

Py•r•o•glyph•s

Greg Haberny

14 October — 20 November 2016

New York, October 14, 2016: “I burnt down my whole life when I was a kid. I went too far,” says the artist whose practice ironically includes a serious amount of melted and burnt objects from crayons and basketballs to his own artworks. Also known for burning his paintings during Dismaland (2015) where he showed alongside Banksy and Damian Hirst, it’s almost redundant to say that Greg Haberny loves to play with fire.

Py•r•o•glyph•s, opening on October 14th at Catinca Tabacaru Gallery, will be the artist’s second solo show with the gallery, and the latest and most extreme iteration of Haberny’s deep attraction to the use of matches; hence the main material of his new solo show being... ashes, partly those of his former paintings. “I don’t care about politics anymore, so I burned my more sociopolitical works and crushed them down with rolling pins before pulverizing the ashes. Then I cut the ashes with archival gel medium, and other things, to create this beautiful jet black medium.”

Haberny admits this radical action could be interpreted as a political or at least personal than that. And, this is where ashes play a key role – allowing him to concentrate on his inner search, to rid his psyche of its shadows, releasing that darkness while he paints.

Inspired by the use of ashes in Chinese pottery, Haberny also uses the black mixture to glaze creature-like-porcelain works that he makes, breaks and reassemble, over and over again... a process not far from his painting or his thoughts.

He makes sure to mention that this is not about a love for destruction. This sentiment is signaled by the fresh flowers peppering his gallery installation. On the contrary, he sees this cycle as a kind of reincarnation and his artistic quest requires a commitment to creation, at every step of his process: from the pigments to the surface of his works that serve as canvases, Haberny builds everything himself. Starting from scratch, building up layers of paper, wood, tape, cloth, paper towels and a myriad of other materials, he succeeds in bringing up a full-range of emotions in his blackest and simplest series of paintings to date, where he believes many personal symbols have slipped through the dark.