### INUTILE ÉTERNITÉ

April 25 – May 31, 2014  
Opening: Thursday, April 24, 6-8 pm

Galerie Peter Kilchmann proudly presents the first single exhibition by Armin Boehm. The artist was first shown in a group show at the gallery in the summer of 2012. The exhibition "Inutile Éternité" now features a new series of works on canvas. The painted interiors, structured densely and crowded with people, alternate between figurative and symbolic presentation. The fragmented views encompass various angles. Combining pieces of fabric and paper with multiple layers of paint Boehm creates vivid image spaces with a distinctive corporeality that dissolves and reappears before our eyes.

Boehm's picture worlds reveal specific incidents that seem timeless in their quintessence. Private cocktail parties, scenes on the beach or in public bars stand beside personal moments of seclusion. All are informed by an atmospheric intensity evoking both intimacy and alienation. The vocabulary of modernism is present in both form and content. Boehm adopts the approach of the German Expressionists and their avant-garde literary tendencies. The sense of alienation from oneself and others as well as the question of how the contemporary person is defined in the context of society are central themes. Boehm addresses these ideas with willful painterly means and deliberately placed materials. His painting is a subjective report of sorts – a constructed cosmos of personal experiences and observations.

Embedded in the ornamental patterns of the collaged image spaces, Boehm places lettering and pictorial references from the world of art, literature, fashion or pop culture. One of the works (2014, 200 x 240 cm) is made up of countless fabric, paper and color components. Red and blue tones predominate in varied shades. It shows a group of five people – they are facing each other, posing lasciviously or contemplatively lost in thought, either clothed or half-bared, sitting, lying or standing under a palm tree - on an otherwise deserted beach that stretches into the background of the image. A chain of hills, tree lines and water waves are arranged behind the group. The setting is colorful and the composition highly detailed. The group is equipped with beach towels, stereo and reading material. A lying woman holds a book entitled "Wilhelm Reich", the psychoanalyst and father of the sexual revolution that was once a student of Sigmund Freud. Another reading held by a protagonist in the foreground alludes to the fashion and lifestyle magazine "Hautemuse". Clearly visible on the ground further lies the book "The Moon and Sixpence", William Somerset Maugham's novel from 1919, which deals with the friendship between Vincent van Gogh and Paul Gauguin. Moreover, the background with its imagery and shapes of the sky, stars and trees directly points to van Gogh's "Starry Night" from 1889.

Other works contain further references on book covers such as "La Bas" and "Pelham". Both allude to the literature of the decadence of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Further included is the the lettering "Umbra Vitae", the title of Georg Heym's collection of expressionistic poetry, which was published in 1924 and illustrated with woodcarvings by Ernst Ludwig Kirchner. The phrase "Inutile Éternité" Boehm borrows from an electronic song of the same title by Miss Kittin & The Hacker, which can be found on their album "Two" from 2009. With these referential interferences the artist Boehm reveals the contemporary person to be a devotee of a cultural historic collective. Perhaps it is a Memento Mori of his own existence. Not only because of his use of clear forms, but also through the integration of historical references to history, art or fleeting popular culture Boehm himself epitomizes the contemporary patchwork-individualism.

Armin Boehm was born 1972 in Aachen and studied at the Staatliche Kunstakademie Düsseldorf in the class of Konrad Klapheck and Jörg Immendorff. He lives and works in Berlin. The important single exhibition "The Evil Eye" was shown at Kunstverein Braunschweig in 2009. A catalog was published on the occasion. Armin Boehm was further part of a group show at KW Institute for Contemporary Art, Berlin, in 2013. In 2012 his works were shown in group shows at Stadtgalerie Kiel, Kai 10 in Düsseldorf, Städelmuseum Frankfurt and Goethe-Institute Johannesburg. In 2011 he participated in group shows at Schirn Kunsthalle in Frankfurt and Musée d'art contemporain (CAPC) in Bordeaux.