

# Michael Borremans Paintings

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bathing his subjects in an austere light and rendering them with strong confident brushwork michael borremans executes paintings that seduce and hold at bay keeping the history of art in dialogue while committing wholly to the iconography of our time the protagonists of these works derived from pictures in magazines or scientific books are captured while engaging in activities whose exact nature seems both mundane and mysterious they're just sitting there breathing borremans told an interviewer but the artist manages to freight these protagonists and the air around them with great emotional tension similarly his apparently sober palette of beiges browns and greys sometimes gives way to a small flourish of brighter color a white bow or a ruddy cheeked face that breaks into and energizes the whole image such sleights of hand by which paint discreetly but completely incarnates mood are the crux of borremans art and are what makes him one of the finest contemporary painters in europe an heir to the suspended enigmas of manet and velazquez and the indoor atmospherics of chardin and vermeer this volume with its engaging essay by jeffrey grove and abundance of color plates is the first to present all of borremans paintings and thus constitutes the standard survey of his significant accomplishments book jacket

belgium based michael borremans creates absurd and sometimes ominous paintings horse hunting 2005 for example depicts in a muddy palette a pale and moody looking man in a suit jacket and crisp white shirt shoving two twigs up his nose he stares straight at us and the wall behind him is filled with his shadow borremans has said of his paintings i use clichés and other elements that are part of a collective consciousness my work would be perfect on biscuit tins at the 2006 berlin biennale borremans showed a film on a small lcd screen which he had framed like a painting the piece was based on a 2002 drawing of a girl which he reproduced in three dimensions so that the girl slowly

spins around whatever the medium borremans work bears this trademark sense of absurdity verging on menace weight is published concurrently with an exhibition at de Appel in Amsterdam

since the late 1990s when he first began to produce drawings and paintings Michael Borremans has created an extraordinarily mature body of work that has captured international attention the disparate spaces he imagines in his paintings drawings sculptures and films are unified by an uncanny sense of dislocation and an often unsettling beauty rendered in complex palettes and exquisite techniques borremans works in all media embrace a rich legacy of artistic progenitors but remain firmly anchored in the present presenting over 100 works created by the artist over a 14 year period in all media this publication includes many works not previously reproduced in books or catalogues offering the most complete overview of borremans oeuvre to date contributions include a concise and incisive overview of borremans practice a revealing in depth interview between the main author of the book Jeffrey Grove and the artist addressing process influence and philosophical and critical issues as well as more than 50 individual entries and mini essays on individual works in the artist's oeuvre by notable writers curators filmmakers and musicians described by the artist as the mother of all borremans books Michael Borremans as Sweet as it Gets is published on the occasion of a major mid career retrospective initially trained in photography and graphic design the Belgian artist Michael Borremans born 1963 turned to painting at the age of 30 work by the artist is held in numerous public collections including the Art Institute of Chicago High Museum of Art Atlanta Georgia Museum of Contemporary Art Los Angeles Museum of Fine Arts Boston the Museum of Modern Art New York National Gallery of Canada Ottawa San Francisco Museum of Modern Art and the Walker Art Center Minneapolis Minnesota borremans lives and works in Ghent

the first in a series of small format publications devoted to single bodies of work *Fire from the Sun* highlights michael borremans's new work which features toddlers engaged in playful but mysterious acts with sinister overtones and insinuations of violence known for his ability to recall classical painting both through technical mastery and subject matter borremans's depiction of the uncanny the perhaps secret the bizarre often surprises sometimes disturbs the viewer in this series of work children are presented alone or in groups against a studio like backdrop that negates time and space while underlining the theatrical atmosphere and artifice that exists throughout borremans's recent work reminiscent of cherubs in renaissance paintings the toddlers appear as allegories of the human condition their archetypal innocence contrasted with their suggested deviousness in his accompanying essay critic and curator michael bracewell takes an in depth look into specific paintings tackling both the highly charged subject matter and the masterly command of the medium he writes the art of michael borremans seems always to have been predicated on a confluence of enigma ambiguity and painterly poetics accosting beauty with strangeness making historic romanticism subjugate to mysterious controlling forces that are neither crudely malevolent nor necessarily benign published on the occasion of borremans's eponymous exhibition at david zwirner in hong kong this publication is available in both english only and bilingual english traditional chinese editions

a breathtaking selection of michael borremans's lustrous paintings this catalogue showcases his technical mastery and creative use of *mise en scène* recalling classical painting both through technical mastery and subject matter borremans's depiction of the surprising and the bizarre invites a second look uncanny scenes of figures onlooking blurred acrobatic displays hooded subjects in rembrandt lighting or solemn portraits of painted faces demonstrate borremans's unique vision in this recent body of work borremans continues to draw the viewer in closer with his small scale paintings of mysterious figures in peculiar arenas

for nearly two decades belgian artist michaël borremans has created an ambitious and mesmerizing oeuvre that continues to simultaneously fascinate and unsettle viewers as the art critic laura cumming writes in the observer borremans's gift is for snaring you enthralling you with all sorts of characters strange scenarios and possibilities his works display a concentrated dialogue with previous art historical epochs yet their unconventional compositions and curious narratives defy expectations and lend them an indefinable character painting has remained central in his pursuit to construct a deceptively simple visual world where figures often seem to elude the passage of time michaël borremans black mould documents the artist's first exhibition at david zwirner london in 2015 and his first solo presentation in the city in ten years this intimately scaled catalogue which has been designed by the artist in collaboration with kim beirnaert includes thirty two small and large scale paintings from his new series most of which feature anonymous black robed characters alone or in groups they perform mysterious acts within monochromatic spaces reminiscent of an artist's barren studio seemingly behaving according to a symbolic language of their own they pose alone or interact in communal dances with some figures holding torches and others exposed naked from the waist down their facelessness opens up ambiguous narrative possibilities like empty canvases with which to construct meaning like archetypes capable of embodying shifting meanings the blank figures become a mold for the human condition at once satirical tragic humorous and above all contradictory

