

AUREL SCHEIBLER



Umbra Studies No. 12, 2019, Oil on canvas, 91 x 71,5 cm

Nils Dunkel

Fragments

Opening 11.09.2019, 6–9 pm

Exhibition 12.09.–26.10.2019

Aurel Scheibler Cabinet

The debut solo exhibition by Nils Dunkel, born 1990 in Linz, Austria, will be presented at the cabinet of the gallery starting from September 11, 2019.

Nils Dunkel started his artistic career as autodidact. He was only in his early twenties when he designed magazines and artist books and used to cause quite a stir in the fashion world with his unconventional designs. He began his education in 2017 in the sculpture class at the Academy of Fine Arts in Munich and changed for the Art Academy Dusseldorf in 2018, where he's been studying since then the under Prof. Rita McBride. From the very beginning, Nils Dunkel's main artistic interest was to use traditional materials and techniques in unconventional ways. This approach is exemplary shown in the series *Flipsides* (since 2018): the artist questions the principal role of picture's face side by elevating the inner side of canvas to be protagonist of the work.

The works from the series *Umbra Studies* (2019) are encrypted in their materiality. Like fragile works on paper, pinned by nails and framed under glass, they remind of silkscreen prints or even ready-mades from pattern books, but in fact they've been produced in course of sculptural exploration of space and interplay of a mechanical technique and a bodily, artistic gesture.

A ground layer of the oil paint is first brushed over canvas. It creates a stage for the second layer, applied with a pattern roller, a tool, rather rare these days, which is used to create a pattern on wall. Consisting of twelve fragments, the series *Umbra Studies* starts with 100% titanium white and ends with 100% umbra. The colour changes gradually, creating a growing contrast. Whereas the difference between subsequent works can hardly be perceived, the No.1 and No.12 are the alpha and omega, completely contrasting in colour.

Colour intense and covered with delicate patterns, the works clearly make a reference to the medium of painting, however, they carry a fundamental anti-painting position. The picture is not painted, but „made“, its surface is constructed by a combination of different techniques. Nils Dunkel uses a traditional craft, detaches it from its original context and re-defines it in art work.

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The idea of the serial repetition is also reversed in the process of making. Though pattern rollers are normally used to produce identical images, in Nils Dunkel's works the structure is constantly shifting, which creates a new picture every single time. A moment controlled accident causes deliberate failures. Based on prefabricated patterns, in combination with the unpredictable of the process, a whole variety of possibilities in the space between artistic work and mechanical process is explored.

A further work in the exhibition is the neon sculpture Black Rose (2019), the motif of which also derives from historical pattern roller. Originally only a few centimetres in size, it is fragmented in a blow-up process and reduced to a minimalist form consisting only of a few lines. The light tubes are painted black, which creates an effect of a contour and contrasts with the white neon light. The result is an imitation of a drawing, an adaptation of a three-dimensional object that takes its final form as sculpture.



Flipside - Grey, 2019, Oil on canvas, 80 x 60 x 2,5 cm