



Armen Eloyan

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ISBN	9789492677891
Publisher	Hannibal Books
Binding	Hardback
Territory	World excluding Benelux, France, Germany, Austria, Switzerland, Portugal, Spain, and Italy
Size	240 mm x 170 mm
Pages	208 Pages
Price	£39.50

- Powerful paintings by Armenian artist Armen Eloyan, balancing between dark humour and total horror

The expressive paintings by the Armenian artist Armen Eloyan (b. 1966) are as beguiling and seductive as they are repulsive. According to Eloyan, a fine painting is like a good joke, the pieces must fit together. With his characteristic dark humour, colourful paint and thick black contours he reveals a dark universe, in which things are thrown out of kilter and the viewer is confronted with existential questions. Cartoon-like figures emerge from mysterious landscapes, as though they have stepped out of a comic strip. They find themselves at the mercy of a harsh, dystopian reality. Eloyan's characters seem disturbed, melancholic and alcoholic, and appear to be in a state of existential meltdown. Almost masochistically they seem to passively accept their destiny. Eloyan combines influences from street art and cartoons with references to the great pioneers of painting, such as Willem De Kooning, Caspar David Friedrich and Philip Guston. He presents a world in which familiar figures, whom we often associate with our own youth, have lost their innocence. The publication is realised in collaboration with the FRAC des Pays de la Loire and the Tim Van Laere Gallery, Antwerp.

Laurence Gateau is director of the FRAC des Pays de la Loire. **Anne Bonnin** is an art critic and exhibition curator. In 2009, she organised the group shows *Pragmatismus & Romantismus* at the Fondation d'entreprise Ricard (Paris) and *Sauvagerie domestique* at the École municipale des beaux-arts/galerie Édouard-Manet (Gennevilliers). She was the curator for the Ateliers de Rennes - biennale d'art contemporain in 2012. She has also taught at the École Supérieure d'Art de Clermont Communauté, at the Ecole supérieure des Arts Décoratifs in Strasbourg.