

Baronian Xippas

Press release

Dean Monogenis

History of Coincidence
2 rue Isidore Verheyden

13.03. – 18.04.2020

Opening

Thursday 12.03.2020,
from 6 - 9 pm

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History of Coincidence

Baronian Xippas is pleased to present *History of Coincidence*, a solo exhibition of new paintings by the American artist Dean Monogenis. Dean Monogenis' paintings evoke surroundings composed of architectural elements associated with more natural ones. His idealized settings often depict unfinished buildings, colorful scaffoldings, patios, pools, or residential buildings amidst rocky landscapes, covered in vegetation; sometimes under a stormy sky or a colored abyss. Monogenis refers to a permanent state of transition and mutation in his work, a fight between urbanization and nature, and the invasion of sprawl. Since the collapse of the twin towers, Monogenis realized that buildings are meant to live and die, the same way humans do. This idea of alteration pushes him to search for examples of transformation around him.

In general, Monogenis paints on wood, plastic or aluminum panels often combining a free-handed application of paint with the use of tape or stencils. This mix of different painting techniques allows the artist to bring more graphic elements to the hand painted parts of the painting. The lines, edges and textures are very important to him. To enhance contrasts, he frequently paints big zones, like skies last, which give an embedded impression, lacking depth. This creative process brings tension to the foreground, challenging the boundary between foreground and background. In his work, progression invites remodeling of the painting surface. Therefore, Monogenis frequently sands down areas to bring them back to their original aspect. This allows him to be precise without compromising his sense for spontaneity and improvisation.

The exhibition presented at the gallery takes a painting that Dean Monogenis realized some time ago as its starting point. *Remedy* (2013) is a small picture of a mountainous, island landscape, forming a cove that encases a series of blue stripes indicating the sea. As the artist explains: "It is a rare picture for me as it does not represent any architectural elements per se. In my mind however it became a doorway into an emotional place and one that connects the myriad images that follow."

History of Coincidence is a tableau of real and imagined places, from the mountains to the sea. It brings together personal and intimate ideas about place and the experience of witnessing and inhabiting different environments. In some cases the images represent locations Monogenis has returned to many times over the years, often seeking peace or escape from the world. In other instances, the artist references known buildings, placing them in new environments, combining the forces of both to create a new narrative and upend the singularity of perception. To quote Dean Monogenis: "The exhibition is a nod not only to personal fantasy but a challenge to how we interact with our perceived world."

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Dean Monogenis was born in New York in 1973. He graduated from the School of the Art Institute Chicago and now lives and works in Brooklyn, New York. His work has been exhibited in numerous galleries in the United States. Xippas Gallery in Athens was the first to exhibit his work in Europe in 2012. In 2013, his work was presented at the Bronx Museum of Art / Weave Hill and, the following year, he exhibited at the Museum of Modern Art in Saint-Etienne in France. In 2016, he had a solo exhibition at the Center for Contemporary Art (CCA) Andratx in Mallorca. He has participated in numerous group exhibitions such as: *Incognito* at the Santa Monica Museum of Art, *Recent Acquisitions* at the Federal Reserve Board, (Washington), *Deconstructing Nature* at the Hunterdon Art Museum (Clinton, New Jersey), *Future Tense* at the Neuberger Museum (NY), *Lost Horizon* at the Herter Gallery, (University of Massachusetts, Amherst), *Beautiful Dreamer* at the Spaces Gallery (Cleveland, Ohio). In 2013, Dean Monogenis received the *Artist in the Market Place (AIM)* award, awarded by the Bronx Museum of the Arts (Bronx, NY, USA).