

The *Collectors* Chronicle

Voices of
Contemporary Art
and Culture

14

Berlin/Vienna
Issue



Photo: © Maximilian Pramatarov

In the Studio Amoako Bofo, Vienna

Amoako Bofo's world is inhabited by powerful characters. With color and vibrant brushstrokes the Ghanaian painter brings strong individuals alive and celebrates blackness with every canvas he completes.

● read more on page 2



Photo: © Kristin Loschert

»My world looks diverse,
confusing, exciting,
incomprehensible, fearsome.«

Simon Fujiwara deals with concepts of contemporary individuality in his diverse artistic practice. In doing so, the preoccupation with people's increasing selfrepresentation in social media plays a central role.

● read more on page 3



Photo: © Laetitia Bica

»I am turned on
by things that I can't fully
comprehend!«

Anouk Kruithof takes her inspiration from the unfathomable, be it in the dark and dangerous convolutions of jungle rivers or Instagram posts of western companies, using photography as her medium.

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PARALLEL
VIENNA

Online Stories



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Jeppe Hein
Berlin



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Elmgreen & Dragset
Berlin

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Amoako, your work is full of colors, patterns, and vibrant contrasts. Can you identify the source you get all this inspiration from? University. My class (of Kirsi Mikkola) has a very good energy. There I'm surrounded by colors, different techniques, and lots of painting styles. From portraiture to abstract and figurative painting, almost everything happens in this class. When you work in different places in the studio you always adopt something from the person next to you. But color is the one thing that you find in all the work and so I'm always surrounded with it.

You're a painter in an almost old-fashioned sense of the word. What is it that draws you to paint and canvas? It's the one medium in which my mind is free. When I paint I don't think of anything else. I also like drawing and I learned how to sculpt. But at some point you have to be honest with yourself: Which way of working makes you free, which one allows you to express yourself most? And for me, that's painting.

As a figurative painter, can you describe what fascinates you so much about specifically portraying other humans? I have always been interested in facial expressions. There is so much you can tell just by showing a human face. Just from looking at someone's face you can say if they are happy or sad. That is one reason I like portraits so much. And then there is a certain gap: When you go to a museum or a big gallery all you see are white figures. You don't see the kind of faces I paint there. I want to do my own small bit to close that gap. So, yeah, that's my main goal: To paint a different kind of portrait.

The people you portray give the impression of being very strong in character and it feels like you are building a quite intimate connection with them. I actually know most of the characters I paint. I am familiar with their expressions and their energy. When you see the portrait I want you to know: This is their energy. By painting them I can connect the colors I use with the energy of the people I portray.

Do you have particular influences in art history that are relevant for your work? There are some people who connect my paintings to Egon Schiele, for example. Schiele is an amazing artist, so that's very flattering. Before I moved to Vienna I wasn't painting like I'm painting now. I was searching for a way to paint figurative portraits in a loose and free way. So I would go to museums or look at books, thinking about how people like Schiele got there. In that way art history had a big influence on how I paint.

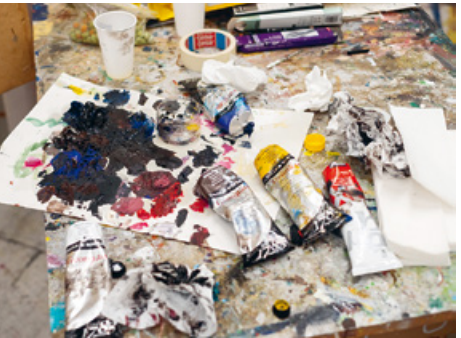
»While you're analyzing the painting, the painting is analyzing you at the same time.«

You were born and raised in Ghana. How did you end up in Vienna in the first place? It's a very long story, but it comes down to that I met an Austrian in Ghana. We did some projects together and eventually got married. I came to Austria for the first time in 2012 to do a show. After a couple of exhibitions in Ghana I returned and went straight to the Akademie für Bildende Künste.

What role does "blackness" or "black pride" play in your paintings? For me painting is basically documenting and celebrating blackness. The main idea of what I do is to paint people I like, people that inspire me, people who create spaces and opportunities. All I do is document the good people around me. So, portraying someone is an act of friendship for you, an act of respect? There has to be something organic that connects me to the person I paint. If I don't connect I cannot paint. With some of my pictures I know the people I paint in person. In that case it's a very intimate process where every movement, every color and every brushstroke I make is based on that relationship. Others I know from a distance, and so I work more with expression, movement and the clothes they are wearing.

