

Pia Fries

Parsen und module

9 march – 20 may 2018

Official opening: 8 march 11am to 14pm

In 2018 a generous gift sees Pia Fries's series *parsen und module**, dating from 1999 and comprising 30 identically-sized pictures, enter the collection at the Musée d'Art moderne de la Ville de Paris. Accompanied by thirty other paintings and drawings recently presented at the Museum Kurhaus Kleve, Germany, this emblematic work is the nucleus of an exhibition offering an insight into the different facets of the Swiss painter's oeuvre.

For some years Fries has been taking an interest in the work of Dutch draughtsman, painter and engraver Hendrick Goltzius (1558–1617), one of the leading engravers of the early Northern Mannerism period. She has homed in especially on two of his series: *The Four Disgracers*, which delves into Greek mythology and the falls of Icarus, Tantalus, Ixion and Phaeton; and *The Standard Bearers*, in which guards are shown carrying flags on a pole. Both of these series of copper engravings stand out for their technical sophistication and the "exuberance" of compositions of which selected fragments have been freely integrated into Fries's own work. Alternating impasto with long streaks of paint, she underscores the sense of movement inherent in the fall of the bodies and the effect of the wind on the generous folds of the flags. Sculptural and vividly coloured, Fries's painterly forms intertwine with Goltzius's fine black and white lines.

Born in Beromünster, near Lucerne, in 1955, Pia Fries lives and works in Düsseldorf and Munich. After initially studying sculpture in Lucerne, she became a pupil of Gerhard Richter at the Kunstakademie Düsseldorf in 1986. Since the mid-1980s her works have taken the form of *Bildobjekte*, or "image-objects", with her use of impasto conjuring up crevasses and geological folds and setting her pictures on the cusp between painting and sculpture. Her use of colour is direct and her composition vigorous. Each picture is the product of explorations and experimentation whose core concern is colour as both substance and raw material.

* *The titles of the 30 pictures of parsen und module all begin with the syllable "par" ("same size" in Latin) or "pars" (part) and involve various plays on words.*

Curator: Julia Garimorth, assisted by Sylvie Moreau-Soteras

This exhibition has been organized in close collaboration with the Museum Kurhaus Kleve, Germany.

It has been made possible by the backing of:

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Pia Fries

parsen und module, « parsnaus »
(detail), 1999

oil on wood, 40 x 50 cm

Anne-Marie and Marc Robelin Collection

Photo : Hans Brändli

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Director

Fabrice Hergott

Curator

Julia Garimorth,
assisted by Sylvie Moreau-Soteras

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Visitor information

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Open Tuesday – Sunday
10 am – 6 pm
Open late: Thursday until 10 pm

Free entrance

Cultural activities

Information and bookings
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