

Friedrich Kunath

One Day I'll Follow The Byrds (Tutto Pasta)

Goethestraße 2/3, 10623 Berlin

7 September – 26 October 2024

Opening: Saturday, 7 September, 6 – 8pm

Galerie Max Hetzler is pleased to present *One Day I'll Follow The Byrds (Tutto Pasta)*, an exhibition of new paintings by **Friedrich Kunath** at Goethestraße 2/3, in Berlin. This is the artist's second solo exhibition with the gallery, and his first in the Berlin space.

Friedrich Kunath's oeuvre spans painting, drawing, installation, sculpture and video. His works contain references to diverse subjects including music, film, Romanticism and pop culture. Born in Chemnitz, the artist grew up in East Berlin and later moved to Los Angeles. Both his personal history, as well as universal emotional experiences, are thematised in his work. Idealised landscapes are frequently depicted in which poetic phrases appear, sometimes clearly, sometimes hidden. For Kunath, the creative process resembles an intimate dialogue with the work. While the subconscious plays a major role, the carving of words into the wet paint creates a conscious message. The often playful motifs that follow create a complex interplay of serious and humorous elements that seem to interrelate or cancel each other out.

The exhibition title, *One Day I'll Follow The Byrds (Tutto Pasta)*, refers to a sense of restlessness and moving on, similar to migratory birds, whilst also alluding to the American rock band, The Byrds. Kunath's passion for music and film is frequently reflected in the titles or motifs he selects, evoking feelings of freedom and the temporary oblivion of one's own reality that can be attained through immersion in a musical or cinematic work. In this exhibition, the subjects depicted range from sombre to hopeful, and are rooted in a state of contemplation and reflection. At the centre of the show is a six-metre-long quadriptych, titled *When Was The First Time, You Realized The Next Time, Would Be The Last Time*, 2023–2024. Two other paintings, *I Dreamed It Was A Dream That You Were Gone*, 2023–2024, and *It's Classic, She Loves Someone Else*, 2024, depict people seen from behind, like stills from a film. They appear to be looking at the rest of the works in the exhibition as outside observers, instead of blending in. This portrayal of observation also references Romantic painting, and can be found in reverse in *Morrissey Lyrics (Roma)*, 2024, Kunath's depiction of a window from which warm light emanates from behind a curtain.

The first part of the quadriptych depicts a small house on a rock. This idyllic scene refers to Franz Schubert's song *Der Hirt auf dem Felsen* (The Shepherd on the Rock), which explores simultaneous themes of longing, loneliness and hope. Pessimus and Optimus, two characters from a 1940s Russian cartoon, are depicted building a tent together on the left side of the canvas. In the centre, the spectacular landscape



Friedrich Kunath
I Restored My Will To Live Again, 2023–2024
© Friedrich Kunath, photo: Dawn Blackman

is interspersed with various phrases and motifs. On the far right, *Der arme Poet* (The Poor Poet) by Carl Spitzweg, here presented in a modified form and covered by a luxurious designer blanket, gives the scene the middle finger. It remains unclear to whom or what this gesture is directed. The popular motif of this German Romantic poet reflects the cliché of the 'poor artist' in Kunath's work in an ironic and critical way. Despite the abundance of themes, references and possible interpretations, individual untreated areas on the canvas leave room for further possibilities and as yet unwritten parts of the story.



The exhibition is accompanied by a playlist by the artist, which can be accessed via this QR code.

Kunath's works are characterised by duality. Pop and high culture, East and West, philosophy and humour are orchestrally linked, working with and against each other, allowing the works to oscillate between memory and reality. This dynamic is complemented by comforting elements of beauty and serenity. The result is an overall picture that presents existential themes such as romance and tragedy, as well as comedy, in a manner that is simultaneously ironic and sincere.

Friedrich Kunath (b. 1974, Chemnitz, Germany) lives and works in Los Angeles. The artist's work has been the subject of solo exhibitions in institutions including G2 Kunsthalle, Leipzig (2024); Kunsthalle Düsseldorf (duo show, 2024); KINDL, Berlin; Centro de Arte Contemporáneo (CAC), Malaga (both 2023); Kunstsammlung Jena (2021); Philara Collection, Düsseldorf (2016); Centre d'art contemporain d'Ivry - le Crédac, Ivry-sur-Seine; Kunsthalle Bremerhaven; CAPRI, Düsseldorf; Nassau County Museum of Art, New York (all 2014); Modern Art Oxford (2013); Sprengel Museum, Hanover (2012); Schinkel Pavillon, Berlin (2011); Hammer Museum, Los Angeles; Kunstsaale, Berlin (both 2010); Staatliche Kunsthalle Baden-Baden; Kunstverein Hannover (both 2009); Kunsthaus NRW Kornelimünster, Aachen (2007); Bonner Kunstverein, Bonn (2002); and The Modern Institute, Glasgow (2000), among others.

Kunath's work is included in the collections of Carnegie Museum of Art, Pittsburgh; Centre Pompidou, Paris; Fondation Louis Vuitton, Paris; Frans Hals Museum, Haarlem; Hammer Museum, Los Angeles; Kunstverein Reutlingen; Los Angeles County Museum of Art; Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles; Museum of Contemporary Art, San Diego; The Museum of Modern Art, New York; and Walker Art Center, Minneapolis, among others.

Further exhibitions and events

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7 September – 26 October 2024

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Haven

Bleibtreustraße 45 & 15/16, 10623

14 September 2024 – 2 November 2024

Albert Oehlen

Schweinekubismus

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Paris:

7 September – 5 October 2024

Rinus Van de Velde

46 & 57, rue du Temple, 75004

London:

29 August – 28 September 2024

Grace Weaver

Flowers

41 Dover Street, W1S 4NS

Marfa:

9 May – 8 December 2024

Katharina Grosse

The Super Eight

1976 Antelope Hills Road

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