



Press Release

CARL LAUBIN
A Sentimental Journey

Private view Tuesday 22nd November 6pm – 8pm

23rd November 2016 – 16th December 2016



'Klenzeana, The Architecture of Leo von Klenze' Oil on canvas, 140 x 240 cm

Plus One Gallery is pleased to present an exhibition of paintings by Carl Laubin.

Laubin is a British/American artist, perhaps best known for his series of architectural capricci. Born in New York in 1947, he later studied architecture at Cornell University before moving to London in 1973 and becoming a British citizen in 2000. He worked for a number of architectural firms in the UK, primarily Douglas Stephen and Partners and later Jeremy Dixon. It was Jeremy Dixon who encouraged Carl to make his first architectural paintings, which led him to illustrate the firm's redevelopment of the Royal Opera House. By 1986 he was able to devote himself fully to painting.

His work has retained architecture at its centre and Plus One Gallery is excited to reveal the exhibition's main work: "*Klenzeana*", a capriccio depicting the architecture of Leo von Klenze. Von Klenze was a nineteenth century German neoclassical architect, the Bavarian equivalent of the more widely known Prussian architect Karl Friedrich Schinkel, his near contemporary. Schinkel's appeal to modern architects as a prototypical modernist has tended to eclipse Von Klenze's reputation, as his work is much more firmly rooted in past styles, being a prominent advocate of the Greek Revival Style. Klenze's architecture transformed Munich from a provincial town of 50,000 inhabitants into a major cultural capital, through a series of residential buildings



expanding the city alongside a number of public buildings, art galleries and monuments, including the Glyptothek, a museum for antique sculpture that is one of the first public museums in the world. His planning of the expansion of Munich was astonishingly complex and sophisticated, linking the old town to an expansive, open, new sequence of squares and avenues which led one biographer to claim von Klenze had achieved Goethe's ideal of raising architecture to a level where "On the most ordinary day the citizens feel themselves to be in an ideal state."



Outside Munich, von Klenze built monuments celebrating the liberation of Bavaria from Napoleonic rule at Kelheim, which is the central building in the *Klenzeana* and a monument to the achievements of German speaking peoples, the Walhalla, above the Danube at Donaustauf. He built a small Orthodox chapel at Baden-Baden, The New Hermitage Museum in St. Petersburg and designed a number of buildings for Athens,

only one of which, the Catholic Cathedral St. Dionysius, was built. He was also an early recipient of the Royal Institute of British Architects' Gold Medal for Architecture in 1852. All these works find a place in *Klenzeana* and their representation in a single painting give an insight into the extent of the achievements of an architect, who should be more widely acknowledged. Although Klenze's work has strong links with British neoclassical architecture, his work has not received the acknowledgement it deserves. Particularly Walhalla and the Monopteros, the setting of a temple in a naturalistic landscape, is an idea central to British architecture in the 18th century.

"*Klenzeana*" is truly an ode to the magnificent neo classical architect, Leo von Klenze.

"In 2013 Léon Krier contacted me about doing a painting of a hypothetical project he was working on based on Le Corbusier's 1925 Pessac housing "revised" by Léon Krier. The numerous paintings that resulted from this will hopefully be exhibited alongside Léon's drawings at some point. The three main paintings are based on one of Léon's sketches and the idea is that what was built in Pessac is in truth a suburb and to become a proper community it needs the amenities of a community, not just housing.

These amenities were planned by Le Corbusier in a second phase that was never built. Léon has introduced them into a re-planned neighbourhood which has a more urban feel to it with public squares, a church, town hall, market and club. My first attempt at translating Léon's sketch into a painting, this changed so often that I decided to use it as a test piece to try out various approaches before incorporating them into another version, more closely following Léon's sketch." - Carl Laubin



