

VOLKER HERMES

Eyes on Time

Volker Hermes (*1972) studied at the Düsseldorf Art Academy and was a masterpupil of Dieter Krieg. He is fascinated by art history, not only portrait paintings, but also historical seascapes, which were particularly popular in the 17th and 18th centuries.

In a mixture of drawing and painting, Volker Hermes recreates selected originals, breaks them down into specific motifs and then rebuilds them in a visually compelling manner which follows the horizontal imperative of sky, horizon and sea. The results are artistic interpretations in their own right that do not imitate the originals, but rather allow them to be experienced in their historical dimension. Hermes draws and paints his seascapes quickly and dynamically. Without glorifying romanticism, his works allow us to recognise the drama of a past times that can otherwise no longer be experienced. The materials used, such as black graffiti markers, are immediately permanent and emphasise the monumental nature of the motif. The paintings are all based on originals by old masters; three of the seascapes on display - *Arnoldus van Anthonissen*, *Andries van Eertvelt* and *Salomon van Ruysdael* - are based on marine paintings from the Suermondt Ludwig Museum's collection.

All the works shown here are united by the artist's point of view: he tells the story from a distance and is not part of the action. Volker Hermes reminds us that paintings in the past often documented events. His work invites us to see and understand historical paintings with a fresh contemporary eye.