

Galerie Francesca Pia
Limmatstrasse 268
8005 Zurich
Switzerland
info@francescapia.com
+41.442712444

Greg Parma Smith
Music of the Spheres

April 22 – May 27, 2017
Opening Saturday, April 22, 2-5pm

“Kabîr says 'My heart's bee drinks its nectar.'”
—Kabîr

Music of the Spheres. Gloria in Excelsis. Doming firmament setting the celestial limit of primordial vision. Comforting and enclosing, extracting. Visually tenable allegory of the infinite other. God. Encircling feats of design, testimony to the intelligence of natural selection.

Big soaring birds appear to symbolize human ecstasy in the infinite void. They are also physically savage, neutral dinosaurs on the furthest side of paradise. Probably always hungry, often on the edge of starvation, impelled to migrate or scour huge distances for food following subtle magnetic fields.

Offerings of fruit symbolize humility and gratitude towards an effulgent void that wants for nothing. This paradoxical gesture applies to representation too—submitting another image to a totalizing stream of visuality.

Our tools to talk about the infinite are inseparable from the barely-considered garbage shat out by capitalist society every second of every day. Let's not separate them. Ideology, clichés, plastic, soda, are on the one hand annoyances to a tasteful and moral sensibility, but are also burning emblems of the erosion in our collective attention to, or authority over, what our culture is producing.

Is it possible to hold both the spiritual infinite and a moralistic critique of ideology in mind at the same time? Does it sacrifice one's sense of irony to put it on the altar for a while? Irony implies critique, devotion implies belief. To trust my critique I must accept a split. I love these birds and I love the sky. I love some of the fruits and I offer them to the sky or Buddha, which stands for the void, No-Self. But no painting is 100% serious since all codes of representation are defined by an abyssal gap. That edge, in which a language contains a meta language, I inhabit; my attempt at probing the possibility of spiritual feeling within paintings that speak a certain referential language is simply an offering dedicated on the altar of contemporary art.

—Greg Parma Smith

Galerie Francesca Pia is pleased to present our first exhibition with Greg Parma Smith (b.1983, Massachusetts, USA). Smith's new hyperrealistic paintings combine the spiritual with the mundane in still lives, birds, butterflies, masks, sunsets and the materials of applied art and craft practices. His precise depictions of the fantastical dredge through registers of allegorical and profane subjects, synthesizing and abruptly fracturing the surfaces and themes of advanced and academic painting. Smith's work is currently on display in a survey solo exhibition at MAMCO, Geneva, until May 7th and has been shown at the Swiss Institute, New York ; at MoMA PS1 ; and at White Columns New York. His paintings are in the permanent collections of MAMCO and the Cleveland Museum of Art, as well as in numerous private collections.