

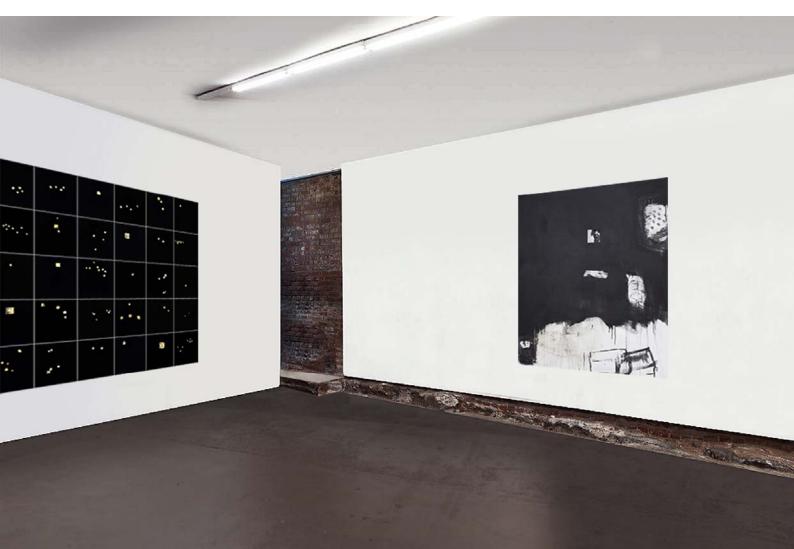
The depth of darkness

For over two centuries millions of eyes have slid over the master paintings in Madrid's Prado museum, while Werner Thöni has paused in his contemplation. His eyes did rest for a long time on those canvases before covering what had become intimately familiar with a thick, black layer. What then began was a long and intensive process of exploring the surface and discovering anew what is hidden behind the monochrome cover. What emerged is a cosmos disconnected from time encapsulated in a composition which challenges the eye, again and again.

"Las Meninas", Velazquez' enigmatic and complex painting, has gained a new symbolic interpretation through the mirror of Werner's personal art esthetic. In his impressive echo to Velazquez' master piece he has worked with archetypical images which are condensed in its minimalistic form to an inner landscape of dreams and fears. The hustle and bustle of the court rotates around the princess, whose clear and curious glance forms the calm anchor in Velazquez' painting. Werner's Las-Meninas-tryptic fascinates the eye of the beholder through its morbid transcendence in which hope lies in the innocent expression in the girl's eyes, in the confident beauty of a young woman and finally in the denied martyrdom of the artist in his self-portrait.

