

07/2021

Philipp Keel

Last Summer

Main description

“The most beautiful summers are often also the most painful. We rarely feel more alive. And at the end of those summers, we’re reminded all the more strongly that everything passes. Looking at Philipp Keel’s new works in *Last Summer* there is the absence—apart from a single nude—of people. Instead, there are still lifes and above all pictures of palms, pools, drinks, initially seeming cool and summery, as well as many captured moments and incidental poetry. Common to them all is Keel’s eye for specific details and moods, and yet on closer inspection melancholy permeates many of his works. At times, the moment has already passed or is only visible on the blurred margins of our consciousness. What remains is a feeling of transience, perhaps even a faint touch of loneliness.

One of the great strengths of Keel’s works is that they stay subtle and reserved. We each find in them what we wish to find. In some, the melancholy is light-hearted, little more than a gentle, not unpleasant tug at a taut string somewhere deep inside us. In others there is more to it. *Last Summer* takes us to a threshold: evening has set in, a solitary view from a veranda with a drink in hand, friends laughing in the background as the day’s last light fades. In our mind play the images of a day that passed far too quickly, some flickering, some clear. Perhaps we feel briefly wistful, or perhaps we turn around and go back to the others.” Benedict Wells

Biography

Philipp Keel is an artist, author, publisher of *Diogenes*, and a filmmaker. He studied at Berklee College of Music in Boston and the Hochschule für Film und Fernsehen in Munich, before moving to California and working in various artistic disciplines. His photographs, paintings, drawings and prints have since been shown in numerous international exhibitions, most recently at Bildhalle Zürich, and are present in leading collections. He became known for his bestselling series *All About Me and All About Us* (Random House, 1998), for *Color* (Steidl, 2003) and the series *Simple Diary* (Taschen). In 2014 Keel’s project *State of Mind* (Nieves), featuring drawings, watercolors and silkscreens, was shown at Villa Flor in S-chanf. Following the monograph *Splash* (2017), which presents a rigorous selection of Keel’s photographic work from recent years, Steidl will next publish *Last Summer*, a comprehensive collection of the artist’s latest works. Philipp Keel lives in Zurich.

Bibliography

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English

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