Something that is characteristic of your works is the really direct look from your subjects that creates a very intense connection. When you look at someone, it always means that you analyze them. The direct gaze in my paintings makes this person look back at you. You stare at the painting and someone stares back at you. That might not be very comfortable for you. It's not easy to be stared at because it means when you're analyzing the painting, the painting is analyzing you at the same time. It's give and take. And then there's a bit of me staring at you at well. I choose characters I also want to identify myself with. The colors, the energy, the patterns, the expressions – that's them, but then I always add something of myself too.

Going forward, how are you going to develop your work? I keep on looking at my surrounding and allow myself to be inspired. I know which characters I want to paint. But I'm looking forward to see which colors and which patterns I'll decide to use.

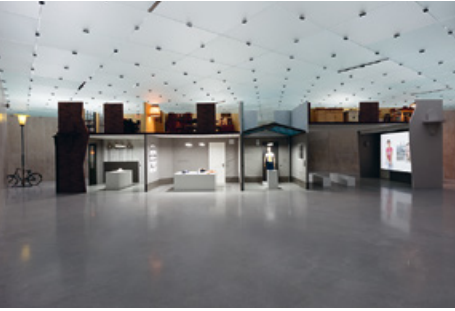


Amoako Bofo is represented by Mariane Ibrahim Gallery, Chicago, IL



Simon, before you studied art, you received a BA in Architecture from Cambridge University. Why did you first choose architecture? I never wanted to be an architect, I always wanted to be an artist. But before I went to an art school I wanted to learn something else in depth first so I studied architecture to learn about the world. I loved learning about the constraints of architecture – when ideas, ideologies and thinking meets pragmatism and construction. That laid the groundwork for my art.

You then enrolled at the Städelschule in Frankfurt. How did that happen? I moved to Berlin first. I had no plan to go to an art school, I just wanted to start making art. I realized that I didn't know any other artists of my age and generation and the way I was thinking about art was not reflected in the older generation of artists I knew. I wanted to have a dialogue with people doing what I was doing. But when I went to Städelschule, I was not really accepted as an artist immediately because I came from the architecture school. I remember that I made a work for my first "Rundgang" that got a lot of attention. It was very simple, I emptied my studio the replumbed the sink so it overflowed with milk. It was like a sexualised fountain that rotted over those four days. It was well received but I overheard people saying that "he's really an architect, not an artist". I was disillusioned at first, because I was so excited to finally be making art and I realized I had stepped into a different world of constraints – the art world – where biography is often foregrounded. My own identity as an artist had been shadowed by my past. I was so frustrated.



top: Exhibition view: Joanne, 2016/2018, Galerie Wedding Berlin
bottom: Exhibition view: Hope House, Kunsthau Bregenz, 2018
Photos: © Andrea Rossetti

How did you deal with this situation? Back in 2008 the notion of self-determination or self-identifying that is now the norm was emerging with new social media like Facebook. People were starting to understand the power of the tools they had to manipulate their image and self-perception. I was sensing this as something that was both exciting and disconcerting and was inspired by these social trends



to tell my own story through hyper affirmation. So, the next work was an architectural project called The Museum of Incest that explored in depth my relationship to architecture. The museum was just a proposal but I treated it seriously, thinking about every detail even down to the museum cleaning staff. It was so personal but elaborately architectural that, ironically, it was the first work that made my peers accept me as an artist.

»I'm trying to understand if it's possible to have a meaningful existence.«

Your art is very diverse, your practice is performative and interdisciplinary. And you involve various disciplines and media in your work. How would you describe the art you make in your own words? I never start with questions about the work's medium first, but more what it is I want to explore and reflect on and then how to communicate it – which is when media comes in. My work is visually all over the place and inhabits many aesthetics as a consequence of being made in the world now, where 'collagistic' and often colliding aesthetics are normal not just in art, or online but in everyday life. This can be about the about the material world we inhabit and the collage of values they embody – luxury meets recycled/sustainable, information or news is presented as entertainment etc. There is more diversity, our digital encounters are more global. In any given day we are confronted with several realities compared even to a decade ago. This is how my world looks – diverse, confusing, exciting, incomprehensible, fear-some – and I can only make work that is close to my experience. It's not a conceptual approach.

Following a visit to the Anne Frank House in Amsterdam you started a series of works of which you made Anne Frank the protagonist. Is your artistic concern a political one? I feel very responsible to my time and work as

clear-sightedly as I can to record, document, transform, mirror or distort it. You can call it political if you like, I don't care so much for that terminology. My primary care is people. I care deeply about the audience.

Do people ever ask you if you just want to provoke with your art? Erm ... Sometimes people ask why I work with so much with pop icons and I say: Why did Cezanne paint apples? Anne Frank, for example is so famous she has become almost invisible, or a part of our habitat like a tree, a dishwasher or an apple.

