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Your Guide to This Year’s Gallery-Share in Munich

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As the third edition of ‘Various Others’ kicks off, Carina Bukuts selects the exhibitions not to miss

C BY [CARINA BUKUTS](#) IN [CRITIC’S GUIDES](#) | 11 SEP 20



Felix Gonzalez-Torres, *Untitled*, 1992, photograph on billboard. Courtesy: The Felix Gonzalez-Torres Foundation

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During the past year, many writers have compared the COVID-19 pandemic to the AIDS crisis of the 1980s and 90s, stressing how both events were surrounded by confusion and deliberate misinformation. Felix Gonzalez-Torres’s billboards, which he produced in 1991 after his partner, Ross Laycock, died of AIDS, are neither informative nor promotional but like no other public artwork, they capture the essence of what it means to experience a serious health crisis and poetically stress how soon our lives can come to an end. Over the course of nine days, Sammlung Goetz presents Gonzalez-Torres’s *Untitled* (1992) on five billboards across Munich. Depicting a ghostly shadow on a billowing curtain, seemingly caught in a state of limbo, the work is a perfect visual equivalent for living in times of uncertainty.



Paul Maheke, *A Fire Circle For A Public Hearing*, 2018, video still. Courtesy: the artist and Galerie Sultana, Paris

‘I like them, they’re nice’

Nir Altman hosting Peres Projects, Berlin, and Galerie Sultana, Paris

12 September – 17 October

‘I like them, they’re nice’ marks Nir Altman’s second exhibition at the gallery’s new space in Munich’s Glockenbachviertel. Joining forces with Peres Projects and Galerie Sultana, the exhibition combines works by Rebecca Ackroyd, Ndayé Kouagou and Paul Maheke, which deal with the relationship between the private and the public. Ndayé Kouagou’s collage *Be Realistic, Think Average* (2020), for instance, features pink taxi fare receipts under Plexiglas on which the artist has printed phrases such as: ‘I am going to build a castle for myself.’ Paul Maheke’s work – which includes performances, videos and installations – explores the self and its relation to society by using his own body to investigate questions of gender and identity.

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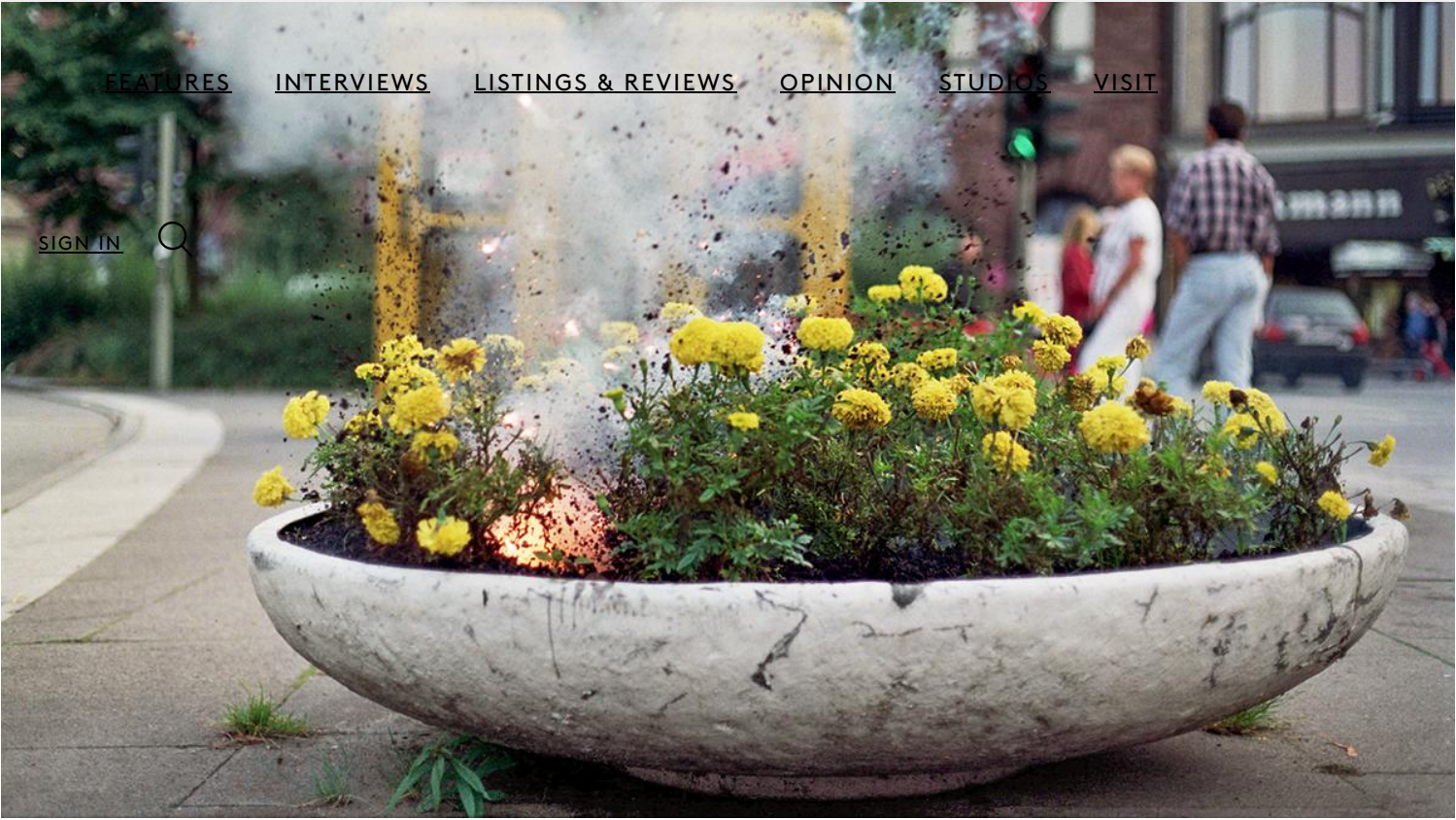
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Annette Wehrmann, from the series 'Blumensprengungen', 1991-95, photography; Courtesy: Ort des Gegen e.V. and VG Bild-Kunst, Bonn

