

Mircea Suciu

Universal Fatigue

16 January – 22 February 2020
Blain|Southern New York

Opening Reception:

Thursday 16 January 2020, 6-8pm



Mircea Suciu, *Disintegration 2*, 2019, Courtesy the artist and Blain|Southern

Universal Fatigue is the gallery's first exhibition with Romanian artist Mircea Suciu. Fragments of appropriated and found imagery provide the subjects for new paintings that demonstrate a relationship between representation and abstraction.

Part of the Cluj School, Mircea Suciu (b. 1978, Baia Mare, Romania) is regarded as one of Romania's leading artists. During his formative years he witnessed the country's tumultuous transition after the only violent overthrow of a communist government in the 1989 revolutions. Describing himself as an image creator rather than a traditional painter, Suciu mines and references art history and contemporary imagery, reducing down the elements and adding colour coded symbolism. He has 'his own complex way of making things in which painting, photography, drawing and print all cooperate while playing their individual parts'.

Inspired by his former studies on the restoration of Baroque paintings, Suciu has developed a process he calls 'monoprinting'. A photographic image is split into a grid of A4 surfaces, each one printed onto an acetate sheet onto which a layer of acrylic paint is applied. The paint acts as a 'glue' that adheres directly to the canvas and once dry, the acetate sheet is peeled off. The result is a transference of the printed image with associated faults and imperfections which Suciu then 'restores' by re-painting with oil and acrylic paint. Sometimes, as with works in the *Disintegration* series, he overlays the image multiple times using various colours until he creates a surface that is barely recognisable from the original. As a final stage the whole image is repainted.

In *Disintegration 2* the image of an ecstatic worshipper at a Christian snake handling ceremony in the US has been overlaid with up to 20 layers of acrylic colour. Members of these churches are 'signs' followers, the venomous snakes are used to show that God protects believers from harm because they are not bitten or because they have survived a poisonous bite. Even death by snake bite can show God's protection, there being no greater sign of obedience to God than to be taken home in such a manner.

Suciu creates these powerful and dramatic images by variously using flat, painted or photographic surfaces in a single painting. He says, 'A characteristic of my work is frailty, not regarding the subject but the relationship between the surfaces that constitute the ensemble of the whole picture.' This multi-layered process creates compositions of reinvented images which allude to history, memory and eventual dissolution of all things.

¹*Hotel Empathy, Meeting Mircea Suciu* by Jurriaan Benschop

Notes to Editors

About the Artist

Mircea Suciu (b. 1978, Baia Mare, Romania)

Works by Mircea Suciu have been included in the Timisoara Biennial (2017); Vilnius Painting Triennial (2016); Gwangju Biennial (2014); Prague Biennial (2009); and Istanbul Biennial (2009). His paintings have been included in group exhibitions in Kunstmuseum Bochum, (DE); Weserburg Museum, Bremen, (DE); Museum Beelden aan Zee, The Hague, (NL); Boulder Museum of Contemporary Art, Colorado, (US); Espace Louis Vuitton, Paris, (FR); Fondation Francès, Senlis, (FR); Maison Particulière, Brussels, (BE); MODEM Center for Modern and Contemporary Art, Debrecen, (HU); and Mucsarnok Kunsthalle, Budapest, (HU).

About Blain|Southern

Blain|Southern is a contemporary art gallery based in London, Berlin and New York. The gallery represents an expanding roster of international artists and is the exclusive representative of the estates of Lynn Chadwick and Avigdor Arikha. Recent exhibitions include: Francesco Clemente, Michael Simpson, Rachel Howard, Ed Moses & Qin Feng, Herbert Zangs, Enrique Martínez Celaya, Bernar Venet, Abdoulaye Konaté, and Joan Snyder.

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