

TEMPLON

II

NORBERT BISKY

Desmadre Berlin

March 14 – May 9, 2020



Norbert Bisky, *Acid Tram*, 2020

On his first return to Paris since 2014, German painter Norbert Bisky plunges us into the heart of his native capital city: the wild *Desmadre Berlin* of the inter-war period, a world of hedonism and anarchy whose traces are still to be found on the capital's walls today.

In this new series, Bisky has chosen to swap the pastel blue of his skies for darker hues and the luminous smiles of his models for more serious expressions. His baroque scenes feature bronzed models who bring to mind the communist propaganda which marked the artist's youth in GDR. Alongside them are the night birds, hipsters and outsiders who populate the streets of Berlin Friedrichshain every evening, drifting among the post-industrial facades that characterise the district, a favourite haunt of the city's denizens of the night.

Channelling the artist's traumas and obsessive questioning of the uncertainties of our era, *Desmadre Berlin* offers an exploration of 1920s Germany during the Weimar Republic. An extraordinary moment in Germany's political history, the period bubbled over with cultural and scientific innovations and shifts in social norms, eventually leading to disaster. This is the volcanic Berlin we see in Bisky's disjointed universe. He depicts a dual-faceted world, both joyful and gloomy, pleasure-seeking and dystopian. His examination of the lost illusions of German youth fuses with the apocalyptic visions of a new generation undergoing their own identity crisis.

Born in 1970 in Leipzig, Germany, Norbert Bisky's work has been widely exhibited internationally, including by the Martin Gropius Bau in Berlin (2003), Museum voor Moderne Kunst (PMMK) in Ostend (2003), National Museum of Korea in Seoul (2004), Dortmunder Kunstverein in Dortmund (2009), Haifa Museum of Art in Israel (2009), and la maison rouge in Paris and me Collectors Room in Berlin (2011). Rostock Kunsthalle held a major retrospective of his work in 2014. His art features in a variety of collections, including at New York's Museum of Modern Art (MoMA), Museum Ludwig in Cologne, the Deutsche Bank in Frankfurt and the Fonds National d'Art Contemporain in Paris. Norbert Bisky marked the thirtieth anniversary of the fall of the Berlin Wall with two museum exhibitions in Berlin: *Pompa* at St.-Matthäus-Kirche and *Rant* at Villa Schöningen in Potsdam.