

## Philipp Kremer- “Soft People” at Kunstverein Langenhagen

Written by Noor Mertens, 2017

Philipp Kremer’s paintings are conflict-laden – not only in the subject matter, but also on a formal level, and in the interplay between the two. In his formal approach he often seems to oppose the narrative element, like choosing colors randomly when showing a utopian community, or approaching the subject of an orgy as if it was a monochrome abstract painting. While all his subjects, be it girls with horses, communes, crying or sex, are social situations, and as such, issues of power are an important element, in his most recent series Soft People they become the main focus. After Gatherings, where a group of people is shown harmoniously engaging in sexual acts, Soft People is portraying humans in scenes of physical violence and domination. Two, at most three or four people or bodies interact in oppressive power relations, in a context that remains mostly unspecific. The paintings are executed with bright colors and light gestures on white canvas, which makes them appear playful and almost seems to insist on highlighting the joyful aspect of painting. The provocation lies in the question of why to bring lightness and violence together: If choosing to depict something means giving it a certain affirmative importance, and painting something means engaging with it emotionally, how is it possible to paint something hurtful, without finding pleasure somewhere in the process? Hence, the paintings need to be executed with joy, and artist and viewer find themselves in the perverted situation of having to deal with the joyful and the hurtful at the same time.

Data source: [https://www.philippkremer.de/content/4-text/philipp\\_kremer\\_soft\\_people\\_by\\_noor\\_mertens\\_2017.pdf](https://www.philippkremer.de/content/4-text/philipp_kremer_soft_people_by_noor_mertens_2017.pdf)