In how far would you say your work has changed since, say, your Städelschule days? It became more sophisticated in many ways, I'm more confident but also more curious and, as can come with age, more in doubt about everything. Before I was working with a lot of text and images, it was more didactic, although intentionally so. But I will say in the first works I made are the seeds of every work I've ever made since. And that is bizarre to me, because every time I start a thread of thinking for a work I feel like I am in great danger, in uncharted territory and I feel excited and nervous. And then later I see the same concerns repeating and evolving from other forms, and I realize how delusional I am. But then I am comforted by the fact that being alive is a delusional idea in itself. Art is the delusion I chose and in embracing its absurdity and being able to speak it out loud, it's a world that makes a lot more sense to me than many others.

read the full story on bit.ly/_SimonFujiwara

Simon Fujiwara is represented by Dvir Gallery, Tel Aviv/Brussels
Esther Schipper, Berlin
Taro Nasu, Tokyo



Photo: © Laetitia Bica

Anouk, you recently settled in Brussels, and have previously spent extensive working periods in Rotterdam, Berlin, New York, Mexico, and Surinam. How does it feel to have the stability of your own studio again?

It's great to have a place of my own, with all my books, belongings, works, and materials – for the past couple of years I've been a nomad, but if I think of 'my studio', this physical, walled place isn't my concept of a studio. It limits me ... I've spent quite some time in the jungles of Suriname recently (a country on the northeastern Atlantic coast of South America) and there I work outside, in the forest, at the river – for me, that's a studio as well.

What work did you do in Surinam?

I've started an art project, but mainly I've been building my own house there, in a Saramakan village called Botopasi on the upper Surinam river. The South American jungle is amongst the most barely comprehensible phenomena in my experience. The transformative nature of the Amazon rainforest is primordial, all encompassing, unimaginably powerful, terrifying, beautiful, and spiritual. The profundity of its innate wisdom informs the wisdom of its people, despite the absence of a historiographical tradition. People's ways of life still closely resemble those of the era when they were runaway slaves that settled in the jungle along the Suriname river, more than three hundred years ago ... But now people are on WhatsApp. The western approach of mankind fascinates me. Our relationship with technology, which seems to actively intervene between the human body



Photo: © Courtesy the artist

and brain is equally incomprehensible to me. I have started to mix the two, together with people, nature, and water, by taking images of future narratives which you see over there, printed on transparent materials such as organic silk, various fabrics, and PVC plastics. But for now, this is a project still 'on the hard drive'.

»Earth is already crying.«

What turns you on?

So many things that I can't fully comprehend! The concealed perils of the jungle and river we spoke of before. My curiosity of the unknown causes me to always be seeking more information; learning enriches me. I want to trigger my rational 'not understanding', listen to others, read and research to learn and flow, so my mind and perception are continuously challenged and kept in motion. I am fascinated with burning topics or actualities, such as the environmental crisis, which I can hardly comprehend in all its depth and potentially grave consequences. All of this is what prompts me to dig deeper, and also of course because these topics constitute the pressing issues concerning life on our planet and the future of mankind. Issues of such immediacy that concern us all such as the melting icecaps is I think a good starting point to make work, but it is also easy to get into difficulties as it becomes over-generalized due to the immensity of the topic ... In order to make good art I feel the key is to find a personal approach with which to deal with such hugely important matters; at the same time, I am not interested in making dry conceptual work. My video installation *Ice Cry Baby* is probably a good example of this.

For *Ice Cry Baby* you used videos that you found online. Could you describe the work?

It's a collage of videos that I ripped from the Internet, all of them made by people who take trips to watch collapsing ice caps. It is a natural disaster that is capitalized upon to such

an extent that it has become a tourist attraction. People can be heard applauding and screaming with excitement. At a certain moment you hear someone shouting 'Yeah Baby' at a collapse – which is partly where the title is derived from. It has become an absurd and perverse kind of entertainment. *Ice Cry Baby* also contains more poetic layers. The ice breaking and collapsing into the water is very poetic, as though earth is already crying. For me, it is clear that Mother Earth, within whose bosom we are invited to live, is saying: it is enough! A clear alarm!

Looking back on your artistic practice to date, what was a key moment in your work?

Leaving the Netherlands for Künstlerhaus Bethanien in Berlin when I was 25. I believe that in the work I created at that time enabled me to liberate myself from the kind of straight photography that I had learned during my education. I came to work towards what's more mine. I developed sculptural and installation modes of photography, stepping out of the medium and its conventions towards an approach of spatiality. I always question everything, including what I am doing myself, while daring to fail. So I had to bounce off a lot of walls.

