

FERDINAND - The beginning of a great friendship

28.01.2023 - 04.02.2023

Opening: 28.01.2023, 4 PM

Hotel Kovèl

Tiroler Gasse 11

82487 Oberammergau

In the exhibition FERDINAND, artists Jessica Twitchell (*1983 in Mellrichstadt) and Kristin Wenzel (*1983 in Gotha) chase a shared childhood dream on the occasion of their 40th birthdays. Growing up in East and West Germany, the artists' references were disparate, but whether with Fury or the stallion Karino, both indulged in the same horse dreams.

The horse: a mystery on four legs. A tail, the mane, the body, the being filled with power and elegance. Wild and impetuous. Symbol of freedom and companion of man. Countless films and television series have constructed a romantic image of the horse and made it the projection surface of our desires and fantasies. Whether in *The Horse Whisperer*, *Black Beauty*, *Lucky Luke*, *My Little Pony* or in blockbusters with an affinity for the Middle Ages, the horse becomes both a symbol and a place of longing.

The beginning of a great friendship. The horse has been known as a domesticated companion of man for over 4,000 years. Whether as a working animal for hunting or field work, as a means of transportation, war animal, status symbol or best friend. In the course of human history, the role of the horse has also changed. Today, man rides horses in tournaments and lets horseback trailriding tourist groups carry him to remote outback locations.

It is of no surprise that no animal has appeared so often in works of art throughout history as the proud steed. Initially as a carved miniature figure found in the Vogelherd Cave some 35,000 years ago, later as the myth of the Trojan horse around 700 B.C., but also as hype for equestrian statues in the Cinquecento or in painting from the 18th century onward. The list is long. The forms of representation vary from the warhorse in battle to the draught horse of the riding carriage to the Wild West friendship and from the fox hunt in royalist Britain to the endured love affair of man.

But what about the horse in contemporary art? Where has it gone?

For FERDINAND 11 contemporary artists from Germany, Romania, Switzerland and Cuba come together to celebrate the myth of the horse. In photography, painting, collage, drawing, sculpture and as a tattoo, the horse is visualized, questioned, paid homage to or lifted from its pedestal.

Participating artists: Vlad Brăteanu, Franziska Sophie Geissler, Elena Helfrecht, Olsen, Anna Pfanzelt, Dania González Sanabria, Thomas Straub, Jessica Twitchell, Dan Vezentan, Kristin Wenzel, Latefa Wiersch.

At the opening, Alan Twitchell will show music videos as part of his lecture performance "And I've it All Here on Red, Blue, Green #8." Starting from the certainty that these are more than just an additional symptom of ubiquitous manipulative strategies of pop culture, we will watch together a wild jumble of videos of sad love songs, cheesy dance videos and through-composed, overbudgeted productions from the 80s. In between, Alan reads some lyrics from "Nimm Dies, Wildes Gärtlein."

From midnight on, we'll gallop across the dancefloor to the Klubhaus beats.