Dancer in the Dark
My medium is painting; this ancient art which is so saturated by tradition, beaten by indignity, wasted by death sentences, abused by bastards; full of lies and inconsistency, fucked up by drugs and prostitution, bursting with hysteria, and born again every day.
"Man must be silent so that God can speak." – Meister Eckhart

My work starts at my work. I paint something. Often I don’t like it. So I paint over it. Even if I don’t feel creative at all, I paint. At the end, it looks all too creative and I must declare to myself: it’s too much art, but has nothing at all to do with art.

To set bounds to this arbitrary creativity and to reduce my own influence, different methods have been applied: I would copy other artist’s work, paint from other peoples photos, have other artists or non-artists copy my paintings, ask an assistant to paint at instructions or ask him for instructions. I paint blind, in the rain or I would print on disorderly arranged stripes of paper to attain patterns which I wouldn’t have come up with myself.
2015 · Installation view, Maglehem · Total Annihilation Breakdown
These compositions of fragments come from the attempt to generate shapes and colour fields on the basis of a system. A colour gradient is silkscreen printed on sheets of paper placed in disorder, one overlapping the other, one shape causing another. The sheets later are rearranged. Disorder gains order.
Another attempt to get around that capricious artistic creativity was undertaken with the particular support of divine powers. Starting from the classic idea of the artist receiving divine vision through in-spiratio, I put myself in a condition where my soul would be attuned to receive the spirit. For a religious person that is practically done in divine service at church, which well corresponds to the artist’s work in his studio. Thus, I begun a work process which would require strong concentration yet give little room for mental labelling.

Days after completed work I went through the bundle of painted sheets of paper to find a remarkable outcome: the most well-made pieces came insignificant and blank, whereas the most deficient ones, accomplished in the final stage of the process, running out of paint, seemed vibrant with life. Only fragments of a vision appear in these failures — some paper sheets show almost nothing at all — but there is a vital reality that makes them whole and complete. Similarly, a greek torso appears whole in its fragmentariness. Divine presence, after all, is whole by definition.
This landscape comes from a small painting by Botticelli called „The vision of Saint Augustine at the seashore“. The remarkable background to this subject is written about in the so called Golden Legends from the 13th century. The philosopher and early christian scholar Augustine was writing a book on the mystery of the Holy Trinity. One day he is wandering along the seashore, sore in his mind, pondering this intangible problem, when he meets a child, pouring water into a little pit in the sand. The child runs back and forth between the pit and the sea, bringing water with his wooden spoon. Augustine bends down to him and asks:

"Son, what are you doing?"
"Can’t you see?” answers the child, “I’m pouring the sea into this hole!"
"It is impossible!” says Augustine, “considering the sea is so great and large, and your hole and spoon so little."
"Truly”, replies the child, “I shall sooner accomplish this, than you will understand the mystery of Trinity in your head; as the Trinity is so much greater in proportion to your small mind, than the sea in relation to this hole in the sand."

The metaphysical appeal of the landscape prevents me from giving the painting an appropriate title. Thus, it has to share one with a simple computer game, whose irrelevance gives the work a corrective flash.

When I work I often feel like Augustine. Puzzling over the secret of art, I wander along the seashore of my studio. And every time this little child appears to me, I realize again: you cannot make art. You can only worship and sacrifice her, do your job and see what happens. Perhaps, accordingly, now and again a splinter of it falls on you.
2013 · oil on canvas · 80x100 cm · The Curse of Monkey Island
2016 · gouache on paper · 61x48 cm (paper size) · Phantom Attraction
2015 · Tycho Erratic Anomaly
129x100 cm · oil on polyester
2016 · Noise Reduction
240x205 cm · oil on pvc
2016 - *Noise Reduction*
149x127 cm - oil on pvc
Emanuel Bernstone biography
born 1973 in Karlskrona, Sweden
lives and works in Berlin

Education
1997-2003
Academy of fine Arts, Düsseldorf
MFA, Meisterschüler

Grants, Residencies
2015  Sachs Foundation, Boston, Ma, US
Maglehem kulturförening, SE
2014-16  Swedish Arts Council working grant
2014  Jaus, Los Angeles
2012  Fundación CAC, Barcelona, ES
Aguéli Foundation, Sala, SE
2011  Beccari Fili, Milano, IT
2009  Swedish Arts Council project grant
2008  Huston Schneider Association, Oakland, Ca, US
2005  Carl Thulins minnes pris, Stockholm

Solo Exhibitions
2016  A Hairy Monkey, Lage Egal Berlin (duo)
2015  Högre Makter, Sätra Brunn, SE
2014  Tomarps Kungsgård, Kvidinge, SE
2013  Masterpiece, Galerie Leger, Malmö, SE
Aguéli Museum, Sala, SE
2010  blue clouds white sky, Galerie Leger, Malmö, SE
Ekerum Konsthall, Borgholm, SE
2009  Apex pro art Kunstverein, Göttingen, DE
Brösarp Konsthall, Tomelilla, SE
Kumla Konsthall and Galleri Örsta, Kumla, SE
2008  Luleå Konsthall, SE
Galerie Leger, Malmö, SE
Dolby Chadwick Gallery, San Francisco, US
Galleri Udengaaard, Aarhus, DK
2007  Stefan Denninger, Berlin

Group Exhibitions
2016  Printage, Projektraum Bethanien Berlin
Camp, NY 242, New York
2015  Berlin-Maglehem, Maglehem, SE
Forth Under Skip Down, Frontviews, Berlin
Frequently Asked Questions, Kunsthalle M3, Berlin
All Up, Bar Babette, Berlin
2014  Molde Kunsthall, NO
Konzentrat, Koffer, Berlin
The Idling Gallery, Berlin
Wurzeln weit mehr Aufmerksamkeit widmen,
Galerie der HBKsaar, Saarbrücken, DE
Contemporary swedish Painting, Jaus, Los Angeles
Leger, Malmö, SE
Black Market, L17, Berlin
Black Market, , The Crooked Leg, Stockholm
2013  The Pleasure Principle, Candyland, Stockholm
Leger, Torekov, SE
2011  Ekerum Konsthall, Borgholm, SE
Centro de Arte João Figueiroa, Barcelona, ES
2010  Martin Mertens, Berlin
2009  Scotty Enterprises, Berlin
Liljevalchs Konsthall, Stockholm
2006  Stefan Denninger, Berlin
2004  Aalborg Kunstmuseum/Kastrupgård
Sammlung, Copenhagen, DK

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