

Olaf Kühnemann, the melancholic

BY GERHARD CHARLES RUMP, DIE WELT, MARCH 28TH 2009

The vivid scene of contemporary art in Israel is the home of some very unconventional figures in art. Olaf Kühnemann is a good example. Born in 1972 in Basel he became a scholar of the sculptor Zvi Lachmann in Israel then went to New York to finally return to Tel Aviv where he worked at the Givon Gallery.

His paintings are closely connected with the history of his family, often based on family photographs, reflecting the coming together and breaking up, change of places, change of life plans, in a strict sense of the oxymoron "Transition is the only constant".

His reflections about the figures – what do they stand for? How do they interact with the background? Do they interact with each other? – are metaphorical reflections as much about life as about the art of painting. Just the artists' privilege of pounding semiotic plains together, like the smith who hammered steel for the Damascene knife so that one is being manifested through the other on a painting, makes his artworks so complex. They also are carried by certain melancholy which is a mark for great art. Prices: 2,000-30,000 Euro.

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