● read the full story on bit.ly/_AnoukKruithof

Interview: Jesse van Winden

Anouk Kruithof

is represented by
Casemore Kirkeby, San Francisco, CA
Galerie Valeria Cetraro, Paris

CURRENT SHOW

group show *Nach uns die Sintflut*
at Kunst Haus Wien
16 SEP 2020 – 14 FEB 2021

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<https://szenario.design>

online first, cross-media communication and design strategies



Photo: © Silvia Martes

What if your whole life were a performance? Queer performance artist Artor Jesus Inkerö dives deep into traditional forms of masculinity in their long-term performative research. Their infiltration into the subculture at the gym led to a transformation that had ripple effects far beyond the quest for muscle gain. Inkerö's completed pieces of art, videos, and installations are impossible to comprehend without understanding the full process of bodily transformation that led to the art works.

Artor, as part of your 'bodily project' you started working out at the gym, from scratch, in 2016.

My bodily project is a performance, which I use as a platform to create art. In that I put myself through everyday transformations of masculinity, like bodybuilding, diet, language, and dress. My art works mix the everyday life, all the stuff that's going on in it, and myself as a queer person, into a series of works that try to present a version of the world we live in. I shape things

Interview: Rasmus Kyllönen

into videos, photographs, sculptures, and installations. My performative processes often happen in places where it is not necessarily viewed as art by the audience, when I'm working out, when I'm eating, browsing social media, riding a bike. The everyday world in which I live, is shaped artistically by the things with which I've chosen to surround myself.

During your bodily project you produced both photography and videos. Those aside, the project itself WAS the work of art. Did you document this somehow?

I try to document everything. I film with my phone all the time. It feels like I have a chronic self-FOMO (Fear Of Missing Out). I want to have the chance to go back in time, to scroll through my phone and see myself through time. I noticed how bodybuilders tracked their progress, so I began tracking everything, too. My primary diary is for keeping track of my emotional world and to look at how my work affects my state of mind. My secondary diary is for fitness. I measure basic stuff like my weight and other boring things. Sometimes I just measure the girth of my wrist to keep on track of that.

»Part of my job is to become someone other than who I used to be.«

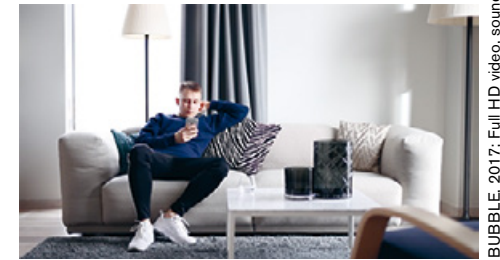
How did the process proceed?

I began as being very focused on the bodybuilding subculture when I started my bodywork. As time went by, I noticed how the lifestyle had become less robotic and had become somehow a more natural part of me. A couple of years into my performance, I reached a point wherein I stopped measuring things so frantically. This led me to explore masculinity in a broader sense and not only from the narrow viewpoint of masculinity in terms of muscularity.

What is the result of your participatory research in the subculture?

The body building subculture taught me many practical lessons. The experience also gave me

moments of acceptance. Like once I was doing bench presses and a "bro" walking by gave me a thumbs up. Those are the weird moments when you feel accepted as part of a subculture, but they are also moments of inclusion because of your physical appearance. What I needed to work on most was behavior. I did this mostly through observation and mimicry. I wanted to penetrate those specifically masculine subcultures by adapting to become one of those people. You have to learn how to behave and to communicate in the verbal and non-verbal language of the subculture. Part of my job is to become someone other than who I used to be.



BUBBLE, 2017, Full HD video, sound, color, 18:22, Courtesy the artist

How did people react to your transformation?

There were certain reactions that I didn't expect. I cut my hair short and my mom was shocked. I used to have long hair and I more obviously passed off as queer. Her first comment was why did I want to be ugly. It is so weird that my own circle of people rejected me in the beginning, how they made me feel like a stranger, another version of myself. They saw my project as something that was extremely hurtful to me and my identity, which it was. I do acknowledge now that it was more self-destructive than I thought it would be, it's definitely not recommended from a mental health perspective to do the things that I've done, and also the effect it had on the close circle of people that I had

● read the full story on bit.ly/_ArtorJesusInkerö

artorjesusinkero.eu



16.09.20–14.02.21
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MUSEUM HUNDERTWASSER

Untere Weißgerberstraße 13 | 1030 Wien | Täglich 10:00–18:00 | www.kunsthauswien.com



Photo: © Christoph Liebert

Marina Sula deals with the everyday flood of images in our digitalized world. In her photographs and installations she subliminally illuminates the origin and development of common visual languages and their interaction with people.

»We want to be desired,
not covet
anything or anyone.«

Marina, how did you get into photography?

