

## Press Release

Exhibition: Utopian Proximity  
Paintings by Dan Maciuca  
Opening: Wednesday 2<sup>nd</sup> March 2016, 6-9pm  
Exhibition dates: 3<sup>rd</sup> March to 23<sup>rd</sup> April 2016

Patrick Heide Contemporary Art is pleased to announce *Utopian Proximity*, the first solo exhibition by Romanian artist Dan Maciuca (b.1979) at the gallery. Dan Maciuca represents a generation of artists trained after the 1989 Romanian Revolution at the so-called Cluj School of Art in Transylvania along with Adrian Ghenie, Victor Man, Mircea Siucu and Ciprian Muresan. All artists originate from a studio community in a former paintbrush factory in Cluj that is nowadays considered one of the main contemporary art hotspots in Europe.

An alienation from or distortion of the past, its figures and surroundings through unsettling and dark colours and moods are a shared trademark of the Cluj School of artists, that sets the tone for an atmosphere that also permeates Maciuca's compositions. Yet Maciuca slowly and confidently developed his own route towards a gestural and more fluid painting style. His compositions are somewhat abstract-expressionist, partly applied in thick impasto, often against a backdrop of geometric, rather figurative elements, buildings or landscapes. In part reminiscent of Auerbach, de Kooning or the Cobra School Maciuca independently developed a similar painting style to discover these artistic soul mates in the Internet by accident late in his studies.

Going through the process of deconstructing the figurative representation, Maciuca examines the uncertainty through utopian urban landscapes. Sceneries with brutalist architecture are set into motion and are stirred up by sweeping movements of the brushstroke or are interspersed with swirls and outbursts of colour. Maciuca's urban landscapes possess the haunting beauty of post-apocalyptic settings, like film stills frozen in time, drenched with energy for potential renewal.

The opposition of the organic or geometric nature in Maciuca's paintings is brought to an almost poetic balance in his complex compositions and is what gives Maciuca's work a strong sense of dynamism. Maciuca redefines the concept of spatiality by turning a two-dimensional composition into a three-dimensional motion that subtly challenges the Cartesian paradigm.

Maciuca's work has been linked to Frank Auerbach for the expressiveness and looseness of the oil application and the depiction of their home-town landscapes. Thoughtful and emotional, heavy, busy and dense, both paint their own world, their own piece of utopian reality.

Dan Maciuca graduated from the University of Art and Design in Cluj-Napoca in 2006 where he is currently a professor for painting.