

Volker Hüller

L.I.T.S.

January 26 – March 18, 2023
GRIMM, 54 White Street, New York, NY (US)



Volker Hüller | L.I.T.S. (Purple Haze), 2022

GRIMM is pleased to present *L.I.T.S.*, a solo exhibition of new works by German-born, Brooklyn-based artist Volker Hüller at the New York gallery from January 26 through March 18, 2023. This is the artist's sixth solo exhibition with the gallery and the first in the gallery's new Tribeca location.

The exhibition title references the continuum of an evolving oeuvre, a double entendre and acronym for "life is too short" and "lost in time and space." Borne out of a deep reflection of the artist's work over the past decade, the new works on view break old patterns while still offering a comprehensive representation of a distinctive modernist approach that consists of painting and hand-colored etchings. On this occasion, Hüller employs a medium new to his practice, soft pastel, whose pigments imbue his large-scale etchings with a new sense of vitality.

In each work a lively scene unfolds in fragments, somewhere between joyful revelry and tormented self-reflection. There is a chaotic melding of limbs, faces, bottles, lighters, and other objects scattered across competing planes that collapse into one another.

Each image is poised between an exuberant communal celebration and a reflection on the alienating pace of modern society. Hüller evades direct narrative but allows each work to speak through motifs and gestures from which multiple possibilities emerge.

The monochromatic palette of the pastel-colored etchings parallels with new oil paintings whose sense of materiality is heightened in vast fields of whites and silvers. The paintings are collaged with textured materials such as burlap and studio detritus, providing rich dimension to the often surreal, abstracted figuration that emerges from the paintings' splintered compositions. This collaged, patchworked approach to painting is free of both narrative and esoteric implications, and instead exists as a memory and record of its own creation.

A strong dialogue is shared between these collage paintings and two monumental new etchings, the artist's largest to date. Often the artist's etchings are motivated by ideas of figuration, but these new works exist in a state of pure abstraction. As in the paintings, notions of intrusion and extrusion are explored where thoughts, forms, and worlds are born into and out of one another.

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Detail | L.I.T.S. (*History Repeats Itself*), 2022

The artist's interest in formal qualities such as scale, material, and color, which are pushed and pulled through examinations of the artist's own oeuvre and the greater art historical context, define the approach of many of the new works on view. A series of small-scale paintings, however, offer a more intimate perspective. Observations from everyday scenes or personal excursions are depicted amongst contemplative representations of human forms: figures lay resting, or perhaps they are nearing life's edge, longing to be reborn. Whereas the other works in the exhibition offer a macrocosmic view of approaches to image making, these paintings can be seen introspective visions of the artist's subconscious.

About the artist

Volker Hüller (b. 1976 in Forchheim, DE) currently lives and works in Brooklyn, NY (US). He studied under the late Norbert Schwontkowski (1949-2013) at the Academy of Fine Arts in Hamburg (DE), graduating in 2008. Recent exhibitions include *Wasteland*, Produzentengalerie, Hamburg (DE); *Birds*, Van Doren Waxter, New York, NY (US); *Bon Voyage*, GRIMM, Amsterdam (NL); *Paradise Inn*, GRIMM, New York, NY (US); *Tonics*, Van Doren Waxter, New York, NY (US); *Volley*, Produzentengalerie, Hamburg (DE); *L.I.T.S. Homo Naledi*, GRIMM, Amsterdam (NL); *Volker Hüller*, 11R Gallery, New York, NY (US); *Volker Hüller*, Timothy Taylor, London (UK); *Volker Hüller*, curated by Anna-Catherina Gebbers, Salon 94, New York, NY (US). Hüller has participated in group exhibitions at the following venues: GRIMM, New York, NY (US); Museum Weserburg für Moderne Kunst, Bremen (DE); Kunsthal KAdE, Amersfoort (NL); Saatchi Gallery, London (UK); and the Falckenberg Collection, Hamburg (DE). Hüller's work is included in the collections of The Museum of Modern Art, New York, NY (US); The Dallas Museum of Art, Dallas, TX (US); Saatchi Gallery, London (UK) and the Israel Museum, Jerusalem (IL), as well as many private collections.

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