I've always been interested in the production of images. But in particular with photography there was an initial fascination with the fact that the medium can be used by everyone. With a camera, one can capture a moment, it's something simple and easy to grasp. But with continuous production, distribution, and confrontation with images, my perception of them changed. On the one hand, it was about capturing something "real" in the moment, like the recording in a picture, of signs and codes that I observe in everyday life. If I am fortunate, something is condensed into a psychological moment that reveals a more general structure. I find the interaction between the indexical and the fictive in a photograph very exciting.

You work not only with the medium of photography, but also with installation. Lately, furniture was included in your exhibitions. Yes, for example, in my installation at vienna-

contemporary (in 2019) I created a specific setting: a couch, four chairs, a coffee table with magazines, paper tissues, and bottled water, a rack for magazines and newspapers, a clock, and my pictures mounted on the wall – for all practical purposes, a waiting room. The couch and the chairs were turned away from my pictures and formed a unity. This installation was especially designed for the fair, the context in which it was perceived was important. I also found it amusing to subvert the spirit of this institution with an ironic gesture. The question is, what social situations is this experiential space, constructed almost like a film set, able to evoke.



Installation view: *I'm sorry, I can't, don't hate me*
Gabriele Senn Galerie, Vienna, 2019

What role did the visitors play in your production?

The title of the installation is simple: *Waiting*. I wanted to use the title to refer to the original function of such a space, a function that has be-

come obsolete in this case. Many visitors asked: What are you waiting for here? I liked this indeterminate state. On the one hand, it reminds me of something ordinary, because everyone knows waiting rooms from their own experience, and on the other hand, there was an uncertainty, because there was nothing to wait for, of course. This strange experience was further intensified by observing and by being observed.

What is the function of art in your eyes?

I might not use the word decoration. What interests me more are questions like: Where is art presented in a broader sense, and who has access to it? How does the context, the environment determine the way you look at certain pictures? And above all: What structure do these paintings follow? Where do they come from and what do they want?

In the photographs that are part of your settings, do you fall back on existing works or do you produce them for specific occasions?

That varies from case to case, because my practice is more analytically oriented. I produce images every day and therefore have a large archive from which I can draw. In my last exhibition with Gabriele Senn in Vienna, for example, I partly used pictures from my archive, but also had to produce certain pictures specifically for the exhibition.

Do you feel the need to make order in the everyday flood of images?

I personally like order! (laughs) I try to find a certain logic for myself in which I can move. But I'm more interested in analyzing the structure behind it – in finding out why certain images are created the way they are.

In your artistic work you also deal with everyday rituals such as self-care and the daily interaction with digital devices. This creates the impression of a lonely subject that is very busy with itself. How do you see that?

I think the imperative of self-care is characteristic of a hyper-individual culture, in which it is always a matter of looking at one's own ego. The libidinous energy is not directed at others, but rather fizzles out in a self. This is somehow boring ... we want to be desired, not covet anything or anyone.

● read the full story on bit.ly/_MarinaSula

Interview: Barbara Wünsch

Marina Sula

is represented by
Gabriele Senn Galerie, Vienna

Abstract Art from the MIETTINEN COLLECTION

09 September – 19 December 2020



Albert Oehlen: *Lord, Pferdeflüsterer, Antichrist*, 1993 - 1999, oil on fabric, 101 x 110,5 cm. Courtesy of the Miettinen Collection

Berlin Art Week opening hours:
Opening: Tuesday, 09 September 3 – 9 pm
Wednesday to Sunday 12 – 6 pm

Regular opening hours:
Saturday only by appointment from 12 – 6 pm

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Klaus Albrecht Schröder, Director Albertina

Mr. Schröder, the Albertina Modern opened its doors in the summer of 2020. The road up to this point has not been easy, and you and your team have shown a great deal of stamina. Why was the Albertina Modern project so important to you?

With projects like this, you don’t assume from the outset that everything will run smoothly and without any difficulties. But I do believe that the Albertina Modern is able to fulfill a certain function that has to date been lacking in Austria.

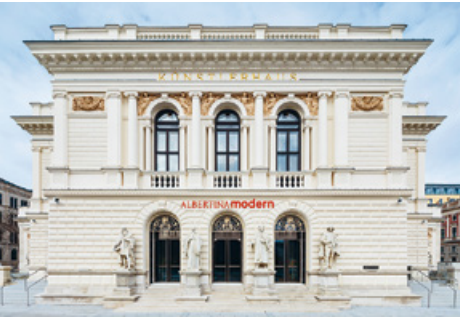
What function are you talking about exactly?
Contrary to what one would assume, there is no such thing as a show collection of Austrian art after 1945. I don’t mean that in the sense of a misunderstood patriotism. It’s not about writing nationalist art history, because one thing is clear: contrary to the usual opinion, Austrian art has always been very well-networked internationally. Many Austrian artists in the post-war years were closely linked to the art scenes of art centers such as Paris and New York. At the Albertina Modern, Austrian art will be shown on a par with international art. We can do this for the very first time, due to the fact that we have taken over a number of entire collections, amounting to 60,000 works of art by 5,000 artists.

