

Metropolis M

Rijksakademie OPEN 2017 How the world / word ends

BY DEBBIE BROEKERS NOVEMBER 23, 2017



Esteban Cabeza de Baca

This year it is twenty-five years ago that the Rijksakademie moved to the renovated Kavallerie-Kazerne at Sarphatistraat 470. Once inside, it remains difficult to navigate in the building. The organization is responding this year by marking the route to the hard-to-find workshops with the letter 'H' and pink dots on the ground. This is very nice, because otherwise spectacular studio presentations, such as *FUNFAIRAFFAIR* (2017) by Funda Gül Özcan and the must-see studio presentation by Sam Keogh, will pass you by. Unfortunately, during my visit, some studios are still in preparation and therefore closed. I will have to come back later for the work of CHE Onejoon and Kate Cooper.

Painting

This year there are a striking number of painters (Inez de Brauw, Esteban Cabeza de Baca, Xinyi Cheng, Frederique Jonker, Kubilay Mert Ural, Rutger de Vries) who make very diverse work in terms of visual language and technique. For Frederique Jonker and Rutger de Vries, the way in which the painting is created, the painterly gesture (with aerosol) is particularly important. De Vries' experiments, originating from graffiti culture, may look spectacular, but they are not particularly exciting. Rather, it is the more subdued paintings that stand out, such as the representations of Inez de Brauw and the matt-colored austere representations of Xinyi Cheng, which are populated by scantily clad or naked bearded men. The figures in her performances are very blasé, they lie a bit. I cannot decide whether the works evoke a sense of humor or sadness. The works seem to be an ironic nod to *le condition humaine*, or more specifically *the condition hipster*.

A personal favorite are the paintings by Kubilay Mert Ural (tip!). You could describe the performances as post-internet art; funny, flat, cartoonish paintings, where famous figures such as Donald Trump, familiar themes such as colonialism and abuse of power, and well-known internet dark holes, such as porn and cat videos, circulate. Everything exists in the world of Kubilay Mert Ural side by side and together, like chaos that seems very logical.