

Adomas Danusevičius

Mud and Flowers

Curator Jolanta Marcišauskytė-Jurašienė

April 4 – May 10 2019

Opening on Thursday, 4 April 2019 at 6 pm

Vartai Gallery is pleased to present a solo exhibition by the young generation painter Adomas Danusevičius. For over a decade, the artist's name has occupied a special place on the Lithuanian art scene because of the sexual identity issues he addresses and the queer aesthetic central to his work.

Lately, however, the work of the artist, who commutes between Vilnius and London, has marked a new stage in his creative career. In these new pieces, painting has become an alchemical process, while the transcultural, transhistorical images of masculinity and femininity allude to the cyclic and hybrid nature of life, and the energy that is constantly circulating between matter and form.

Mud and flowers are universally perceived mythical images ingrained in humanity's bodily memory like plant seeds or mushroom spores buried in soil. When watered, the roots of life pulsate and thrive in the mud. It was out of mud – formless and lowly – that the gods moulded humans to populate the Earth and struggle with their nature. It is precisely the 'metaphysics of mud' that opens the gates to the primeval hybridity of life, the unquenchable desire to change, procreate, occupy new territories, and rule through the capricious play of the cosmic Eros.

The creative and destructive primal energy in Adomas Danusevičius works mutates and flirts playfully, sometimes taking us the viewers to the underground quagmire of the subconscious and at other times submerging us into heady hallucinations of blossoms. Social and gender identities intermix, coalesce, and again transform into formless matter bursting with endless potential. The recurring nature motifs are vibrant, charming, enigmatic, and simultaneously sexually ambivalent, flirting with the viewer's senses.

The artist's masterful lively and 'carnal' brushstroke is embodied on the surface of the canvas like concentrated energy, brought under control in the creative process, turning the painting into a transgressive object. The painter's refusal to copy the images of visible reality, and instead choosing a conscious dissolution and obscuring of these bring his work close to George Bataille's ideas on formlessness (*l'informe*) in art, a necessary condition for the emancipation of creative intuition. Both the Greek myth of chaos as the origin of the world and the contemporary Big Bang theory speak about one and the same thing – the seed of creativity lying in formlessness.

Adomas Danusevičius (b. 1984 in Vilnius) completed his doctoral studies in the arts at the Vilnius Academy of Arts and went on to deepen his theoretical and practical knowledge at the Royal Danish Academy of Fine Arts. Since his debut in 2008, the artist's work has attracted interest and been praised by art critics, with his pieces having been acquired by Lithuanian and foreign private collections, including the Lewben Art Foundation and MO Museum. The artist actively participates in group exhibitions in Lithuania and abroad, the current exhibition at Vartai Gallery being his 13th solo show. In 2018–2019 Adomas Danusevičius received the Bavarian State Ministry award for Education, Culture, Science and Arts with a scholarship covering an artist residency at the Internationales Künstlerhaus Villa Concordia in Bamberg, Germany. His works from the debut series *Carmine*, as well as from the series *Camouflage Masculinity and Campish Dazzle*, were featured in the important publication *Queer!?: Visual Arts in Europe* (edited by Evert van Straaten, Anton Anthonissen, 2019), in which the development of the queer aesthetic is discussed.

Maecenas

Živilė ir Jonas Garbaravičiai

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