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FEBRUARY 11, 2026 | BY FAKEWHALE | REVIEWS

Martin Galle, All About Nothing at Suburbia Contemporary Leipzig Spinnerei, Leipzig

All About Nothing by Martin Galle, at Suburbia Contemporary Leipzig Spinnerei, Leipzig, 10/01/2026 – 06/04/2026

The phrase feels disarming, almost evasive, and yet it carries a peculiar gravity. Nothing, does it mean absence, or the space from which everything emerges? As we cross the threshold, we sense not emptiness but density: layers of time, of gestures learned and relearned.

Some of the works in caves sixty thousand years ago, tracing animals on stone. We think of Octavio Paz and his reflection that the will for life is the will for form. Before us, form stands as a reply to mortality.

Galle's paintings do not shout; they persist.

They hold their ground in a world that scrolls too fast.

Is nothing perhaps the fertile silence from which meaning grows?

The exhibition unfolds as a meditation rather than a spectacle.

And we find ourselves slowing down.

The atmosphere at Suburbia Contemporary Leipzig Spinnerei is measured and lucid. Light falls evenly, without drama, allowing the works to breathe. Visitors move quietly, almost instinctively adjusting their pace to the calm that emanates from the canvases. The space does not impose a rigid path; instead, it encourages a gradual discovery, a drifting from force still lifes to human and animal figures, what Galle calls, in essence, the "humanimal."

The arrangement fosters subtle dialogues, fascinatingly rendered compositions rooted in classical tradition converse with paintings where techniques and styles converge. In one direction, we encounter sensitively painted surfaces, attentive to contour and palette, grounded in painterly discipline. In another, established vocabularies meet elements drawn from contemporary pop culture. These crossings do not fracture the exhibition; rather, they extend it across historical and cultural boundaries. Tradition is not quoted as nostalgia but examined as living matter.

Technically, Galle's commitment is palpable. His diligent use of contour anchors figures within their environments, while his palettes, measured, attentive, carry emotional undertones without theatrical excess. The surfaces reveal study: an awareness of lineage, of the Leipzig painting tradition and its symbolism. Yet this is not mere inheritance. Different techniques merge within single works, suggesting that painting itself is a site of negotiation.

His recurring depictions of nature and figures capture fleeting moments, an encounter, a pause, a state of mind suspended between movement and stillness. Time hovers. We sense an acute awareness of transience, as if each image were both a record and a farewell. In this sense, the exhibition becomes anthropological: it reflects on humanity's persistent urge to document and preserve presence. Art, here, is neither decoration nor escape. It is a strategy for crossing time's barrier.

As we move toward the end of the show, the title returns to us with renewed clarity. *All About Nothing* feels less like irony and more like an existential wager. If we are mortal, then every brushstroke resists erasure. We die, yes, but we live with intensity. And what we create speaks after us.

The silence between the works follows us outside. It is not empty. It is charged. We suspect that "nothing" might be the most fertile ground of all, and that Galle has quietly cultivated it before us.

-FW

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