

**Erik Schmidt**  
***Re-Retreat***

Duration: November 9, 2022 — January 14, 2023  
Vernissage: November 8, 2022, 19:00

KRINZINGER SCHOTTENFELD  
SCHOTTENFELDGASSE 45, 1070 WIEN, ÖSTERREICH · TEL+43.1.5128142  
[KRISTINA.BOSAK@GALERIE-KRINZINGER.AT](mailto:KRISTINA.BOSAK@GALERIE-KRINZINGER.AT), [SCHOTTENFELD@GALERIE-KRINZINGER.AT](mailto:SCHOTTENFELD@GALERIE-KRINZINGER.AT)  
[WWW.GALERIE-KRINZINGER.AT](http://WWW.GALERIE-KRINZINGER.AT)  
Opening Hours: Tue. - Fri. 12:00 - 18:00, Sat. 11:00 - 14:00

Text by Silvio Saraceno

Krinzinger Schottenfeld is pleased to host *Re-Retreat*, Erik Schmidt's latest solo show, which expands the elusive paradise he created with his previous project *Retreat* introducing new elements and material. The creative exploration of the polyhedric German painter, born in 1968, has often been shaped by the narratives of his travel experiences and his desire to illustrate what he perceives by the encounter with foreign cultures.

The exhibition takes us on a six-week trip the artist made last spring to Sri Lanka, across the villages surrounding Colombo, the capital city where mass protests began in March 2022 and spread all over the country. Protests of people who – thirteen years after the end of a long civil war – are still recovering and are now struggling with economic crisis, including power cuts and shortages of basics such as fuel, food and medicines.

In *No Crisis*, a drawing series based on pictures taken while wandering the streets, Schmidt individuates characters from the flow of people, absorbed in their life rhythms or activities, and portrays them on the pages of newspapers from which he received daily national news updates. The result is an extremely expressive juxtaposition of thick brushstrokes that offers a genuine insight into the local community, also displaying the "political ground" of it, despite the limited colour range and the area's high humidity levels. Some portraits, instead, are later developed in his studio, using the peculiar technique of overpainting on printed canvas, and manifest his dynamic optical filtering of the world.

Overwhelmed by such a politically connoted environment, even the painter's fascinated gaze gets affected. Nature itself turns into a war zone in *Palm Bombs*, small sketches and large-scale paintings based on photographs of palms, captured during the residency at One World Foundation. Schmidt's perspective gives the spectator a bottom-up view of the palm trees, which is usually forbidden in order to prevent the harm of falling coconuts. Impasto technique here overshadows photography with an aggressive streak and paint reaches a palpable sculptural aspect, transforming inner vibrations into pure, disturbing colour: fruits thus become bombs, palm leaves are their explosion rays.

What remains of these explosions is lying on the ground of the space, maybe fallen from the same trees, resembling weapons and hand grenades. More newspaper pages lie on a hanger, overwritten with keywords, as if desperately trying to erase the news that one is forced to read. The expectation of this *Palm House* being a paradise fades away and brings us back to the violent failure of civilisation.

The vain search for shelter is also echoed in the two videos *Fine* and *Inizio*, thematically related to the paintings, although set in a different geographical and temporal context. Scenario shifts from tangible reality to Schmidt's own inner dimension, paradise lost where the illusion of sanctuary is unachievable once again. A kind of self-exploration through guilt and catharsis, undoubtedly germinated from the unrestlessness of his life journey, which finally leads to a more conscious realisation that there is no longer any place on Earth for *retreat*.

*Silvio Saraceno*

**Erik Schmidt** (\*1968 in Herford, Germany) studied design at the Hamburg University of Applied Sciences and at the "Freie Klasse" UDK/HDK, Berlin. In his painterly work, Schmidt is oriented towards the materiality of colour and its structure, which is characterised by gestural application of paint and a pointillist style of painting. In addition to painting and photography, the artist also creates films in which the performative act is usually in the foreground. In this way, the artist uses himself as the protagonist, immerses himself in different social sub-groups and examines their behavioural systems. Erik Schmidt lives and works in Berlin.

**Selection of solo and group exhibitions:** *Blancs de Blancs*, Villa Schöningen, Potsdam (DE), 2022; *Drei Farben Blau Weiss Rot*, Walter Storms Galerie, Munich (DE), 2022; *Follow George Grosz*, Kunstsammlung Jena, Jena (DE), 2022; *Retreat*, Kunstraum Potsdam, Potsdam (DE), 2022; *Revisiting*, Galerie Claire Gastaud, Paris and Clermont Ferrand (FR), 2022; *Schnee fällt hinterm Berge*, Avlskarl Gallery, Copenhagen (DK), 2022; *Ain't no Mountain High Enough*, Ze Tux Gallery, Tux, Tirol (AUS), 2021; *Berliner Symmetrie*, Davide Paludetto Gallery, Torino (IT), 2021; *ongoing schmidt pick*, Galerie carlier | gebauer, Berlin (DE), 2021; *Sehnsucht und Fall*, Videos aus der Sammlung Wemhöner, Kunstsaele, Berlin (DE), 2020; *Fast Undurchsichtig. Bilder von Erik Schmidt in der Sammlung Glampe*, Berlin (DE), 2019; *Folge den Markierungen*, Herz und Diabeteszentrum NRW, Bad Oeynhausen (DE), 2019; *From Hand To Mind*, Galerie carlier | gebauer, Madrid (ES), 2019; *Globe as a Palette – Contemporary Art from the Taguchi Art Collection*, Hokkaido Obihiro Museum of Art, Kushiro Art Museum, Hakodate Museum of Art, Sapporo Art Museum, Hokkaido (JP), 2019; *Passion – Bilder von der Jagd*, Bündner Kunstmuseum Chur (CH), 2019; *The Only Way Is Up*, Galerie carlier | gebauer, Berlin (DE), 2019; *10 years Videoart at Midnight*, Babylon Berlin, Berlinische Galerie, Berlin (DE), 2019; *Sammlungspräsentation*, Leopold-Hoesch-Museum & Papiermuseum Düren (DE), 2018; *Skyscanner*, Galerie Jochen Hempel, Leipzig (DE), 2018; *Creator Exhibition*, Tokyo Wonder Site, Shibuya, Tokyo (JP), 2017; *Picha/Bilder - Zwischen Nairobi & Berlin*, me Collectors Room, Stiftung Olbricht, Berlin (DE), 2017; *Rays around you*, Carlier/ Gebauer, Berlin (DE), 2017; *EINBLICKE - IN DIE SAMMLUNG WEMHÖNER*, Sammlung Wemhöner, Berlin (DE), 2014; *Downtown*, Leopold-Hoesch-Museum, Düren (DE), 2013; *Role-Playing Role-Pictures*, Museum der Moderne Salzburg (AT), 2011; *Hunting Grounds*, Museum Marta Herford, Herford (DE), 2007.

**Exhibitions at Galerie Krinzinger:** *Foreign affairs*, 2022; *Further up & Further in*, 2018; *Cut/Uncut*, 2016; *Icon*, 2016; *WHY PAINTING NOW?*, 2013; *Bogged Down*, 2010; *I remain silent*, 2010.