

OLAF BREUNING: *BIG DROPS*

Von Bartha, S-chanf

27 March – 29 May 2021



(L-R) Olaf Breuning, *First Plant*, 2020; Olaf Breuning, *Life*, 2020. Images courtesy the artist & von Bartha.

Press Release, 26 March 2021

Von Bartha is pleased to present a solo exhibition of new work by Swiss artist Olaf Breuning in the gallery's S-chanf space, 27 March - 29 May 2021. *BIG DROPS* is Breuning's first solo exhibition at the S-chanf gallery and features a series of seven colourful new woodcut paintings by the artist which explore the natural world and playfully address pressing subjects such as global warming.

For the new body of work on view in *BIG DROPS*, Breuning uses the ancient method of woodcut painting. By using blocks of roughly cut wood, the artist prints paint onto the canvas' surface. The organic material of the woodblocks echoes the natural subjects depicted in his compositions. The paintings use bold, vivid shapes to depict foundations of the natural world such as water, earth and light, encouraging the viewer to confront their own existence within these surroundings and their role in the ecosystem.

Multi-disciplinary artist Breuning lives in Upstate New York and works across the media of performance, photography, film, sculpture, and drawing. Breuning is known for his characteristic sense of humour and work which reflects on human experience as well as cultural and political issues. Breuning's diverse practice introduces viewers to absurd and humorous worlds, using an intentionally simple visual vocabulary to address a range of human concerns. The artist's work crystallises particular themes, allowing viewers to reflect on both the range of human experience and the commonalities we share.

Olaf Breuning, Artist, commented: *"With these large woodcut paintings, I use nature to talk about nature. After a few years of having my studio in the middle of the forest, I started to think more about my beautiful natural surroundings. It was good timing, as I believe now*

more than ever that we should all start to rethink how we coexist with nature. Saying that, I genuinely hope my paintings remain light, colourful, and uplifting even with a dark shadow of personal concern attached to them. After all, I am an optimist!"

Olaf Breuning: *BIG DROPS* will also be available to view through von Bartha's online viewing room from 20 April via www.vonbartha.com

Notes to Editors

Exhibition Facts:

Title: Olaf Breuning: *BIG DROPS*

Exhibition dates: 27 March - 29 May 2021

Address: Somvih 46, CH-7525 S-chanf

Telephone: + 41 61 322 1000

Opening Hours: 27 March - 5 April, daily from 3pm - 6.30pm. 6 April - 29 May, by appointment only

Admission: Free

Twitter: @vonbartha

Facebook: galleryvonbartha

Instagram: @vonbartha

Von Bartha follows the recommendations of the Federal Office of Public Health. Information on our online events and visiting our spaces will be communicated on our website and social media channels.

About von Bartha

Initially co-founded in 1970 by Margareta and Miklos von Bartha who remain a contributing force in its strategic direction, the family-run gallery has been under the direction of Stefan von Bartha since 2008. Together, the two generations maintain an unparalleled level of expertise. Von Bartha is a trusted destination for its audiences and a place to gain knowledge of the artists and the specialist areas that they represent.

Von Bartha presents a cutting-edge contemporary programme, representing an international roster of artists working across a diverse range of media including Superflex, Terry Haggerty, John Wood & Paul Harrison, Anna Dickinson, Sarah Oppenheimer, and Felipe Mujica amongst others. The gallery nurtures new generations of artists, whilst supporting the continually evolving practice of their established artists. As one of the longest-running international contemporary art galleries, von Bartha continues to support the careers of influential artists such as Camille Graeser, Fritz Glarner and Olle Baertling. It facilitates discovery across the generations, and has a track record of fostering the careers of some of the leading artists of the 20th Century with a focus on Constructivism; Concrete art; and Op art.

Located in Basel, one of the world's most important centres for the display of art, and S-chanf, in the heart of the Swiss Alps, von Bartha brings together international and local art audiences across these two locations. Von Bartha creates a unique platform of events and

programming including salons, openings, and exhibitions beyond the walls of the gallery, inspiring and informing audiences by making new connections and offering a fresh perspective. Von Bartha publishes books, exhibition catalogues and its own online magazine "Stories" featuring interviews, essays and insights to the gallery's work and programme. Read more at www.vonbartha.com/stories

About Olaf Breuning

Olaf Breuning (b. 1970, Switzerland) made a name for himself through a multi-layered oeuvre that questions contemporary reality. Since the early 2000s, he created ambivalent photographs and installations that undermine a simple reading of the surrounding world. Recently, Breuning has begun a new series of paintings, in which he playfully addresses pressing subjects such as global warming. The artist currently lives in Upstate New York. He had solos shows at NRW-Forum, Düsseldorf; Palais de Tokyo, Paris; Chisenhale Gallery, London; and the Paul Klee Museum, Bern. He participated in the 2008 Whitney Biennial and showed in group exhibitions at the Museum of Modern Art, New York; Pompidou Center, Paris; Haus der Kunst, Munich; Kunsthalle Zurich; Walker Art Center, Minneapolis; Jeu de Paume, Paris; KW Institute for Contemporary Art, Berlin; Whitechapel Gallery, London; and the Mori Art Museum, Tokyo.

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