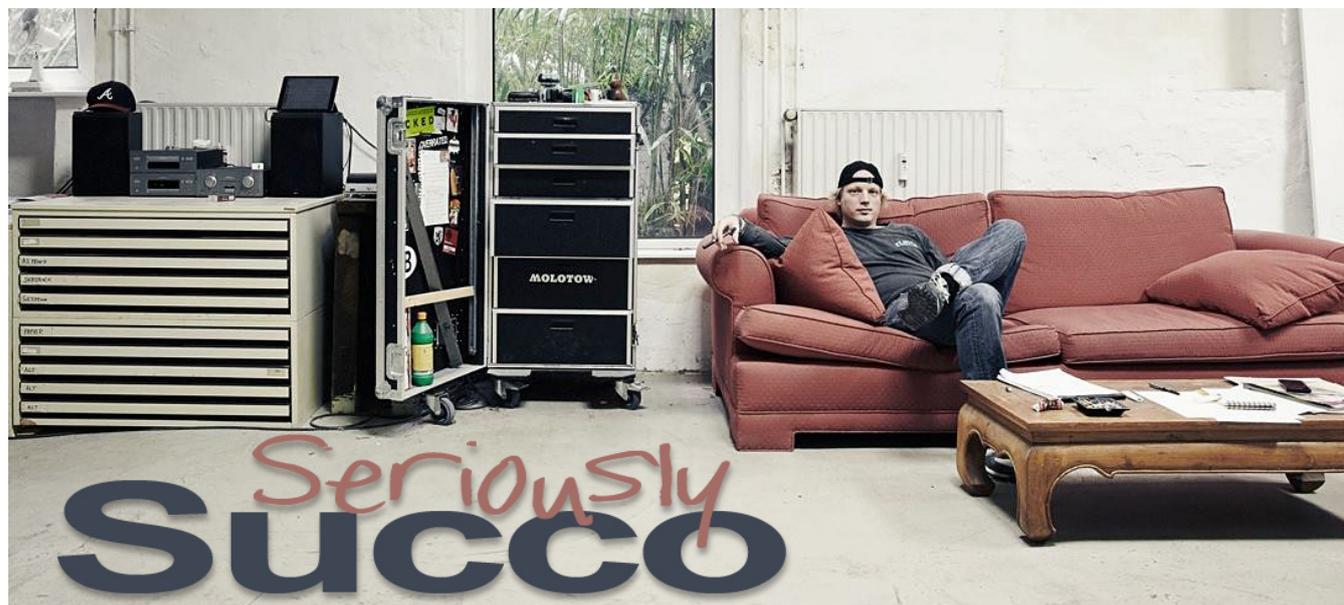
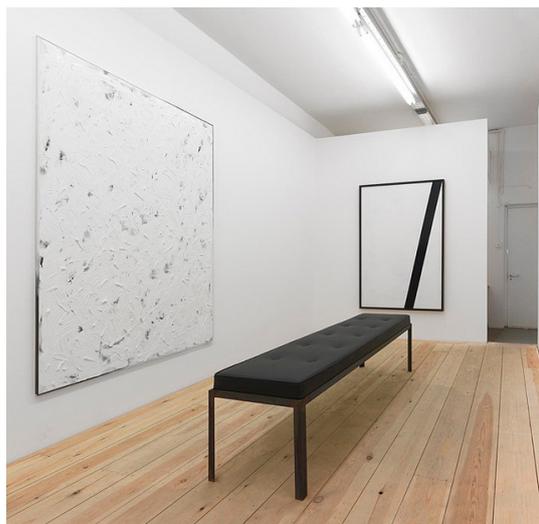


Seriously Succo



Beer, Sex and Rock n' Roll. Boho alternative music tours. Baseball caps and the street-trash plaids made common by chavs. Not to mention that seemingly irreverent smirk.

It would be too easy to stereotype this 34-year-old former musician from Dusseldorf unless you've viewed the artwork of German artist, Chris Succo. We've never met the young man in person, but the light-hearted public persona can't possibly match the seriousness of his art. Beneath the rocker-turned-artist veneer, Succo produces engaging works with diverse materials over multiple formats that feature both the subtle academic refinement and street-cred grittiness that remain highly coveted by true collectors and speculators alike. When artists manage to fuse both into one body of work, all the better. It's no surprise therefore that Succo is currently rated as a can't miss contender with serious waiting lists already formed for some of his most appealing series such as the white and black paintings.



<http://www.artfronts.com/images/chrissucco/Succo-install1.jpg> We're partial to material processes and artists who treat texture as pictorial content. Succo delivers in spades. Thick creamy paints. The polished precision of metal. Soft, floppy linens with fashionable patterns. Slick, high contrast photos. Minimalist blocks on shimmering aluminum. Inviting three dimensionality and accompanying objects to fill out the tale. Many come replete with external visual, poetic and musical references; is this the latest 21st century Renaissance man?

Cross platform, multi-genre, multi-media shows are nothing new in the contemporary art world. If Succo's future success is to be threatened going forward, it may come from adhering too tightly to the Flippers Paradise wishlist. His work checks many of their boxes. The subdued, near monochromatic palettes and his go-to B&W

Euro pop preference. Accessible geo patterns and simple mono forms. Chunky paint. Sloppy framing. Words and other verbiage. The bohemian, the rocker dude, the sexual innuendo. There's plenty to connect with when framed squarely within a common denominator.

But there's something else in Succo's mandate. The seemingly random strokes and sloppily overpainted frames belie the sophisticated lines and smooth perfection of adjacent work. The overall presentation of Succo events tends

to be quiet rather than face palms, forming an intriguing dichotomy between life experience and product. Succo's work rarely exhibits the angst or hyperactive meandering of some in his generation. Has he simply grown out of it or are his representatives doing a masterful job of molding him to the more lucrative formalist market sector?

I don't arrive at the same knee-jerk conclusions after viewing Succo shows that I get from similar artists' shows. Other exhibits are multi-faceted but scattered. Succo has a plan, an order. Others feature breadth over depth, leaping as they do between incoherent ideas, clashing styles and unfinished thoughts. Succo offers diversity without clutter and clear definition. There's a sincerity to his work. On careful viewing, his shows always drill down eventually to one or two direct assumptions that always seem to be sufficiently answered.

I enjoy Chris Succo's entire body of work to date, save for some of the earliest banal photographs of beer glasses and kitschy tit collages. He's at his best when he leaves the materials to do most of the heaviest contextual lifting. While prolific and broad in scope, common threads unite each new series to the last. His refined approach is much less pretentious than many of the minimalist grungers, the pseudo-post-post-neo-post-expressionists, the abrasive screamers and the untalented pretenders with whom he unfortunately must share space on the contemporary stage.

There's always a "but." By choosing not to shout, I wonder whether some of Chris Succo's calmer works will hold walls individually when outside of the context of carefully-orchestrated exhibits?

-Artfronts Editorial