Bruno Ryff Swiss Consul General, Barcelona





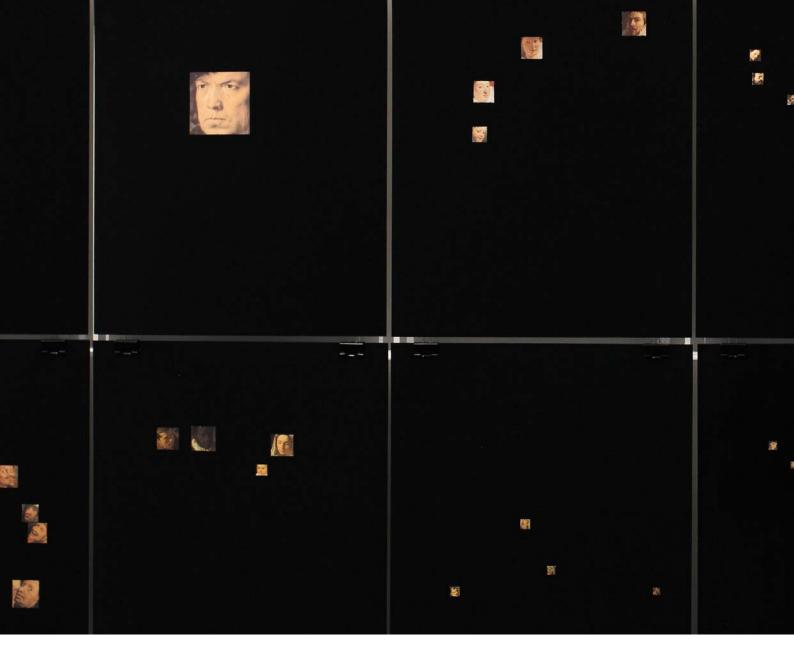
MY BLACK PAINTINGS

A project by

Werner Thöni

The body of work My Black Paintings - a sizeable installation and five large-format paintings - is a meta-artistic project that approaches and resignifies European painting from the 9^{th} to the 19^{th} century by contextualizing it in a contemporary setting, both in terms of conceptual treatment and as visual language and technical execution.





The installation that gives its name to the whole project consists of 162 pages from a book with art reproductions from the Prado Museum, each treated with spray paint. It examines different questions of classical painting, such as the idiosyncrasy of its protagonists, the composition of the pieces or the chromaticism employed. It does so by focusing on the painting's essential elements, the faces, seen from a frontal or three-quarters perspective, cut out and framed in a square that stands out on the surface painted in black, alluding to the action of tagging a person on *Facebook* or other social network sites.



My Black Paintings

2015

Installation detail

72 pages treated with spray paint from the book "Museo del Prado," Santiago Alcolea Blanch, Círculo de Lectores, 1994

174 x 294cm



My Black Paintings 2015 Installation detail

The entire installation consists of **162 pages** and is more than twice as large as shown in the photo. The dimensions of the installation are variable in accordance with the exhibition space.



My Black Paintings storage box Articulated horizontal opening, 3 removable shelves containing 162 treated book pages. Paper, cardboard, wood board and linen 27 x 33 x 11,5cm













The five paintings, all on Dutch linen, take a contemporary approach of appropriation and re-signification to the subject, thus nullifying its historical context. Some of the book pages of My Black Paintings installation are like the pillar of a new creation. They reconstruct the work they represent in a minimalist style, respecting its proportions, orientation and compositional structure, achieving much more than just a narrative recreation. The incorporation of selfies and other photographs from Internet completes the process, creating a new image with strong formal connection to works by artists like Joseph Beuys, Berlinde De Bruyckere and Phyllida Barlow.



Anciana sentada

2015

Acrylic and oil painting, photo transfer on linen $163\,x\,138\,x\,3$ cm

Based on "Anciana sentada" by Antonio Puga?, 1602-1648 "Museo del Prado," Santiago Alcolea Blanch, Círculo de Lectores, 1994, page 201





Adán y Eva

2015

Acrylic and oil painting, photo transfer on linen $163\,x\,138\,x\,3$ cm

Based on "Adán, Eva" by Albrecht Dürer, 1471-1528 "Museo del Prado," Santiago Alcolea Blanch, Círculo de Lectores, 1994, page 392





Las meninas_01

2015

Acrylic and oil painting, photo transfer on linen $163\,x\,138\,x\,3$ cm

Based on *"La meninas o La familia de Felipe IV"* by Diego Velázquez, 1656 *"Museo del Prado,"* Santiago Alcolea Blanch, Círculo de Lectores, 1994, page 195





Las meninas_02

2015

Acrylic and oil painting, photo transfer on linen $163\,x\,138\,x\,3\,\text{cm}$

Based on "La meninas o La familia de Felipe IV" by Diego Velázquez, 1656 "Museo del Prado," Santiago Alcolea Blanch, Círculo de Lectores, 1994, page 195





Las meninas_03

2015

Acrylic and oil painting, photo transfer on linen $163 \times 138 \times 3 \text{ cm}$

Based on *"La meninas o La familia de Felipe IV"* by Diego Velázquez, 1656 *"Museo del Prado,"* Santiago Alcolea Blanch, Círculo de Lectores, 1994, page 195







Werner Thöni Barcelona, 2016

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