

Meredith Rosen Gallery

Meredith Rosen Gallery is pleased to present *The Dead Don't Die*, the first solo exhibition in the United States of Swiss artist Tina Braegger. The show opens Friday, November 8 and remains on view through December 21, 2019. A public opening reception will be held on Friday, November 8th from 6pm until 8pm.

Braegger presents eight new large-scale paintings of the iconic Grateful Dead bear. In this ongoing series of work the paintings are oil on canvas and measure approximately 80 x 80 inches, scaling each image just slightly larger than life. Braegger has worked with the symbol of the Grateful Dead bear since 2011 and has included it not only in paintings, but other mediums such as books, hand-sewn flags, light boxes and animations. She published a novel called *The Grateful Dead*. For Braegger's first US solo exhibition she is keeping her imagery as simple as possible. The bear is kept recognizable even when distorted or warped. The exhibition provides an overview of how she has been playing around with different versions of the symbol. In its entirety, the exhibition is a modular set of versions of the bear, like a paper dressing doll, put together differently, but always following the same set of rules (motif, material, canvas size). The surface of the work is flat in some areas and scumbled in others with colors including the entire spectrum of the color palette, from colorful to dull and even reduced to grayscale.

The Grateful Dead bear is one of the unofficial logos of the 60's rock band *The Grateful Dead*. The original dancing bear motif was created by Bob Thomas and is usually illustrated in a lineup or a circle. The bear is defined by a heavy outline, indicating fur on its legs, back, ears and one arm, with a scarf mane around its neck. Over the years fans have redrawn the motif with different colors, patterns and accessories, but Braegger's paintings tend to stick to the original design. Her interest in the bear is that it's somewhat empty and without narrative, it has no voice, no gender and has never been animated. By taking the bear out of its context, using the imagery without its association to the music of the band, she puts a focus on the visual sign or symbol and what it stands for. Her paintings are neither figurative nor abstract. We can look at the motive of the Grateful Dead bear as a sign or a symbol that can mean anything, even stand in for painting itself. The bear is forever the same, not considered masterful or beautiful. It is functional as an icon plucked at random from a sea of signs. The juxtaposition of the childlike bear with the anxiety produced through its repetition is meant to completely disassociate the symbol from meaning but at the same time lets the viewer complete the work with ideas of their own.

Tina Braegger (b. 1985 Zurich, CH) lives and works in Berlin. Recent solo exhibitions include *The Other Dream Team*, Luma Foundation Westbau, Zurich, CH, *Zu Besuch bei den Träuschlingsverwandten*, Weiss Falk, Basel, CH, *I've used all my sick days, so I called in dead*, Charly M, Berlin, DE, and *The holy Beast is watching us*, Weiirtal Biennale, CH. She recently had a solo presentation at Artissima with Weiss Falk and a two-person presentation at Paris Internationale with Shanaynay. Group exhibitions include *Totemists*, LY Gallery, Los Angeles, CA, *Good Life Ceramics*, invited by Caro Niederer, Kunstmuseum St. Gallen, St. Gallen, CH, *Elevation 1049*, Gstaad, CH, *Standard Operating Procedure*, Blum & Poe, Los Angeles, CA and *First among equals*, Institute of Contemporary Art, Philadelphia, PA. This is Braegger's first solo exhibition in the United States and in New York City.