

taymour grahne
projects

holland park
10 portland road
london w11 4la
+44 2037 458705

notting hill
1 lonsdale road
london w11 2by
+44 2037 458706

the artist room
52 lonsdale road
london w11 2de
+44 2037 458706

Krzysztof Strzelecki

Summer Scenes

Exhibition Dates: September 10 - October 22, 2022

Opening: September 10, 4-7pm

Address: The Artist Room by Taymour Grahne Projects, 52 Lonsdale Road,
Notting Hill, London W11 2DE

Opening times: Tuesday - Saturday, 10am – 6pm

Taymour Grahne Projects is pleased to present *Summer Scenes*, a solo exhibition by London-based Polish artist Krzysztof Strzelecki, opening on September 10 between 4-7pm at the Artist Room space (52 Lonsdale Road) as part of a joint opening across our 3 spaces.

In his first solo show in London, Krzysztof Strzelecki investigates the depiction of homoerotic desire in art and the acceptance of the male figure and its sexuality through a series of glazed ceramic vases decorated with exuberant summer scenes. The viewers are taken on a queer erotic journey where riversides are populated by handsome young men spending their holidays carefree in idyllic locations. Some of the athletic figures are seen getting undressed just before they jump in the warm water for a swim, while others simply recline observing the sculpted bodies around them. Sweating under the intense summer heat, they pass long days trying to get a perfect tan, while maybe having a snooze in the shade. Painted against colourful backgrounds, the men have passionate encounters under lush palm trees and are surrounded by flowers that complete the scenes and contribute to the dreamy atmosphere the artist aims to achieve.

Inspired by the painting *Bathers (Summer Scene)* by French Impressionist Jean-Frédéric Bazille (1869), Strzelecki chooses an atmosphere of leisurely summer bliss as background for his protagonists. Complex visual narratives unfold on the richly decorated ceramic surfaces with compositions merging harmoniously and scenes remaining mysterious - it's unclear whether we're witness to a summer secret, or a new romance. Is this a fantasy or a nostalgic memory from someone's past? Through this summer-themed body of work, the artist comments on how nature can become a tropical paradise refuge that provides space for love, liberation and for the expression of desires and fetishes. Safe and hidden away from the world by the dense foliage, Strzelecki's figures exchange glances, perhaps some wrestle playfully to establish their masculinity and eventually experience the joy of sexual excitement.

Strzelecki's use of intense colour conveys a sensual delight to his animated figures. Large flat areas of deep greens, pinks, blues, and reds are divided by bold outlines. Bodies are finely designed and are given balanced proportions, referencing the pure simplicity and harmony of the male figure as depicted in classical Greek and Renaissance art. The artist draws parallels not only between the iconography of the past and the present, but also the ways in which men perceive and understand their bodies. Strzelecki mentions that since antiquity, the habit of physical exercise in a public yet intimate space - that of the gym - was closely connected to queerness. Young men eagerly compete, fight and come closer to compare their bodies and ensure they are desirable – especially in the summertime.

Along with the ceramic vases presented in the show, the artist has created a new series of wall pieces or 'paintings on ceramic canvases' that aim to make an interesting connection between sculpture and photography as perspectives usually encountered in photography are transferred onto the clay surface. In *Torso* for instance, the image zooms in on a naked chest set against a second background scene. Mimicking the effect of the photographic lens when capturing the image of a model in close proximity, the artist plays with the idea of mixing techniques to investigate the different results and surprising effects this experimentation leads to.

Krzysztof Strzelecki (B. 1993 in Świdnica, Poland) works in a variety of media including ceramics, photography and site-specific installations. His work is included in the Dallas Museum of Art collection. Strzelecki's first solo show took place earlier this year at Anat Ebgi gallery (LA) and he has participated in numerous group exhibitions at venues such as: Beer Arts, Four Corners Gallery, Copeland Gallery and UAL Camberwell in London, CICA MUSEUM in South Korea, The Drill Hall and Gallery 23 in Edinburgh. Strzelecki holds a BA in Fine Art Photography from the University of the Arts London and in 2017 he completed an UAL & British Council-organised artist residency in Mumbai, India. His work has been featured in publications such as GAYLETTER, K MAG, Art Maze and It's Nice That. Currently, Krzysztof Strzelecki lives and works between London and Świdnica, Poland.