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Willehad Eilers aka Wayne Horse | Artist Interview Series

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Willehad Eilers

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The following interview forms part of a series where I invite contemporary artists to each reflect on their personal history, meaning, and philosophy, and how those are embedded throughout their creative process. This week I talk to Willehad Eilers aka Wayne Horse, a German-born artist based in Amsterdam.

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That Loving Feeling

Tell me about your piece, 'That Loving Feeling'.

That Loving Feeling is part of my ongoing series of party scene paintings. I am painting situations at their tipping point. Where pleasure and pain cross paths. Sometimes a little over the tipping point, but in the end beauty exists because of its opposite. So, they are somewhat even, need each other to exist.

This particular painting is inspired by the bar-flirt scene of the 80s film top gun. Tom Cruise has been a big inspiration to me throughout the years. from his movie character as the uprising underdog, to actual tom jumping apathetically on Oprah Winfreys sofa. Sitting somewhere backwards on a chair and shamelessly laughing or being prominent member of a career religion.

Anyway, this movie scene, in which they are singing the song, 'you've lost that loving feeling' to the new flight instructor at a casual army night, started this painting off. That is a fact. Though not a very important one. The starting point to any work i make can be insignificant. i just need some foundation to build on. the work that then rises out of these set circumstances will take on a character of its own, that is not possible for me to plan beforehand, but is a result of spending time with and reacting to what happens on the painting. I work blindly for a big part of the work, namely the first lines and arrangement. then I sit back and look at what I make instead of searching for what i intended to make.

This is the most aggressive and impulsive act of the painting. from then on it slows down a lot and gives me a chance to focus on details, and facial expressions, which also happen. I am sometimes hoping for a certain expression, but in the end the character of my persons appears in front of me. whether I like it or not. I'll have to deal with it.

The woman that in the movie is more of an object of desire in my painting turned into a dangerous and uncanny threat. She has eaten several persons. There is a woman from the right pushing in, longing to put an end to her terrible reign, to her power over the situation, by piercing an oyster knife right into her black heart, but she is being observed by a watchful bystander who might stop her. This is a possible scenario, but just something I read into the painting as I spent my time with it. Every story someone reads into it is just as true as mine.



Lonely Boys Paradise, 2021

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NEXT ARTICLE

So far in your creative process, what have been the most important discoveries or learning curves?

I have spent many years as a commercially very unsuccessful artist. More than a decade. This time made me face and question my work in many ways. I have been working as an artist for many reasons. Not all of them noble. But somehow, the pressure from the outside world made me realise the most important thing about making art for me. And that is joy. Of course, there are topics I would like to talk about, issues to deal with, but the most important is to learn, discover, build and enjoy. It sounds so flat, but there are many artists out there who do not enjoy their work. I am sometimes overworked, but as soon as i am done and get the chance to relax, the first thing I do is to start on a new drawing without pressure.



Festanz der Peinlichkeiten, 2021

Which ethical considerations most impact the choices you make as an artist?

I try to keep ethical considerations out of my work. I even try to do the wrong thing at times simply to get the ball rolling. The work does not have to be an example of how to be right or give the viewer a valuable moral. The work exists to challenge the viewer's morals. To go within and see how one can or cannot apply the personal code of ethics.

As a person, I do of course have my own morals, but the work should not serve as a missionary. The work needs to be unapologetic and loose of any political or other agenda.

My basic thought is humans are good, our structures are a growing evil. Or: human is good, humans are trouble. My work is then often an illustration of the dead end or open end roads we build.



Love Boat, 2021

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Feeling lost, stuck and without meaning are experiences we all face as human beings. Why do you think that is? How do you approach those feelings in your work?

I use my work to help me. It gives me an opportunity to let loose and later look at my feelings manifested and try to make sense of it. I wish for everyone to have one or the other relief form similar to this. Life in itself is absolute unexplainable madness, so feeling lost is nothing to be ashamed of in the least.



What does authenticity mean to you as an artist?

To me, it means that I am not lying to myself or others about my work. It does not need complicated statements to be appreciated. One may like or dislike it. Both is fine.



Der Zirkus zieht weiter, 2021

If you were to design a new piece that emulated your current experience of the world, what might it include?

You can see this in each new piece I make, as I try to act as a filter to what I experience or see. At this point, I suppose I would like to stress people holding each other. I like a good hug. Compassion.

See more of Willehad Eiler's work and keep up to date with upcoming exhibitions: [Instagram](#) | [Website](#)

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