In this respect, the Essl Collection was a fortunate turn for you.
When it became known that the ownership structure of the Essl Collection was about to change and that the collection was to continue to exist in the future in a central location in the country where a presentation with an objective museological claim could be ensured, the Albertina was actually predestined to receive it. The realization of this vision was made possible not least by Hans-Peter Haselsteiner, who, with 57 million euros, has demonstrated the greatest patronage in the history of the Austrian federal museums of the 20th century. After three years of the most elaborate renovation, modernization and expansion of the former

Künstlerhaus, we can now show art history the way that I have in mind.

How do the Essl Collection and that of the Albertina, complement each other.
There are, of course, large areas in which the Albertina already has had many holdings, such as drawings. With 30,000 works on paper, including works by Brandl, Baselitz, Robert Longbow and William Kentridge, the Albertina already had a considerable stock of works, which is now being superbly supplemented by paintings, sculptures, videos, and installations from the Essl and Jablonka Collections. This has meant that new or previously unrepresented artists have been added.

How does the Albertina Modern fit into the contemporary offerings of other institutions in Vienna?
As a contemporary city, Vienna cannot have enough contemporary art in my opinion. Visual art in Vienna in the 21st century is comparable to how music represented the Vienna of the 19th and early 20th centuries. What Maria Lassnig, Arnulf Rainer, Franz West and Erwin Wurm have contributed to international art is of enormous importance, considering the small size of the country. In this respect, I regard the Albertina Modern as another important pillar, alongside other institutions such as the Secession, Belvedere 21 and mumok, in establishing the city of Vienna as a city of art and not just as a backward-looking, waltz-loving city of music.



above: outside view, Photo: © Rupert Steiner
below: central exhibition space, Photo: © Robert Bodnar

Since the collection of contemporary art has now found a new home at the Albertina Modern, what does this actually mean for the Albertina as the main building?
I believe in the need for a degree of friction that only contemporary art can offer. In my view, today, every view on art, even the art of the Old Masters, must be a contemporary one. I wouldn’t want to do without that in the future for our main location. A Dürer exhibition at the Albertina looks different if a Lassnig exhibition or a Hermann Nitsch exhibition is taking place at the same time. Therefore, the Bastei Hall will

remain open to contemporary art.

How do you keep the two locations apart when it comes to showing contemporary art?
The retrospectives will continue to be shown at the Albertina, if only because the space at the new location would be far too large for that. At the Albertina Modern, we will primarily show thematic exhibitions that, for the first time, truly live up to the ambition of comprehensively presenting the canon of Austrian art history, by that I mean gathering a comprehensive understanding of the influencing factors that changed the course of art history.

Your opening exhibition is then also a theme exhibition.
The Beginning. Art in Vienna 1945 until 1980 deals with the “zero hour” after 1945, which lasted for about 35 years in Austria. The art of that time draws its identity from the sealing-off from the Third Reich, the horrors of the war and the terror of the Nazi regime, and an idealist art concept that was deeply dishonest. For both Valie Export and Maria Lassnig “degenerate art” played a major referential role. One also will be amazed at how many artists, from Pichler to Gironcoli, utilize the swastika, and of the immediate role the Third Reich played in the iconography of art, even for Franz West.

With one million works of art, there are probably works that mean more to you than others. Do you have a favorite work of art?
No, there isn’t the one. There are, of course, certain works and some artists that are particularly close to me. But even this selection changes from time to time. It can even change with mood or from context to context. If you look at art with a certain knowledge and curiosity, the reduction to the one can’t exist in my view. In the same way, I could not, for example, culinarily commit myself to one favorite main course without considering starter, dessert and wine accompaniment.

albertina.at

Interview: Florian Langhammer

Timeless portraits of the world's leading

Madeleine Boschan, Vienna

and most compelling emerging artists.

Collectors Agenda
Voices of Contemporary Art and Culture

collectorsagenda.com



Photos: © Maximilian Pramatarov

The work of the artist Jonas Feferle initially appears as minimal and cool, although on closer inspection irregular and exciting material interventions become apparent in order to interrupt the “sleeker” moments of the works. Impact metals are lined up in plates to facilitate sorting and to change spatial conditions. What is important here is the physical experience of the art itself, the preoccupation with the existing and with the added, as well as a clear examination of the categories space, material, and form. Proximity and distance also play an equally important role in the experience of his art, which often manifests itself in room-filling installations.

