

Jan Paul Evers

Apotropäische Psychotope

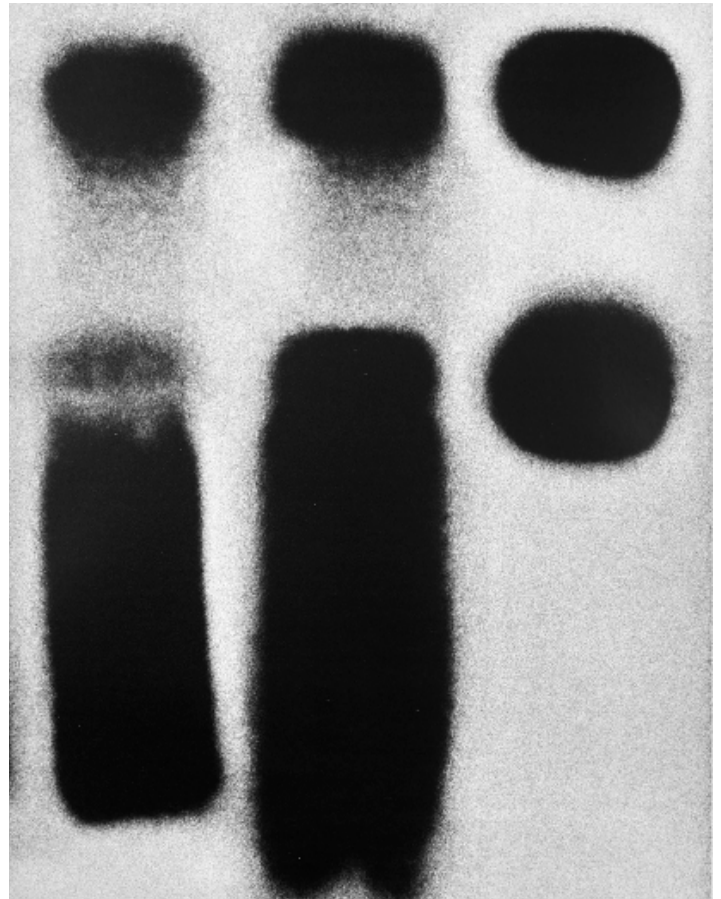
15.1.– 26.2.22

“I am fascinated by the medium of photography, because basic questions of our relation to the world can be framed in it.”

(Jan Paul Evers)

Jan Paul Evers' new series of works entitled ApoPsych focuses on questions as to the way we shape our relationship to the world of things and nature. The motifs are based on scientific imaging procedures of the most various gene sequences. Jan Paul Evers searched for the source images of his motifs in online databases of American universities and then altered them analogously during his work process. This resulted in a game of deception between natural and pictorial sciences: The motifs are based on empirical facts, while simultaneously becoming abstract, transcendent compositions. The respective “depiction” of a living being does not disclose whether the starting point is a human, an animal or a plant. Everything is open and all things can be shaped.

The title of the series alludes to this and is also reflected in the title of the show: Apotropäische Psychotope. “Apotropaic” means “having the power to avert evil influence”, in this case through a psychotop, a term coined by the architect Richard Neutra in the early 20th century that describes the effect of an environment on the human psyche. Whether macro- or microcosm, inside or outside, there are structures in which we humans have positive or negative emotions, thoughts and associations. In this sense, “psychotop” means a space in which mental events occur between the self and the things. The facticity of gene sequences encounters “magical realism” as it can be found, for example, in the literature of the contemporary writer Markus Gabriel, where what appears to be a factual report takes a surreal turn. This form of transcendence between hard facts and illusion is characteristic of Jan Paul Evers' works. The most various perspectives on the world are superimposed and become “simultaneously” visible and tangible. The self is repeatedly positioned anew between different coordinates, and the same applies to the interpretation of truth and identity.



Beth, 2020/2021

silver gelatine print on baryta paper, hand print, unique  
145 × 95 cm; framed: 151 × 104 cm

Biographical note:

Jan Paul Evers (DE 1982) lives and works in Cologne. He just has been awarded with the “Große Hans Purrmann Preis der Stadt Speyer”. His works are part of museum collections such as Museum Folkwang Essen, Kunstpalast Düsseldorf, Fotomuseum Winterthur or The Art Collection of the Federal Estate of Germany. Jan Paul Evers works have been shown in solo exhibitions such as at Villa Stuck, Munich or Kunsthalle Lingen as well as in group exhibitions such as at “Photography to the Test of Abstraction”, Frac Normandie Rouen (FR), “Nullpunkt der Orientierung. Fotografie als Verortung im Raum”, Art Foyer DZ Bank, Frankfurt a. Main, “Germany is no Island. Art Collection of the Federal Estate of Germany”, Bundeskunsthalle Bonn or “Black & White. From Dürer to Eliasson”, Museum Kunstpalast, Düsseldorf.

