



Martin Kozlowski Anti.Mnemosyne

Anti.Mnemosyne is the first solo exhibition by young Swedish-born artist Martin Kozlowski in Berlin. The show consists of large paper works that Kozlowski uses to build up and excavate the hidden, invisible structures of musings, influences, love, relationships and all of its dramatics.

The exhibition title is derived from the titaness Mnemosyne [Greek: 'memory'], who is mother to the nine muses and a prominent figure in ancient Greek mythology. Her name is used in the exhibition conjunctively with the prefix 'anti' to take up the myth of the two rivers Lethe and Mnemosyne as nodal point of connection to Kozlowski's latest work on remembrance and the uncovering of traces of memory and inspiration. As similarly described in Plato's Republic, Lethe is the river in Hades from which dead souls drank so they would erase their memories before reincarnation whereas its counterpart Mnemosyne - as liquid memory - was used ceremonially to achieve the exact opposite.

Concentrating on fresh pieces that are the manifestation of a recent change in trajectory for the artist, Anti.Mnemosyne tries to mediate Kozlowski's experiences via revealing and re-substantiating what usually remains invisible to the ordinary bystander, concentrating on the emotional ties to loved ones, places, or the mnemonic musings that are derived from them, yet without reverting to lamentation, the artist carries out his approach with just a quantum of recognition and tribute to the elements that formed him as an individual.

Kozlowski's more abstract and minimal explorations can be classified as a deeply introspective yet outwardly accessible view into the workings, connections and nodal concentrations of human interaction on a deeply emotional and personal, yet also on an incredibly inspiring level.

This particular alchemy of excavating the buried strands of memory through an abstract and minimal approach to patterns and structures of painting and drawing is what makes Kozlowski so interesting, allowing his audience to approach the viewing and interpretation of the works in relation to their own experiences.

The strands of paint that reverberate

against each other demonstrate the flow of memory that becomes apparent through the crystallization of such connections. Kozlowski's bridge between painting and calligraphy [writing graffiti] brings to mind Lou Zhenngang and her opinion that 'calligraphy reveals one's true self, and painting uncovers the aspirations spoken from their heart.'

His at first glance seemingly random placement of paint and lines morphs into complex systems of labyrinthine proportions that thematize an allegory of the mind, picking up on what Freud insists, 'a trace of each inscription [that] remains in the surface below.' The displaced elements of negative space gather into structural riddles and subgroups of the greater puzzle, the depth of Kozlowski's works, which is subjected to a process of transformation that does not remain entirely at the hands of the artist; his structures that through the placement of wet acrylic form the paper surface that reacts to the inscribed material. The two-dimensional flat picture plane of the paper is not elevated by illusionistic properties but by the process and time it takes the paint to dry, transposing the lines and structures into a more bodily physicality, part of the pictorial story as told by Kozlowski. The journey that one undertakes when passing along the diverse works becomes a journey through the convolutions of Kozlowski's memory, his desires, persons, places that left an imprint that is being excavated and made visible for the audience by unfolding and casting them on paper. They all become metonymic in a rare recognition of the endless proliferations of connections and remembrances in re-tracing what only remains in its residue, trying to preserve and enhance them through visualization.

As counterparts in the tradition of Lethe and Mnemosyne, Kozlowski's Anti.Mnemosyne reveals itself as the place of modern memory sites, those metamorphoses of one place after another, from transparencies to opacities of emotional and inspirational fluids that act as an extension for the memories that otherwise decay fragmented as mnemonic ruins, the fragments - following Stephen Owen - 'from which we try to reconstruct the lost totality.'



Exhibition info
Anti.Mnemosyne

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untitled (011 | pixels ain't nothing but ...) - acrylic on paper. 150 x 100cm, 2012.



untitled (016 | no title) - marking spray for construction sites, paper on paper. 150x 100cm, 2012.



untitled (008 | transmitted) - chinese ink on paper, 150 x 100cm, 2012.



untitled (006 | different stories - symbiosis 2) - acrylic on paper, 150 x 100cm, 2012.