presenting the belgian artist michaël borremans's newest group of psychologically charged paintings this catalogue highlights his exceptional technical skill interest in figuration and innovative approach to mise en scène everything is a self portrait and now i have been painting monkeys it's like making a movie michaël borremans interview magazine as a pendant to his acclaimed catalogue the acrobat the monkey showcases seventeen paintings that reveal his interest in exploring surface and artifice borremans portrays mysterious sitters including the titular monkeys which are glazed toy figurines and depicts enigmatic scenes that simultaneously invite viewers in and keep them at bay katya

tylevich's insightful commentary delves into the depths of borremans's compositions connecting the themes and motifs in the monkey to those present in previous bodies of work tylevich delves into the complex emotional and art historical registers at play in the artist's new paintings and maps the trajectory of his practice observing other instances of repetition and fabulation across his practice the publication featuring this essay alongside beautifully illustrated images of the new paintings serves as the ideal complement to the artist's 2024 exhibition at david zwirner london

belgian artist michael borremans born 1963 is among the most brilliant painters of emotion of the past half century an heir to the sober enigmatic character studies of manet and velazquez and the thick indoor atmospheres of vermeer borremans has greatly advanced this tradition in part through his incorporation of cinematic allusion and of that uniquely belgian take on surrealism that is at once deeply phlegmatic and bizarrely comical any divisions between realism and flights of fantasy are mysteriously abolished by borremans however leaving the viewer to confront his intense almost claustrophobic painterly world published for an exhibition at bawag contemporary in vienna magnetica presents a concise selection of a dozen canvases made over the past five years examined in dialogue with the artist's drawings and films

museum für gegenwartskunst kunstmuseum basel

michael borremans horse hunting was published on the occasion of the artist's second solo exhibition at david zwirner in 2006 amongst the fourteen new paintings on view was the eponymous work horse hunting 2005 which portrays a young man fashionably attired holding two twigs from each of his nostrils available in hardcover this catalogue includes a text by belgian artist and curator hans van heirsele

both michael borremans and mark manders are known to the world for unique and unconventional expression grounded in the proud traditions of european art the 21st century museum of contemporary art kanazawa is now delighted to present double silence an exhibition that will see the works of these two artists occupying the same space for the first time

die auffallend virtuos ausgeführten in zurückhaltend tonigen farben gehaltenen gemälde von michael borremans 1963 in geraardsbergen belgien zeigen zumeist einzelne figuren oder kleine gruppen die sehr konzentriert und mit betonter gestik agieren da nicht erkennbar ist was genau die protagonisten tun wirken diese bilder mysteriös und surreal vor nur sparsam ausgeführtem hintergrund führen sie in ihrer deutlich zeitlosen an stilleben gemahnenden welt letztlich sinnlose handlungen aus ein durchaus ironischer kommentar des malers auf bürgerliche normierungen und zwänge vorlagen und einflüsse für seine komplexen und faszinierenden arbeiten findet borremans in alten fotografien aus den 1930er und 1940er jahren porzellan kitschfiguren bekannten tv serien wie in der literatur diese disparaten elemente führt er in einer mit joseph cornell vergleichbaren art und weise in seine intimen und poetischen tableaux zusammen ausstellungen s m a k stedelijk museum voor actuele kunst gent 5 2 10 4 2005 parasol unit london 3 5 30 6 2005 the royal hibernian academy gallagher gallery dublin 14 7 4 9 2005

text by jeffrey grove

depuis qu'il se consacre à l'art c'est à dire depuis la fin des années 1990 michael borremans 1963 grammont belgique a produit une oeuvre d'une maturité frappante qui a très vite attiré l'attention internationale les espaces disparates qu'il imagine dans ses tableaux ses dessins ses sculptures et ses films se fondent sur un mystérieux sens de la dislocation et une beauté souvent troublante rendue au moyen d'une palette complexe et d'une technique virtuose l'oeuvre de borremans conjugue un riche héritage artistique d'éminents prédécesseurs avec un ancrage

profond dans le présent près de 200 reproductions d'oeuvres réalisées sur une période de quatorze ans dont certaines étaient encore inédites illustrent cette vaste publication qui offre le panorama le plus complet à ce jour de l'oeuvre de Michael Borremans outre une interview de l'artiste cet ouvrage rassemble cinquante neuf contributions hautement individuelles d'écrivains de commissaires d'expositions de cinéastes et de musiciens qui chacun à sa manière commentent une sélection de tableaux et de dessins

the centro de arte contemporáneo de Málaga has organised Michael Borremans first solo show in Spain curated by Fernando Francés fixture brings together 35 paintings produced in the last decade and a half and offers a window into the artist's complex personal universe populated with close ups of anonymous people and still lifes Borremans work evokes a filmic atmosphere and indeed cinema is one of his main sources of inspiration along with photography the exhibition has been sponsored by the government of Flanders the artist lives and works in Ghent Belgium 00exhibition cac Málaga Spain 9 October 2015 17 January 2016

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