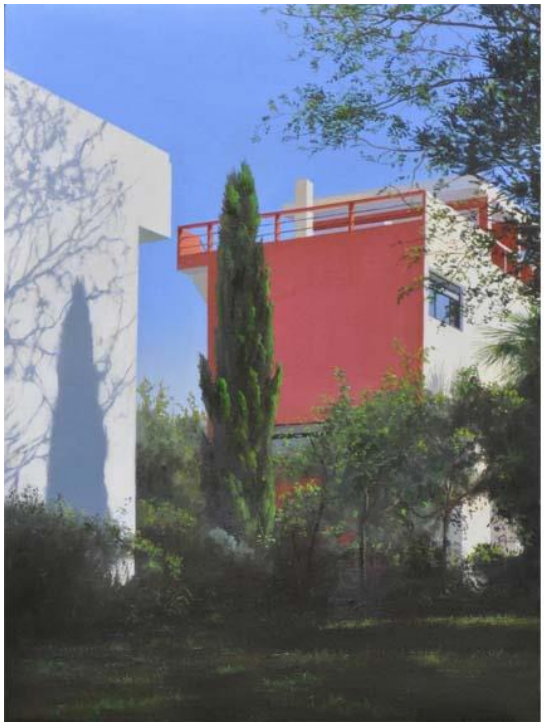
Machines for Living I, 56 x 122 cm, oil on canvas, 2015



Machines for Living II, 56 x 122 cm, oil on canvas, 2015

A Sentimental Journey

“Journey” is a term I prefer to avoid in any context other than actually traveling from A to B as it is so overused (along with iconic). So I astonished myself when I settled on A Sentimental Journey as the title for this exhibition. I was reading Laurence Sterne’s satirical novel of that title about the 18th century Grand Tour, and it suddenly struck me that the title was very appropriate to my paintings of Leo von Klenze’s work in this exhibition, so steeped is his architecture in the study of antiquity from his journeys through France, Italy and Greece visiting many of the sites of the Grand Tour but studying them in a much more intense manner than that of a tourist. This journey was not just the mental or emotional journey of the clichéd term “journey” but actually did involve traveling to many of the major archaeological sites of antiquity and studying them through making sketches of the remains and drawing or painting reconstructions. It should also be pointed out, as the introduction to my copy of Sterne’s A Sentimental Journey does, that at the time of its writing in the mid-18th century, “sentimental” had a quite different meaning to what it does now. It “did not have the pejorative sense of ‘excessively emotional’ or ‘mawkish’ that it has since acquired.” The meaning was more to do with being in a mood of reflection and of being in sympathy with the object of reflection. This is certainly evident in the beautiful drawings and paintings von Klenze made of his travels. I was given a book on von Klenze’s drawings and paintings by the architect Léon Krier back in 1987 when I was working on a painting of Krier’s Atlantis project. It was my introduction to this early nineteenth century Bavarian architect’s work. Von Klenze was a contemporary of Schinkel but is now less well known, hardly known at all in Britain. The book did not include much about his architecture but mainly focused on the drawings and paintings he made on his travels through Italy and Greece. I did not really appreciate the extent and beauty of his architecture until starting the research for these paintings. I have long admired the English Architect C. R. Cockerell both for his architecture and his painting. He inspired my first architectural capricci with his paintings The Professor’s Dream and A Tribute to Sir Christopher Wren, which combine numerous buildings out of their contexts in imaginative compositions. I was interested to find that von Klenze was almost the exact contemporary of Cockerell and their careers have many similarities. They were both architects, painters, archaeologists and architectural theoreticians. They both received the Royal Gold Medal for Architecture from the Royal Institute of British Architects within four years of each other, so presumably von Klenze did have some following in Britain at one time. It is an interesting thought that von Klenze and Cockerell, as they formed their architectural styles, visited and drew many of the same archaeological remains in Greece and Italy. They shared a particular interest in the Temple of Olympian Zeus at Agrigento, both men having made measured drawings of the remains of the temple and drawings reconstructing the building and its Atlantes or giant columns in the shape of male figures. These feature in many of von Klenze’s designs including the Befreiungshalle and the Hermitage in St. Petersburg which can be seen in the paintings in this exhibition.



Details of the Corbusian architecture of Pessac.

For more information, contact Plus One Gallery at rosie@plusonegallery.com or amy@plusonegallery.com. Alternatively you call us on 020 7730 7656 or visit www.plusonegallery.com.
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Opening Hours: Monday to Friday: 10am – 6pm
Saturday: 10am – 3pm
Sunday: CLOSED
nearest train stations : Wandsworth Town, Clapham Junction, Imperial Warf or Fulham Broadway