

black

sea

With works by Christian Awe & Levan Songulashvili

Opening:

Friday, 16 March, 6–9pm

Duration:

16 March – 20 April 2018



Levan Songulashvili, The STYX 9-Gorgós, 2017, Oil on canvas, 100 x 100 cm

Location:

68projects, Fasanenstraße 68, 10719 Berlin

68projects by GALERIE **KORNFELD**

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In the exhibition *black / sea* 68projects presents works by the Berlin painter **Christian Awe** and by Georgian painter **Levan Songulashvili**. The show combines powerful, life-affirming color compositions by Awe with the black and white philosophical approach to painting by Songulashvili.

Two artists, two flows, two worlds: together at 68projects. The motives and emotional medium is water, its energy, its depth and intangibility, its fire, its colors. The elixir of life that, like the air we breathe, is fleeting and unfathomable, yet unlike air - leaves no more than a wet glow upon the skin. Water that is colorless and yet reflects all colors. Water that creates fertility, quenches thirst; and the fire that purifies, carries and floods us, that stands still or flows to the sea, which is never the same when we dive in it. Part of the myth of life and the hereafter that erases the memory and yet stores all memory as it flows through the layers of rock. Water, with which all colors are painted and, as **Christian Awe** shows, when sculpted and formed, can produce fireworks of color. With the appearance of water drops running over the canvas and the border between imagination and reality disappears. The depths of the oil paintings of the young Georgian painter **Levan Songulashvili**, evoke the underworld and the River Styx, where marsh plants and jellyfish (French 'Méduse', German 'Quallen') surround the dead, translating the remnants of organic existence into their own to embrace and devour.

Two artists, one medium, two worlds:

The works of 1978 Berlin born artist **Christian Awe**, are in a tradition starting with the German Expressionists over The Informel until the abstraction of: Hans Hartung, Sam Francis and Gerhard Richter. Awe's works are abstract, on the edge of figuration. He puts color on the surface in many layers, and lets it run, writes into, rips it off and uncovers the underlying parts; in this way linear drawings, and almost figurative elements are built. In his newest works he combines plastic, almost photographic or print-like color landscapes, with powerful rivulets and spontaneous seeming gestures. What looks unintentional on

the first sight is an intentionally created composition. The artist has shown in numerous national and international exhibitions from Hamburg, Düsseldorf to Stockholm, Los Angeles and Tokyo. Awe defines himself as an ambassador of a democratization of the arts and advocates for many social and art and education projects. He founded his "Construction-with-arts" project which finances the building of a school and a hospital in Burkina Faso and is getting involved in integrative refugee projects.

Levan Songulashvili, born in 1991 in Tbilisi, began painting at six years old and received professional training in his hometown during his teen years. At the age of 22, he graduated from the State Art Academy with a bachelor's degree in drawing and printing. Early in his career he was awarded with scholarships and prizes, and he was the first Georgian student to graduate painting at the New York Art Academy with a Master's Degree. His award-winning works, combining old mastery with cutting-edge techniques, are shown in galleries, private collections, and museums worldwide, including the Brooklyn Museum. Both at home in Tbilisi and in New York, he was Artist in Residence of Galerie Kornfeld/68projects in Berlin for three months, where four large-format oil paintings were created and exhibited as a continuation of his Styx series. They show a mythologist and mystic at work, whose fantastically hovering instrument, whether feather, pen or brush, always probes into the depth, the secret, where all colors go out in these works of art. An Ophelia-esque woman's head depicts a barely recognizable form of a female body on its face - an unobtrusive quote from the history of art (Magritte), which is as present in his pictures as the myths, like those of figures from religion or poetry.

Awe is inspired by the big city with all its urban fuss and the people with all their vitality on one side and the elements of nature on the other. Awe celebrates an insatiable scientific curiosity: he is looking for the boundaries of the painting process every single time. The works with contrasts of close ups and zoom-outs, color contrasts, matte against glossy color lawyers, have been built in an almost archaic seeming process respond to his own energy and rhythm in the studio, the works appear tactile and are always creating new surprising visual experiences. Whereas in Levan Songulashvilis' work everything is revealed and made visible; including colors that meld into the shadowy, suggestive, changeable, and back to that dreamlike realm where knowledge and ignorance, where the conscious, half-conscious and unconscious, flow under water. Songulashvili is one of the most promising contemporary artists of today.

Black I sea – two artists, two flows – a double highlight in the arts. We invite you to join us.

The artists are available to interview - feel free to contact us.
For questions or further information we are at your disposal.
We will gladly send printable pictures upon request.

Best regards,
Janina Rösner

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