

# ARTLOG

## SEE // Erwin Olaf's Berlin

Lane Nevares March 20, 2013



“Beauty is a term that is always in development, it’s not a fixed thing and is very much subjective, so to me, it’s a perception.” Erwin Olaf

“It all begins with a dream,” Erwin Olaf told a group of us last Saturday. His latest show, Berlin, currently on view in NYC at Hasted Kraeutler and in London at Hamiltons Gallery, is true to form for Olaf: sumptuous images layered with narrative, rich with details, and perfectly executed.

Using his dreams as surrealistic launching points, Olaf described his process of finding themes, unifying them, and working with his design team to bring them to fruition. This latest series, Berlin, took him outside of his Amsterdam studio and into a city steeped in history, where he could shoot his tableaux inside noted buildings, some of which have notorious histories. (Indeed, the stairs Olaf climbs in his self-portrait are the same that Hitler mounted in the Olympic Stadium.) These particular interiors, and the tales they contain, become part of the new story. Olaf’s Berlin series takes us into an enigmatic world where no one is telling us what to believe, but rather engaging us to conjure these stories ourselves.