

GREG PARMA SMITH

## MY IDEAS



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## THE PRIVATE AND PERSONAL SIDE OF A PAINTER

Conceived by Greg Parma Smith as an active archive, this artist's book combines a selection of recent paintings, an extensive number of drawings (preparatory sketches, studies, simple patterns and designs, cartoons, notes, and doodles) realized by the artist from his youth years—when drawing was his favorite medium of expression—and three essays by long-time followers of Parma Smith's practice, namely artist and writer John Miller, art critic Kari Rittenbach, and musician and singer Hunter Hunt-Hendrix. In a very generous way, the artist thus allows us to enter his personal universe and to understand his path to painting and artistic creation.

"The anti-potentiality of drawing is at least one tendency that informs Greg Parma Smith's selection of work in this volume," John Miller states in his essay. "His decision to put together such a book must be read in contrast to paintings that have come to define his artistic position. Regardless of whether they depict butterflies, colored pencils or figures grafted together from disparate body parts, these paintings are consistently stylized, taut, and polished. In them, he seeks a nuanced, outré effect that might be typified as "straight edge" or "perverse straight edge." In any event, a distinct moral undercurrent runs throughout. As opposed to this, the affect of the collected drawings is

diffuse, even amoral, arising perhaps from their varied character and function. Spanning a period from 1991 to 2015—nearly a quarter century—this sampling mixes ostensibly mature works with childish musings. As such, it suggests a de-hierarchicalization that refuses to denigrate what might be deemed otherwise embarrassing or crude efforts. The juvenile, here, reasserts itself as a wellspring for ideas as they exist before coalescing into a consistent style.”

Born in 1983, New York-based artist Greg Parma Smith has recently exhibited at the Swiss Institute, New York; the Contemporary Art Museum, St. Louis; Le Magasin, Grenoble; MoMA PS1, New York, in the 2015 Greater New York exhibition; and at MAMCO, Geneva, in Spring 2017. This artist’s book stems from the latter and is published with MAMCO, Geneva.