Jonas, could you tell us when and how your interest in art developed?
Art has always been a part of my life, so it is difficult for me to pinpoint a precise moment in time here. However, I can say that I developed an explicit interest in the work of Picasso, Jean-Michel Basquiat, and Jackson Pollock in my early youth, around the age of thirteen. Dif-

Interview: Alexandra-Maria Toth



collectorsagenda.com

ferent positions in painting and their opposing movements also fascinated me at the time.

Material, space, and form are the categories in which you move artistically. Can you describe how you treat these categories?
I understand space, material, and form as a kind of precondition that underlies all works and undermines them in the process of transformation. The space can be the exhibition space, but also the material as a surface, which is treated by me. The material is mainly plates and impact metals and the basic preconditions of resources to which I have access. Form is influenced by space, material, and my personal experiences and actions. The decisions I have made and continue to make in life, what influences and occupies me, are decisive for these actions and thus influence the form of the works. The moment of decision is especially interesting for me and affects all of us, because in the end we always have to make decisions in life.

»The moment of decision is especially interesting for me.«

Is the movement of Minimal Art an important reference in your work?
Minimal and Post-Minimal Art as well as European positions with similar themes fascinated me from a very early stage. I remember a moment in Darmstadt. I was nineteen years old and saw the work Raum 19 by Imi Knoebel in Hessisches Landesmuseum. Even though I couldn’t do much with what I had seen at the time, I was still incredibly fascinated. These references are still important for me and my work. In between I have the feeling that I have already exhausted these fields, but in the details there are always unexplored and unknown aspects that require repeated occupation.

Your works convey a cool atmosphere. Is this effect intended?
Of course these metallic surfaces radiate a sense of coolness, a hermeticism in themselves.

At the same time, however, there is also a reflecting effect, which is particularly important to me, because it makes the viewer part of the work. Differently, depending on the setting, the room is also reflected in it. A further ambivalence results from closeness and distance. The further away one is from the work, the more homogeneous and cooler it appears, while from close up an organic moment is revealed, in which breaks become apparent and the fragility of the work becomes visible.

Are there sometimes doubts in the work process and if so, how do you resolve them?
Doubt is a constant companion. Some days a fundamental doubt arises. One wonders whether art should be produced at all, because everything was apparently already there – so what is there to add to what is already there? The “doing” in this ambivalent relationship occupies me very much. On other days, specific doubts about the work arise, which lead to breaks. I see these breaks as important moments through which my work experiences extensions. Doubt is therefore necessary.

● [read the full story on bit.ly/_JonasFeferle](https://bit.ly/_JonasFeferle)



Jonas Feferle
is represented by
Galerie Raum mit Licht, Vienna

Interview: Florian Langhammer

ART COLOGNE

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Photos: © Sarah Peguine

The colorful paintings and installation works of Israeli artist Iva Kafri are unapologetically enigmatic. Fusing together mixed media including spray paint, plexiglas and wallpaper, she compels viewers to piece together the components of the puzzles she builds. The results of her creative process may look like a window opening onto a joyful world, but the creator behind it is carefully striving to maintain her balance on a taut tightrope.

Iva, when did it start for you that you were painting?

I was a child who always painted, I come from a family of artists. It was really what I liked doing the most for as long as I can remember. At the same time I actually really loved cinematography, and had this fantasy about being a filmmaker. But after taking a video making course in my first year of school, I was unable to connect to the process of sitting in front of a computer and editing. Suddenly I realized that I had never fully valued the immediacy of

Interview: Joy Bernard

the painting process, the fact that the process is in itself meaningful, not only the final result. Eventually I understood the meaning of what I had been doing my entire life; the language of painting was like an additional mother tongue I possessed, and until then had taken for granted.

Can you put into words what you have been trying to express through your art since that moment of realization?

I think that I make scenic situations, and my aspiration is for there to be as little distance as possible between myself and the things I make as I make them. These situations merge into and with my consciousness, my subconscious, chance elements, and with time itself. They are like a little encapsulation of me; an expression of a very complicated situation that belongs entirely to me.

Are there artists whose work you carry with you to this day?

There are discoveries I remember making as a child that are part of my core as an artist, like the works of Gauguin, Matisse, Rauschenberg. These are the very first artists who moved me because they had a way of communicating through color and a certain kind of sensuality and freedom that I value.

»Painting is first of all
a physical act.«

You tend to create paintings that are very large in scale. Is that the method that you naturally gravitate toward?

