

Hans Weigand

Rider in the Storm

19.05. – 21.08. 2022

The ALBERTINA introduces Hans Weigand with a selection of his most recent works: a sensitive graphic artist and painter, he resorts to ancient media rich in tradition, translating them into a present context. In that same vein, the presentation focuses on Hans Weigand as a forward-looking object artist and musician who is thoroughly up to date through his choice of subject matter and work titles, both of which are socially critical most of the time: from their mere appearance it is hard to guess that many of them are named after songs by such bands as The Doors or The Clash, which can be assigned to psychedelic rock and early punk.

As early as at the beginning of the 1970s—even before he took up his studies at the Vienna University of Applied Arts under Oswald Oberhuber—Weigand was profoundly influenced by pop art and science fiction, as well as psychedelic pop and rock. In line with the individualistic and anarchist self-concept of Vienna's artistic circles at the time, in his work Weigand reflects upon nostalgia, personal failure, intoxication, and self-alienation. These themes go hand in hand with sociopolitical motifs.

In his output, Weigand, who lived in Los Angeles from the mid-1990s to the end of the decade, elaborates upon a utopian yet classical visual vocabulary abounding with contrasts and contradictions. Behind the façade of the American West Coast's casual lifestyle, he especially deals with such sociopolitical themes as the Great Financial Crisis of 2008, having obtained deep insights into the surf punk culture through his fellow artists. Having widely been quoted in many of Weigand's works, the character of the surfer exemplarily personifies the idea of ambivalence: it symbolizes freedom and a willingness to take risks, as well as daring and downfall.

In Weigand's oeuvre, not only do contemporary motifs collide with the imagery of old masters. Also, such traditional techniques as the woodcut are realized in an essentially unconventional and contemporary fashion.