

Press Release

Thomas Bayrle
Gerani / Pavesi

May 1 – July 25, 2015
Preview Thursday, April 30, 12 am – 6 pm
Gallery hours, Tue–Sat, 11 am – 6 pm

In Essershausen, Thomas Bayrle's retreat, geraniums are blooming the whole summer. For his exhibition *Gerani / Pavesi*, held by Galerie Barbara Weiss with great pleasure on the occasion of this year's Gallery Weekend, these blossoms are the leitmotif of new works.

Rigid street structures of grey cardboard, seen recently in *Carmageddon* as monumental mural relief at documenta 13, 2012 in Kassel, are here present in two wall objects broken through – first timidly, then more assertive – by green, trailing plants. They take back their space, breaking up the concrete, covering and overgrowing everything built.

Geranio 1-5, 2015, and *Yellow Rose of Texas*, 2015, denote six open wall boxes, in which Bayrle orchestrates the entanglement between organically grown and industrially fabricated even clearer. Here he depicts the plants with all their ramifications and blooms in subtle grey, light blue and white gouaches. Above, motorway fragments made from cardboard sway as if moved by wind, their whorls mimicing botanical shapes.

On a centrally arranged table Bayrle shows another series of works; point of departure is the nationwide Italian corporation *Autogrill*, founded in 1947 by Mario Pavesi. Filled with travellers, these „Restaurantriegel“ (Bayrle) are floating above the moving traffic. They fascinated Bayrle ever since he drove to Italy by car for the first time in 1958. In the works, the Autogrill transforms into an overarching toll station with a Christus affixed to the (Autobahn-)Kreuz (motorway intersection), alluding to his film piece *Autobahnkreuz* from 2007/08. In one of the objects, *Gerano Pavesi / church*, 2015, a little chapel is encased between two lanes. A built-in mechanism enables car drivers to move on their seats from the street to the prayer room: Bayrle's humorous vision of a modern motorway church.

The exhibition is completed by stamp paintings from the late 1980ies. With this gesture, Bayrle skillfully makes a self-referential connection and demonstrates that engaging with mass-phenomena and „Super-Forms“ on a formal and substantial level are as interesting for him then as now.

Bayrle's work has been shown internationally in museums and institutions, among others are Portikus, Frankfurt/Main (1990, 1994); Museum für Moderne Kunst, Frankfurt/Main (2002, 2006); Museum Ludwig, Cologne (2008); Museu d'Art Contemporani, Barcelona and Musée d'art Moderne et Contemporain, Geneva (2009). He participated in numerous group shows, among them documenta, Kassel (1964, 1977, 2005, 2012); *von hier aus*, Dusseldorf (1984) and has been invited to various biennials, such as Venice (2003, 2009), Guangzhou (2005), Berlin (2006), Gwangju (2006, 2010), Tbilis (2007), Sydney (2008) and Busan (2012). His retrospective *Thomas Bayrle: All-in-One* was shown in 2013/14 in four different venues: Wiels, Brussels; MADRE-Museo d'Arte Contemporanea Donna Regina, Naples; Baltic Centre for Contemporary Art, Gateshead; and Institut d'art contemporain Villeurbanne/Rhône-Alpes.

Kirsten Wandschneider