

# Anton Kern Gallery

## Ellen Gronemeyer *frozen*

For Immediate Release

January 11 – February 24, 2018

Opening reception: Thursday, January 11 from 6–8pm

For her first solo exhibition at Anton Kern Gallery, Berlin-based painter Ellen Gronemeyer presents a group of new paintings that portray youthful characters, children, and the occasional animal in a topsy-turvy world of whirring colors and improbability. Captured alone or in friendly groupings, and often engaged in various stages of contemplation and transformation, Gronemeyer's protagonists are fueled with the paradoxical energies of the possible and the imagined.

How real is the likelihood of metamorphosis, Gronemeyer's paintings seem to be asking, how probable a change of the form or nature of a thing or person into a completely different one? Let's say, the mutation of a young man into a mechanical spider wearing socks and gloves suspended from the unknown into a shadowy mountainscape; or, two friends embracing while their heads transform into large globes, like two worlds meeting; or, four adolescent dancers in a cramped space with two of the figures breaking apart at hip level and nearly merging into each other while an onlooker seems mildly startled.

Obviously, transformation is what painting can do: mess with the rules of nature, create unlikely scenarios. However, Gronemeyer seems to suggest something more, namely that these transformations are possible, observed in real life, or at least nearly witnessed in her daily life experience.

The surprise and shock of these paintings do not result from the improbability of their scenarios or the artist's vocabulary of metaphors alone, but from the way the paintings are made. Paint and brushstroke merge into the figures, and vice versa, figures dissolve into flickering surface patterns. The illusion of a donkey with the human-faced nose is absorbed into a sparkling ground that resembles more an unkempt hairy carpet than the spotlight stage it is depicting. And equally a three-eyed, double-nosed kneeling figure transforms into a spectacular surface of brush marks and, despite its darkness, celebratory paint surface. Herein lies Gronemeyer's magic. In her ability to transform metaphor into paint, so that the physical works themselves become the protagonists in the artists' world of open possibilities. An illogical world for sure, but one where seriousness and profundity lie in the interplay of color-trembles and humming, gnarly brush marks with her cast of characters, a world in which the original, biological meaning of metamorphosis, i.e. the transformation from an immature stage to an adult stage, is played through and, most astonishingly, temporarily reversed.

Gronemeyer has exhibited in galleries throughout Europe as well as New York and Chicago, and was recently included in groups shows at Neuer Aachener Kunstverein, Aachen (2017); Kunsthalle Bern, Bern (2015); and Deichtorhallen Hamburg, Hamburg (2011). She lives and works in Berlin, Germany.



Ellen Gronemeyer, *frozen*, 2017, oil on canvas on board, 12.6 x 9.45 inches.

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### Gallery Hours

Tuesday through Saturday  
10am – 6pm