

Tanya Leighton

Press Release

Gerasimos Floratos
'THERE'S A SIDEWALK INSIDE THIS GUT'

26 October – 20 December 2019

Tanya Leighton is pleased to present 'There's a sidewalk inside this gut', Gerasimos Floratos' first solo exhibition in Germany.

Gerasimos used to work the night shift. Around 1:00am, maybe, he started tripping in the shop, and smoking spliffs in the basement, waiting to go out. Sometimes he'd be there making coffee for the customers and would start to feel something magical, to see constellations of building lights swirling around his head like halos; 'Times Square Mysticism,' he calls it. This was in Hell's Kitchen, where he's lived his whole life and where all of his characters come from. His characters are annoying, obnoxious, contradictory sweethearts. That won't shut up, that seem kind of mad, all these clowns and maniacs on every corner, everywhere you turn. The old lady shouting at you in the hallway. Your neighbours. All these different sorts of people just trying to live their lives and get through their days. Floratos draws every day. He's been drawing these grumpy, loudmouth characters ever since he was little boy. He imagines New York City as a great churning digestive tract consuming everything that enters, grinding everything down, turning it into ... crap, energy, inspiration, good feelings, bad feelings. His figures are squished and contorted. Jumbled together like guts; like intestines, constantly rotating, changing direction, packed tighter and tighter inside each other. Now more and more figures are layered on top. He likes to paint over collages of his drawings and works everything up into an overwhelming hallucinatory mess; which is just how it feels like in Midtown sometimes (most of the time). You're walking down the street and you're screaming on the inside. "Fuck awffff" shout the drawings in the background. New York's a collection of mouths and assholes that will never quite shut. The city's anxiety, temptation, overstimulation, hyperactivity, desire, delight. The city's full of mouths and chews you right up. There's a sidewalk inside this gut.

Floratos is painting inside the belly of the beast. He's built his own little paradise under the sidewalk. Literally under the sidewalk; in the basement of the old Hit Factory on 48th Street where he's made himself a studio that extends right down under the street. In the evening rush hour when everybody else is leaving work, he hears them clacking and tapping and thumping overhead. Next door there's a dance studio that's also a Broadway rehearsal room so he can always hear clapping and singing and dancing around the clock; pure energy coming down through the walls and the ceilings, pushing in from every side. He's down there painting New York from the inside, crumpled up inside its colon, painting paintings over paintings over drawings and spinning his canvases around and around.

Dean Kissick

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Gerasimos Floratos was born in 1986 in New York. He lives and works between New York City and Kefalonia, Greece.

Recent solo exhibitions of his work include 'Slangwich Motel' at Schloss, Oslo (2018); '1977' at Eleni Koroneou Gallery, Athens (2018); 'Soft Bone Journey' at Armada, Milan (2017); 'Big Town' at Pilar Corrias Gallery, London (2016) and White Columns, New York (2016).

For more information and images please contact info@tanyaleighton.com or telephone +49 (0)30 21 972 220.

The gallery is open Tuesday – Saturday, 11am – 6pm and by appointment.