

# ROBERTS PROJECTS

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Lenz Geerk, *Shakespeare Actor*, 2024, acrylic on paper, 16.14 x 11.81 in (41 x 30 cm). Photo Paul Salvesson

**Lenz Geerk | Schwarzweiß**  
January 25 – March 8, 2025

Roberts Projects is pleased to present *Schwarzweiß*, an exhibition of new paintings and works on paper by Lenz Geerk, marking the artist's fifth solo presentation with the gallery. Using the German word for "black-and-white," the monochromatic works in *Schwarzweiß* straddle the line between drawing and painting, allowing the artist to probe the emotional and psychological spaces of anxiety, uncertainty and disconnection.

Geerk's oeuvre is renowned for its use of a figurative language that harkens back to early Modernism as a means for exploring the strangeness and alienation of contemporary life while also attending to moments of hope and possibility. His paintings regularly depict solitary figures absorbed in contemplation, or groups of people where the possibility of connection has been replaced by the certainty of isolation. His figures are archetypal rather than specific; he sets them within spaces both descriptively vague and poetically alive. The compositional restraint of the scenes Geerk constructs and the placid, dreamlike manner in which he paints is often at odds with the inner turmoil his figures seem to be experiencing. By eschewing obvious references within the works to a specific historical period, Geerk allows them to assume a timeless and universal quality, one that prompts viewers to reflect on details in their own lives without being imaginatively confined by them.

Though the existential and thematic focus in *Schwarzweiß* is consistent with previous bodies of work, the form of expression is decidedly new, as these works are rendered entirely in black and white. For Geerk, the simplification of his palette into a range of monochromatic values is a way of expressing the increasing polarization of society and the absence of nuance, complexity and uncertainty as a result. His figures continue to express these states and qualities, as do the scenes of landscapes, still-lives and interiors where figures are conspicuously absent. Even when the emphasis is on the inanimate or non-human, Geerk still places viewers in a precarious situation where, though certainty of meaning may be unattainable, the experiences of levity and joy are not.

Geerk's investigation of the vast space between seemingly rigid positions takes place not only on a metaphoric level, but on a formal one as well. Although the spectrum of color has been narrowed in these works, they nonetheless contain a wide range of tonal variation and pictorial subtlety which belie any notion

that they are truly—and only—black and white. Working in this evasive space where drawing meets painting is just another example of Geerk's brilliance in using his materials and creative process to express a state of

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flux and indeterminacy. In *Schwarzweiß*, works that might have previously been understood as studies or preparations are embraced as both provisional and complete.

## About the Artist

Lenz Geerk (b. 1988 Basel, Switzerland; based in Düsseldorf, Germany) is a German painter whose portraits, landscapes and still lifes are rendered with exceptional intensity and luminosity. Geerk formally studied painting at Kunstakademie Düsseldorf from 2008-2013. Solo exhibitions include *Moonpaintings*, MASSIMODECARLO, Milan, Italy; *Arrival*, Roberts Projects, Los Angeles; *Sleepless*, MAMOTH, London and *Pearls & Pearls*, Galeria Acappella, Naples, Italy. Group exhibitions include *On Alchemy*, Roberts Projects, Los Angeles; *TICK TACK*, Kunsthalle Recklinhausen, Germany; *SLEEP*, Kunsthall KAdE, Amersfoort, Netherlands and *Intimacy Rarely Makes Sense of Things*, Pond Society, Shanghai, China among others. Geerk is represented in the collections of Institute of Contemporary Art, Miami, FL; The Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, MA; The High Museum of Art, Atlanta, GA; Hirshhorn Museum, Washington, DC; Orange County Museum of Art, Orange County, CA; Santa Barbara Museum of Art, Santa Barbara, CA; Walker Art Center, Minneapolis, MN; USHEM Museum, Shunde, China; X Museum, Shanghai, China; XIAO Museum, Shandong, China; Fondation Louis Vuitton, Paris, France; Tel Aviv Museum of Art, Tel Aviv, Israel; Fondazione Sandretto Re Rebaudengo, Turin, Italy; Comico Art Museum, Oita, Japan; Kistefos Museum, Oslo, Norway; Up Next Art, Vega Baja, Puerto Rico; The Arts Club Dubai, ICD Brookfield Place, DIFC, Dubai, United Arab Emirates and The Kunsthaus Zürich, Zürich, Switzerland.

**For additional information**, please visit [robertsprojectsla.com](http://robertsprojectsla.com) or contact Mary Skarbek, Senior Director at [mary@robertsprojectsla.com](mailto:mary@robertsprojectsla.com) or 323-549-0223.

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