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Patrick Groth

Who Knows Why Geese Go Barefoot?

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OPENING RECEPTION SUNDAY, JANUARY 10, 6–8PM

Woodcut prints already existed in Europe for half a century when Johannes Gutenberg introduced the printing press to the West in the mid-1400s. Suddenly, images and information were inextricably linked—what we know became synonymous with what we see, and what was seen became capable of being replicated and distributed.

Patrick Groth's paintings begin with this historical lineage of the reproducible image, yet question the primacy of vision and its relation to rationalism. Often beginning with altered woodblock illustrations of early manuscripts, and sometimes adding a handwritten text of his own "rational" thought, Groth then hand-paints over transferred traces of the originals, adding the touch of the human hand, clumsy and imperfect, back into the precision of the mechanical reproduction. Tracing contemporary image saturation to its roots, Groth locates the moment when the dispersal of images was first able to outpace knowledge itself.

Several of the paintings in the exhibition reference *The Ship of Fools*, a late 15th century manuscript by Sebastian Brant illustrated by a young Albrecht Dürer. The text itself is an early humanist work of satirical fiction, with the seemingly irrational fool implemented as the agent of critique against bureaucratic structures of power and the iconographic hegemony of the church. In Groth's paintings, dogs, birds, cheetahs and other animals appear with human figures that have been fragmented, transplanted, or dismembered. Groth presents the paradox of an animal logic—or lack thereof. For despite the anthropomorphic attributes we may ascribe and subsequently rationalize, the human condition presents just as many non sequiturs as that of the goose.

Patrick Groth (b. 1987) lives and works in New York. Groth recently completed his MFA at Yale University. This is his first solo exhibition. Please contact the gallery for additional information or images.