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CHECK OUT GERMAN ARTIST JONAS BURGERT'S DARK AND DREAMY ARTWORKS

Text by Huzan Tata. Photograph Courtesy: Lepkowski Studios

Enter canvases that are both familiar and fantastical



At first glance, the paintings seem to be striking portraits, enhanced by a vibrant palette. On closer look, one notices the unsettling, even grotesque, portrayal of human beings. The figurative paintings are reminiscent of Dutch masters such as Rembrandt and Van Dyck, but are marked with acidic yellows and fluorescent hues. For Schlier, his debut show in the country, Berlin-based Jonas Burgert presents allegorical narratives of our contemporary world.

"I don't paint cruelty or real brutality. I try to be serious and honest, which I think shocks, because this is what we always try to avoid. I interpret the stage on which the struggle of spiritual representation takes place," he explains.

Burgert, who works predominantly with oil on canvas, creates works that seem almost dream-like. "I don't want to be in a clearly defined place or a specific time, rather I want my paintings to seem timeless. The essential questions hardly change, that is why it is possible to create bridges in art from a thousand years ago to even last night," he maintains. Hoping that his work compels viewers to ponder the complexities of the human psyche, Burgert paints both the real and the wondrous, each creation an attempt to portray, as he says, "an ongoing struggle of hope and failure".

Schlier is on display at Galerie Isa, Mumbai until April 11, 2017.

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