

# VAN DOREN WAXTER

**Volker Hüller**

Special Online Presentation

June 17 - July 10, 2020



*Dead Myth*, 2020, Etching, watercolor and shellac on paper,  
Paper Size: 13 1/2 x 15 1/4 inches, Image Size: 7 3/4 x 9 3/4 inches (19.7 x 24.8 cm)

Van Doren Waxter and GRIMM are pleased to present *Volker Hüller: Special Online Presentation* from June 17 - July 10, 2020. This collaborative project features etchings and mixed media paintings by the German-born multi-disciplinary artist whose works are in the permanent collections of The Museum of Modern Art, NY (US); The Dallas Museum of Art, TX (US); and The Israel Museum, Jerusalem (IL), among others. Volker Hüller's (b. 1976, Forchheim, DE) works reveal scenes from the artist's personal life as well as narratives of misadventure and mythology, brought together in dialogue with bold abstraction. Selected works - including new works on paper can be viewed online at [vandorenwaxter.com](http://vandorenwaxter.com), [grimmgallery.com](http://grimmgallery.com), and the gallery's Artsy and Artnet pages.

Across material and techniques, Volker Hüller utilizes a precision of texture and line-making to create challenging allegories of art history & myth. A skilled draftsman, this collection of etchings and mixed-media paintings highlight the artist's use of narrative and fallacy as vehicles for the re-exploration of visual history. For Hüller, the use of linework across mediums doubles as a formal concern as well as a conceptual model from which a genealogy of visual expression can take shape. The use of formal line coalesces with a symbolic throughline of historical styles, art history's various expressions becoming the allegory depicted in Hüller's work.

In Hüller's paintings, each canvas is intricately layered with accumulations of collaged canvas, sheets of paper, dried organic material, stones and other mixed media. There is a three-dimensional surface which adds to the physical linework of the paint application, the whole of the painting's texture in flux. Often painting in monochrome, Hüller forces a hyper-focus on linear qualities, outlines and shadows. The obscuring of the figurative subjects' legibility allows room for the realm of psychic space, where the artist's exploration of authentic expression and representation comes forward.

Where the artist's paintings belie their 3-dimensional surfaces, Hüller's etchings find form in their scratchy, elusive movement. Delicate lines construct hybrid figures at conflict with any narrative of inner or

outer reality. The etched forms, layered with watercolor and Shellac, appear in a collage-like quality, like Hüller's paintings, experimenting with fragments and rhythms to keep the image field open. Included in this online presentation are five new etchings, highlighting narrative forms yet, as in the artist's signature style, ambivalence persists.

Trees form a subliminal anchor to the natural world across these recent works, and challenge the existence of Hüller's tragic figures, who are possibly found buried, hanging, and likely met with death. Here, tragedy and mythology form an inseparable connection to Hüller's practice. Much like the allegory of the centaur, seen in *Dead Myth* (2020), Hüller's compressed worlds are filled with uncanny symbols of humanity's unbridled, primitive subconscious preserved through narrative forms like the history of art. Focusing on the interconnection between the human body and allegory, Hüller's loaded ethings expose a primal and permanent state of reality, revealing the possibility that violence and barbarism are hallmarks of our cultural history.

Throughout his practice, Hüller ultimately reveals that figuration itself, and its allegorical counterparts, are not stable subjects from which an ideological paradigm of understanding might be possible. Hüller's figures, in fact, symbolize a crisis of representation itself: the refusal to depict a clear-cut story of any kind is an attempt to oppose the definition of meaning that traditional Apollonian law imposes. Figuration at the extremities of existence can simply not be reduced within the framework of conventional hermeneutics. Hüller's construction and deconstruction of images is a kaleidoscopic procedure; an assembly of present and past visual codes, changing mythical and historical fragments into an entirely new way of seeing.