



Anna von Ballestrem **Between heaven and hell –
Daniel Richter's painterly furore**

Daniel Richter's works are always intense and painterly events. Our painting is a particularly exciting example of one of his more recent works. The shift in Richter's work in 2014, marking a new phase of his painting following his early abstract, colourful works and the later figurative, politically charged paintings, culminated in the "Shellshock" and "Limbo" series. These works are simultaneously heaven and hell. Richter has mastered the palette of painting with greater virtuosity than almost any other artist of his generation. He teaches us to see anew, not by instructing us, but by touching emotions. Almost without wishing to, it seems, he allows beauty to emerge. Yet beauty is deceptive.

"Yesterday's News" colours are initially seductive: a rich, sugary-sweet pink, an intensified yellow. Almost cheerful. Almost harmless. Then a white stroke – a line like a whip lash – slashes through the picture, striking the back of the bent body. Richter's work has always drawn on his extensive archive – an endless pictorial atlas of record covers, photographs, paraphernalia and newspaper reports – that serves as a source of inspiration and visual reference. In this case, the starting point was a hundred-year-old field postcard depicting First World War casualties, which he painted countless times in ink and oil on paper and canvas. Animated and varied, he transformed these mutilated bodies with the most intoxicating colours into grotesque hybrids: giant insects, whimsical birds or mutated machine-like creatures.

These fragmented bodies are actually caricatured memorials, because they were first destroyed by the war and then by painting. Richter scratches the surface. With a palette knife, with his fingers, with an oil pastel. His technique dismantles the classical image, yet simultaneously causes its rebirth. Physical forms emerge on monochrome, red-tinged surfaces that resemble views through thermal imaging cameras – glowing from within, yet dissolving at the edges. Something that may once have been a person – or perhaps still is – can be discerned. The title "Yesterday's News" is a lie. What was yesterday is not past. It throbs, screams and bleeds. And we look away. Daniel Richter does not. He holds the gaze. And he compels us to do the same.

14^R Daniel Richter

Eutin 1962 – lives in Berlin and Hamburg

“YESTERDAY’S NEWS”. 2021

Oil on canvas. 230 × 170 cm (90 ½ × 66 ⅞ in.). Signed, dated and titled in black felt-tip pen on the reverse: D. Richter 2021 YESTERDAY’S NEWS. On the stretcher inscribed with the catalogue raisonné number by another hand: DR/M 563. There a label of GRIMM Gallery, New York. The painting is registered in the catalogue raisonné of paintings by Daniel Richter by Dr. Eva Meyer-Hermann. [3068] Framed.

Provenance

Private Collection, Europe

EUR 150,000–200,000

USD 176,000–235,000

Exhibition

Condition Humaine. New York, GRIMM Gallery, 2021

