

GALERIE CHRISTINE MAYER

Liebigstraße 39
80538 München

ANDY HOPE 1930

A SPACE PHILOSOPHY: PLOZLOZ AND BEYOND
15.9. - 20.10.2018

The two groups of paintings in the exhibition A Space Philosophy: Plolzoz And Beyond by Andy Hope 1930 approach painting as probings into the molecular and the cosmological from a futurist perspective.

The central and largest work in the show, A Space Philosophy IV (2018), is part of a recent series of “garbage can paintings” (shown in previous exhibitions at Rat Hole Gallery, Tokyo and Lomex, New York) in which we see cosmological units and symbols contained within the outline of a garbage can. Here, the elliptical clusters of galaxies are stuffed into the container like bin bags, each in itself ballooning out from their ever expanding, star-filled voids inside. Besides the clear connotation of a “trashy” artwork – doubled up by the use of silver glitter paint, the cheap version of makeup – it also refers to the medium of painting itself; namely to the question of how to distribute “space”, how to partition the surface plane.

One of humanity's most aspirational challenges (or escape routes) today is the “colonization” of space, the drawing of lines of ownership through to whatever frontier is within our technology's perimeters – a highly questionable endeavor that does not just continue a colonialist mythology in language, but might also cause actual exploitation and displacement on earth, for example through shifting funds from welfare (on earth) to warfare (in space). The watercolor collage of the invitation card could also allude to this future scenario – the cow on another planet carrying an oxygen bottle, the earth's continents on its body like a colorful memory of home, as an essential part of setting up a sustainable agricultural settlement in hyper space.

The second series of paintings so far consists of four variations on an amorphous form called Raw, Hazy, Mass and Blob (all 2018) differing in color, shape and style. Stretching over nearly the whole surface of the canvas – on two paintings even going beyond it – these forms or not-yet-forms seem to be in a state of metamorphosis, as bodies approximating abstraction.

Throughout time, the idea of a form without meaning seems to have deeply unsettled people as it is perceived as having no soul, no reason, nothing to argue with. Neoplatonists believed that form is governed by an idea, so as long as matter is capable of form it is neutral, but if form and idea are indiscernible it is evil. In the science-fiction classic *The Blob* (1958) a growing shapeshifting blob of jelly “keeps getting bigger and bigger” (Steve McQueen) as it eats people.

However, taking a bio-historical trip back to our ur-ancestors in the Precambrian – for instance the globs of slime in a warming moor that Gottfried Benn called for, stricken by a yearning for reverse evolution – the blobs are at the beginning of all life. And they remain the most adaptable, just like a blobfish living thousands of feet underwater, its gestalt squashed and constantly reconfiguring under the weight of the water. Product design of the future will be similarly adaptable, it will go way beyond curved edges and instead produce shapeshifting, enveloping, pliable forms.

In Andy Hope 1930's painting series, it seems these blobs were thrown at the picture, sticking to the surface, devouring the canvas, negating it with their non-form, whilst still evoking associations from Hokusai's *Great Wave of Kanagawa* to a speech bubble in a Lichtenstein comic strip to a speckle of dirt.

As you can look into a bin to view history, this history inevitably decomposes into blobs of molecular matter which are the beginning and end of everything.

Manuel Gnam