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Press release

5 October 2022

NORBERT BISKY

UTOPIANISTAS

5 November – 23 December 2022



Retaliation, 2022, oil on canvas, 150 × 120 × 4,5 cm

Norbert Bisky's last exhibition in Paris, which opened the day before the first lockdown in March 2020, had to close its doors as soon as it opened. His frustration resulted in Utopianistas, a post-pandemic and energetic Parisian exhibition that proposes to a brand new reading of the concept of utopia developed by Thomas Moore.

The artist was born in 1970 in the GDR, his father a prominent member of the communist party. He has spent many years exploring the notion of political utopia, its practical ambiguities and the weight of ideology. The fall of the Berlin Wall and discovery of the West prompted him to embark on a career as an artist. He has drawn on this watershed moment, both historical and intimate, to build an

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exhilarating and engaged artistic practice. His oil paintings, their colours shimmering so brightly they can be blinding, borrow as much from the socialist realism of his childhood as from the codes of contemporary hedonism. He portrays glorified but idle young people, often caught up in all sorts of catastrophic scenes.

For this new series, Norbert Bisky shows us serious-faced teenagers lost in the middle of heavenly landscapes. As he explains: "New generations have emerged from the pandemic full of hope and ideas for making the world a better place. It is these modest 'heroes', these ambiguous visionaries, I place at the heart of this exhibition: what future lies ahead for these idealists who dedicate themselves body and soul to perfecting our societies without realising that by doing so, they are possibly leading it to destruction?" Each of the paintings acts as a metaphor for the traumas and uncertainties of our time. They offer an equivocal interpretation of the world, divided between optimism and disenchantment.

Born in 1970 in Leipzig, Norbert Bisky has seen his work widely exhibited in France and internationally, notably by the Martin-Gropius-Bau in Berlin (2003), Museum voor Moderne Kunst (PMMK) in Ostend, Belgium (2003), National Museum of Korea in Seoul (2004), Dortmunder Kunstverein in Dortmund, Germany and the Haifa Museum of Art in Israel (2009), Maison Rouge in Paris and me Collectors Room in Berlin (2011), Rostok Kunsthalle, Germany, with a retrospective of his work (2014), Villa Schöningen, Potsdam, Germany (2019), Confort Moderne, Poitiers, France (2020) and G2 Kunsthalle Leipzig, Germany (2021). His art features in a variety of collections including at the Museum of Modern Art (MoMA) in New York, Museum Ludwig in Cologne, Deutsche Bank in Frankfurt and the Fonds National d'Art Contemporain in Paris. On the occasion of the thirtieth anniversary of the fall of the Berlin Wall, the artist's work is the subject of two museum exhibitions: Pompa at St.-Matthäus-Kirche in Berlin, and Rant at Villa Schöningen in Potsdam.