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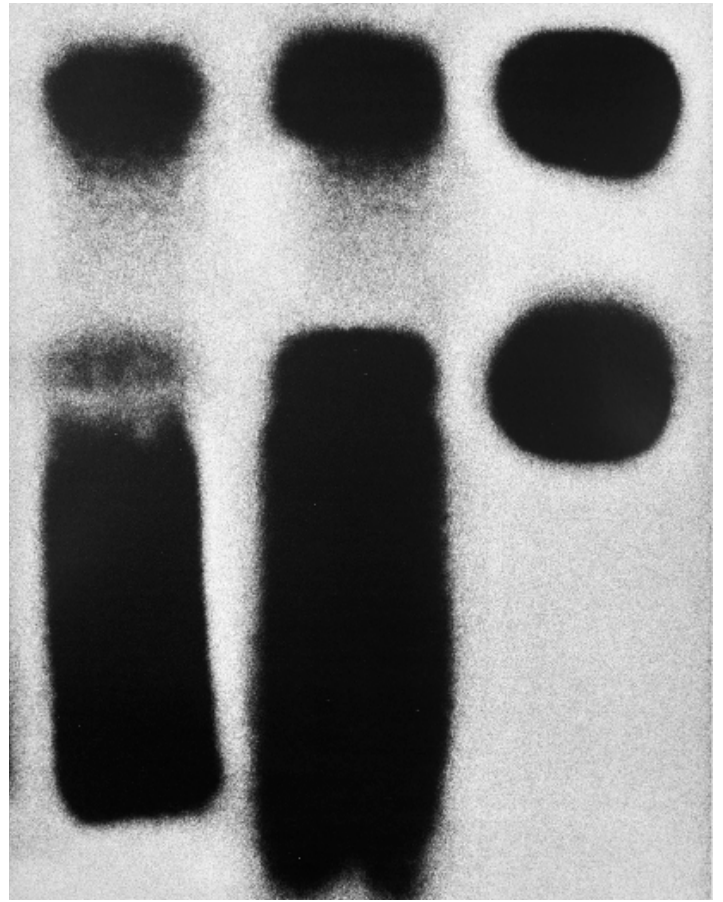
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“Amidst a totalitarianism of ‘visibility’ as currency, the artist Jan Paul Evers turns to a kind of residual material that could very well ground the flickering of visual echo chambers of everyday communication. Most daily images are now being produced by machines for other machines; Evers's first series of works entitled Apotropäische Psychotope also uses anonymous parts of DNA sequences, images deriving from a scientific, technological context. But the black-and-white passages in varying formats selected strictly according to subjective, aesthetic criteria do not reveal whether the DNA is from humans, animals, fungi, or plants. Rather, the images open themselves up in the best sense of the word.



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It is precisely in their closeness and evidence of bare life that the works convey a strange distance – or rather melancholy: toward a dogma of identity politics that is as omnipresent as ‘visibility’ and curiously lets the relations of aesthetics and ethics striving for the ideals of multiculturalism in fine art and beyond appear as a monoculture. Evers counters all this with the qualities of ambiguity and doubt, thus fathoming the ultra-thin space that art as potentiality in the sense of indeterminacy still inhabits. Evers originally searched for apparatuses having to do with the human exploration of the universe, along with the attendant image myths. He wound up under the skin, so to speak, with a group of works that can be understood, 30 years and thus a generation of artists later, as a perspectival reversal of Thomas Ruff’s ‘Stars’ (from 1989 onward).”

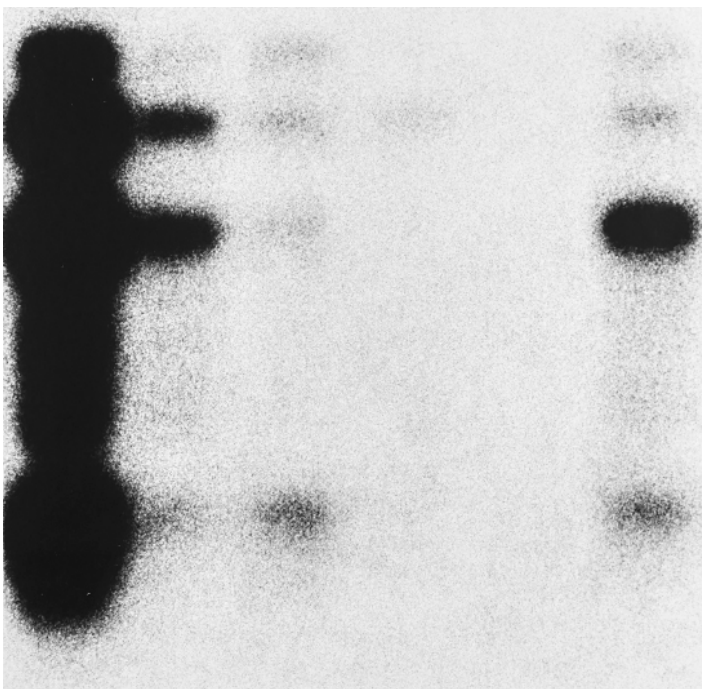
– Martin Germann

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About the author:

Martin Germann lives and works as an author and exhibition organizer in Cologne. He is Adjunct Curator at the Mori Art Museum, Tokyo, and curatorial consultant of the Aichi Triennale planned for 2022. From 2012 to 2019 he was head of the art department of the S.M.A.K., Gent, after working as a curator at the Kestner Gesellschaft, Hannover, from 2008 to 2012. He regularly teaches and publishes and is a member of the advisory board of the Établissement d’en Face, Brussels, and the acquisition commission of the IAC Villeurbanne.



Zahir, 2020/2021

silver gelatine print on baryta paper, hand print, unique  
69 × 63,9 cm, framed: 78 × 72,5 cm

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