



Mick Jagger

*The story behind unseen
images of The Rolling Stones
in their heyday*

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As a child, Philip Mueller had just one desire: to paint. Armed with art supplies bought by his ever-supportive parents, he did just that – and has yet to stop.

Now in his early twenties, the acclaimed Austrian artist is preparing to unveil the third and final part of his exhibition, *My Father was Many and I am Happy as a Sailor*, at Dubai's Carbon 12 gallery.

"[Painting] is the only thing I ever wanted to do," he told AIR. "Because no one tells me what I should do and how it should be done, I already feel quite free."

In the case of his latest, three-part exhibition, that freedom translates into vibrant, sometimes macabre, always thoughtful works that seek to explore "our schizophrenic handling with our past, our heroes or antiheroes and what they left us behind".

The gallery states that Mueller's studio "is his dungeon, where the act of painting becomes a shamanistic ritual, and where every canvas initiates a rite of passage".

In his latest works, Mueller searches through history for his ancestors and other great

characters of the past, including Emperor Franz Josef, US performer Grace Jones, Austrian artist Hermann Nitsch and Chilean-French filmmaker/actor/author, Alejandro Jodorowsky.

Mueller is the sailor referred to in the exhibition title, travelling through space and time in search of "the miraculous" and, along the way, exploring themes of Greek mythology and German romanticism, among others.

"Every painting tells a story," he said. "The viewer has to figure out the stories by himself by watching the painting, and everyone should see something else based on their own history."

The first part of the exhibition took place at Art Cologne, the second and third at Carbon 12. The final installment will run until September 6.

For one so young, the body of work Mueller has produced in the past five years alone is impressive. For inspiration, he looks to great artists and creative thinkers of bygone years.

"There are many artists throughout history that I look up to: some in a romantic way, others in terms of the wish to take up correspondence with them," he said. "But most of them are dead. For instance, I would really like to paint some pieces with Hieronymus Bosch, or go for a walk with E.T.A. Hoffman." carbon12dubai.com



Image: Hercules Just Killed Beethoven by Philip Mueller, courtesy of Carbon 12 Dubai