

# Tom Król

Petrichor

2020 Sept 5th – Oct 10th

opening Friday Sept 4th / 11am - 10pm

[www.fiebach-minninger.com](http://www.fiebach-minninger.com)

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## Petrichor

In his second solo exhibition titled *Petrichor*, Tom Król presents a series of large-format paintings on the premises of the gallery *fiebach, minninger* in Cologne. Colorful heads look into the space and are set in specific color scales and painterly gestures. It seems as if, by entering the space, one will immediately be involved in a direct conversation with the depicted protagonists. Friendly, bizarre, eccentric and beautiful in their own way, they look at You, just as if they could see through You.

The You is capitalized here. You are probably asking yourself: Who is meant by You? Me? Or is it You? Well, it's You! You, who has everything inside yourself; You, whose background is negated here. Your environment becomes a white surface. After all, You're standing in a white space. Is that it? Probably not. Everything happens in Your head, and the other thing happens on Your skin. It seems like standing in front of a mirror and looking into someone else's face. At the same time it is a familiar face, after all we do know each other.

Whether these are portraits that can be assigned to a specific person remains to be seen. Certainly, these faces testify to different narratives, which are reflected in the painterly expression as well as in compositional decisions. They talk about themselves and their counterparts.

Hello there! It's You again.

Everyday they seem to tell a different story. They talk about themselves, about people, painting, encounters and memories. They come across as a bit clumsy, it seems as if Król is acting explicitly against any predictability or expectation: will it become a circle? No, it won't be a circle!

On the one hand, Król negates painting by drawing white varnish over the painted picture, making any perspective or localization impossible. On the other hand, he ascribes existential relevance or even necessity to the painterly by filling human faces with it. The stencilled heads look like they were part of the architecture; as if they had grown out of the wall. Their layers of color are organic developments and have something natural about them, reminding of the seasons or scents. They are physical paintings; they win with their absolute presence within the space.

Do you remember that stone we found by this beautiful lake two years ago? It's there, on the bookshelf and seems to have found its place there forever.

The paintings radiate something permanent and have an obstinate force of validity. There is something comic-like about them, without being caricatured. In some places it becomes apparent that the settlements were determined by layout issues and solved painterly. Król is known for his drawings. Again and again he brings along small zines that he publishes with friends or on certain occasions. A sketchbook or pad always falls out some pocket, the pocket itself usually also painted. Notes and drawings are mixed up on it and capture parts of his everyday thoughts

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and gestures. And that denim jacket he always wears, with the painted back piece ...

What are you thinking about? Me? Somehow, I have to think of his bike, which he had lent me for the occasion and the moment we left his view, the bike took advantage and threw me off. It's a bit like that here too, with these painting. The moment you believe they have been conquered, they become cheeky, stubborn and surprise with new insights of their own.

The exhibition can be understood as an encounter that creates an intimate space between oneself and the characters on view.

Hey You, something else occurred to me: the big one there, it's called *Hallodri*. That fits. When I hear the word *Dingsbums*, I always have to think of Tom Król.

Luisa Schlotterbeck