‘Not Working: Artistic Production and Matters of Class’

Kunstverein München

12 September – 22 November

When thinking about work these days, it’s impossible not to consider the consequences of the current pandemic on the economy. Millions of people lost their jobs or were put on national furlough schemes – a crisis that has hit those most vulnerable in our society the hardest. In light of this, Kunstverein München’s project ‘Not Working: Artistic Production and Matters of Class’ couldn’t be timelier. Comprising an exhibition, publication and a series of film screenings and talks, ‘Not Working’ looks at the interdependence of artistic production and social class. The contributor’s list includes well-known figures such as British artist Stephen Willats and Lise Soskolne, co-founder of W.A.G.E. (Working Artists and the Greater Economy), as well as rising artists like Gili Tal and Angharad Williams.



Andrzej Steinbach, *Untitled (Construction Worker, after Alexander Michailowitsch Rodtschenko)*, 2019, 60 × 40 cm, photograph. Courtesy: the and Galerie Conradi, Hamburg

Andrzej Steinbach, ‘Industrial Music’
fructa space hosting Briefing Room, Brussels
12 September – 11 October

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Recently awarded Munich’s prize for galleries and off spaces, fructa space has teamed up with Brussel’s Briefing Room to present a solo exhibition by Berlin-based artist Andrzej Steinbach. At the heart of the show is *Untitled (Zarge)* (Chambranle, 2020), a door frame removed from the former Foreigner’s Authority in Leipzig, which Steinbach turned into an amplifier, allowing the architectural element to ‘speak’. Steinbach is best known for his politically charged photographic portraits (also on view at the gallery); ‘Industrial Music’, however, is not the first time the artist has turned to sound. His 2015 work *Liste*, for instance, includes a reading of names of members of the German far-left militant organization Red Army Faction.

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Lena Henke, *City Lights (Dead Horse Bay)*, 2016, bronze, painted wood, 105 × 125 × 65 cm.
Courtesy: the artist, Galerie Emanuel Layr, Vienna, and Bortolamy Gallery, New York

Lena Henke, Dominique Knowles, Megan Francis Sullivan

SPERLING hosting Galerie Emanuel Layr, Vienna

12 September – 17 October

For the third edition of Munich’s gallery-share, SPERLING invited Vienna-based Galerie Emanuel Layr into their space. The three-person exhibition brings together a number of works by Lena Henke, Dominique Knowles and Megan Francis Sullivan that demonstrate a shared fascination for horses and their cultural meaning. While Sullivan commissioned a professional horse photographer to take portraits of her mare, Marie, for the eponymous photo series from 2020, Knowles’s painting *The Solemn & Dignified Burial Befitting My Beloved for All Seasons* (2020) recalls the visual vocabulary of prehistoric art. Elsewhere, Henke’s bronze sculpture *City Lights (Dead Horse Bay)* (2016) contours the island of Manhattan to a horse head. The work is an exploration of Dead Horse Bay in Brooklyn, famously used as a landfill site by New York city planner Robert Moses in the 1950s.



Michael Armitage, *The Chicken Thief*, 2019, oil on Lubugo bark cloth, 200 × 150 cm. Courtesy: the artist and White Cube, London/New York/Paris/Hong Kong; photograph: Theo Christelis

Franz Erhard Walther, ‘Shifting Perspectives’

Michael Armitage, ‘Paradise Edict’

Haus der Kunst

through 29 November

through 14 February 2021

Both solo exhibitions currently on view at Haus der Kunst mark turning points for the respective artists. Franz Erhard Walther’s ‘Shifting Perspectives’ is a long-awaited retrospective of the artist’s career, bringing together works from the past 50 years. In his large-scale textile pieces, Walter continuously challenges our understanding of sculpture and its relation to the human body by inviting visitors to ‘activate’ the works. Elsewhere, Michael Armitage’s exhibition ‘Paradise Edict’ marks the British-Kenyan artist’s debut in Germany and includes works from the last six years. Heavily influenced by images circulating on social media as well as a combination of references from Western art history and motifs from East Africa, Armitage’s paintings explore the notion of the Black body and the Western gaze.

Two additional must-see exhibitions in Munich:

Espace Louis Vuitton presents Anicka Yi’s 3D video work *The Flavor Genome* (2016) until 10 January 2021. Though not part of the official programme of Various Others, the group exhibition ‘The world is not like us, it was imposed, we try to transform it’ at Britta Rettberg, curated by Anna Goetz and comprising works by Miguel Calderón, Karla Kaplun, Sarah Minter, Berenice Olmedo and Lucia Elena Průša, is definitely a highlight.

Various Others runs from 9 September – 11 October 2020.

Main Image: Anicka Yi, *The Flavor Genome*, 2016, video still. Courtesy: the artist, Gladstone Gallery, Brussels/Ne York and Fondation Louis Vuitton, Paris

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