

VILLEPIN

ANSELM KIEFER: *GOLDEN AGE*

19 May 2023 - September 2023

G-2/F, 53-55 Hollywood Road

Central, Hong Kong

Sunday - Wednesday | 11AM to 6PM (By appointment only)

Thursday - Saturday | 11AM to 7PM (Open to public)



Anselm Kiefer, *Im Fruhtau zu Berge*, 2021-2022. Emulsion, oil, acrylic, shellac, gold leaf, straw, steel and charcoal on canvas, 190 x 280 cm.

Villepin is pleased to announce a solo exhibition of German artist Anselm Kiefer in Hong Kong, *Anselm Kiefer: Golden Age*, opening on 19th May, 2023. Presenting works which evoke the mythology and nostalgia of the ancient "Golden Age," the exhibition coincides with a special moment for Hong Kong as the city reopens its borders and looks forward to a new era for the gallery.

Through the long-standing personal relationship between the founders of Villepin and Anselm Kiefer, the exhibition has been collaboratively curated and offers a selective view of the practice of one of the most important artists of his generation. *Anselm Kiefer: Golden Age* will feature paintings and a sculpture created between 2020 and 2022. The exhibition will be accompanied by salon talks, guided tours, and educational materials.

The exhibition title *Anselm Kiefer: Golden Age* takes its cue from Greek and historical myths, which often allude to the peak of human civilization, denoting a period of primordial prosperity and peace. Kiefer has previously referenced German philosopher and cultural critic Ernst Bloch, who renews the core idea of, and interest in, utopia. In his book *The Principle of Hope*, Bloch explores the idea of the Golden Age as a utopian ideal, defining the concept of utopia as a philosophy that envisions a better future for humanity. Bloch argues that hope and striving for a better world are fundamental to human existence, and that this impulse is what drives people to create art, music, and literature. Installed across three floors in the gallery, Kiefer's works allude to the utopian ideal, capturing the transformative nature and alchemical process of their creation.



Anselm Kiefer, *Für G. Segantini - die bösen Mütter*, 2022. Emulsion, oil, acrylic, shellac, gold leaf, straw, steel and charcoal on canvas, 190 x 280 cm.

Featured in the exhibition, works such as *Alkahest* and *For Segantini* both depict the imagery of mountains, which serve as a recurring motif and can be interpreted as a metaphor for utopia. Like much of Kiefer's oeuvre, the works are inspired by verses from his favorite poets, as well as by the myths and legends of diverse cultures and places. Layered with gold leaf, lead, oil, acrylic, soil, and sediment, Kiefer's works reflect continued reinvention of material and subject matter. Other recurring visual motifs in the exhibition include bicycles and wheels, conveying the idea of renaissance and cyclical changes from one place to another.



'We are very pleased to showcase the most recent works of Anselm Kiefer at Villepin, one of the foremost contemporary artists practicing today. It is both an honour and privilege to be presenting the powerful vision of this seismic artist to Hong Kong audiences, and we welcome everyone to come to the gallery to experience Kiefer's art in person.'

'On a personal level it brings me great joy to be exhibiting Kiefer's work in our gallery for the first time. I have long admired the artist and share with him a long-standing friendship, having the chance to visit many times his studio near Paris and his foundation in Barjac, South of France.'

'Kiefer's latest body of work 'Golden Age' responds to ancient myths, following his ongoing desire to inspire new perspectives of our modern world, and the challenges we face today. I feel it is a perfect moment to enjoy his art in Hong Kong as the border reopens and everyone is looking towards the future.'

-Arthur de Villepin

Arthur de Villepin, Anselm Kiefer studio in Barjac, 2022

About Anselm Kiefer

Anselm Kiefer was born in Donaueschingen, Germany in 1945, a few months before the end of the Second World War. In his works, he explores historical themes, and ruminations about national identity, in particular of the relics of German history. He studied law before devoting himself to painting, attending the School of Fine Arts at Freiburg-im-Breisgau, Germany, then the Academy of Fine Arts in Karlsruhe, Germany. Inspired by history, mythology, and literature Kiefer often uses these materials as the prime source of his work.



Anselm Kiefer in his studio in Croissy, photo by Georges Poncet

NOTES TO EDITORS

About Villepin

Shaped by Dominique and Arthur de Villepin's passion for art, Villepin is a new gallery model created by collectors for collectors. Founded in 2019 in Hong Kong, Villepin is specialized in selected important artists, estates and foundations, advocating their work through carefully curated exhibitions while bridging them with the leading collectors and institutions in the Asia-Pacific region and around the world. Beyond its gallery walls, Villepin also acts as curator for exhibitions in museums and institutions.

Each exhibition at Villepin is based on in-depth scholarship and offers a unique experience to immerse visitors in the life and art of each artist. Previous exhibitions have also produced special bilingual publications that include original essays and curatorial research. Artists presented by Villepin include Zao Wou-Ki, Myonghi Kang, Pierre Soulages, Georges Mathieu and Hans Hartung among others.

As curator and advisor to a close community of collectors, Villepin is focused on education and promoting scholarship of its artists through intimate salons and collaborations with leading institutions, foundations, universities and museums. Through their extensive experience in building close friendships with artists, the father-son partnership aims to share their expertise, encourage dialogue, and support collectors in building long-lasting relationships with artists, who are at the heart of Villepin's initiatives.

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