I experience painting as a very physical process, and working with a small canvas makes me feel tied up and restricted. I also respond to the spaces I work in and try to play with them, be it a museum or a gallery where I'm presenting my work, or on the walls of my studio. For me, the act of creating is essentially the act of opening myself up to the world.

Are the ideas of contact and physicality essential to your practice?

Certainly, they are essential. Painting is first

of all a physical act. I also really adore dance, it's one of the artistic mediums that I connect with the most. For me, dance is about creating a presence. And that is the kind of physical presence that I hope to manage to bring into my paintings. It is almost a desperate act sometimes; it's like I'm leaving traces on the canvas that speak for me. They are saying: 'Someone was here once.'

When observing your work, imbued as it is with rich colors, it conveys an almost child-like sense of brimming over with happiness.

Well, I'm not surprised you experience it this way. Freedom and passion are elements that draw me to the making of art, which is what you probably recognize as happiness. But I don't agree that rich colors are necessarily happy. Different colors and their combinations contain a very ample variety of feelings. There is a certain abyss or a struggle that I always have to overcome as part of my creative process.

[read the full story on bit.ly/_IvaKafri](https://bit.ly/_IvaKafri)

This story has emerged from a collaboration with Art Source, an online platform providing exclusive access to discovering and collecting the best positions among contemporary Israeli art.

artsource.online



Iva Kafri
is represented by
RawArt Gallery, Tel Aviv

July 3 – November 8, 2020

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secession

Friedrichstraße 12 1010 Vienna www.secession.at

September 18 – November 8, 2020

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Photos: © Nora Heinisch



Timo Miettinen is one of the most famous Finnish collectors of contemporary art. The Miettinen Collection, which focuses primarily on painting, comprises more than 1,200 works by artists of different generations and nationalities. We met him at his house in his adopted home of Berlin and talked to him among others about his passion for collecting and his eye for recognizing talented young artists.

etc. There are, for example, grand pianos here in the rooms that are used at evenings like that. In the last ten years, I have become more and more Berlinized, and now I also live in these rooms, and I like that very much.

»When you are young, try to buy the art that is relevant to the period you are living in, then you may promote something that might be interesting later.«

12 Timo, how does a businessman like you come to be collecting art?

I started my career in the business world as a business-oriented engineer. Today, I am still chairman of the board of our family business EM Group in Helsinki and managing director of our Berlin real estate company MTV GmbH. For many years I worked for the electrical company Ensto, which is also one of our family businesses, but to enrich my life, I needed something else, and that was art, design, and architecture.

Does the collection have a specific focus?

About 30 percent of the collection is represented by Finnish artists, 30 percent are German, and the remainder is comprised of a range of other international artists. In the meantime, my collection has become so large, that I am able to create my own thematic exhibitions. Painting accounts for about 70 percent of the collection, followed by photography, sculpture, a few videos, and a great many drawings.

What interests you in art?

The internationality of art interests me. During my professional life I have travelled a lot and have often had to deal with international clients and partners. I lived in Germany for a long time. Early on I was interested in an international view of Europe and the world, in which one is not only occupied with oneself, but is curious about other countries and cultures, views, possibilities and opinions, art reflects all of this, and that's why collecting art is interesting for me. This was also how Salon Dahlmann in Berlin was created. The idea was not only to show art, but also to revive the original concept of the salon from earlier centuries, as a meeting place for the exchange of ideas, music, art,

Secundino Hernández. Of the Finnish artists I like Matti Kujasalo and Lars-Gunnar Nordström, among others; both are Finnish constructivists. I would also like to mention the photographers Ola Kolehmainen and Niko Luoma. I am also very fond of Kirsi Mikkola and Marianna Uutinen, they are both great artists. I particularly like the work of the architect Alvar Aalto who is also an artist and designer. Of the younger generation, Ville Kylätasku and Janne Räisänen deserve special mention whom I have supported a great deal. But there are so many, it's impossible to list them all. Kirsi Mikkola is very important to me as a painter, and I also follow the work of her students. She teaches painting in Vienna at the Academy of Fine Arts. Through Kirsi I have met many exciting artists. Amoako Bofo is one of her students, and I just held a solo exhibition of his work, thanks to Kirsi I met him in 2016, long before he became successful in the art market.

How would you advise someone who is just starting to collect art?

When you are young, try to buy the art that is relevant to the period you are living in, then you may promote something that might be interesting later. And maybe it's also a good investment. And if that does not happen, you will still have done something worthwhile.

● read the full story on bit.ly/_TimoMiettinen
Salon Dahlmann in Berlin's Marburger Straße 3 is currently closed due to the Corona pandemic but will open its doors again as soon as possible. miettinen-collection.de

Interview: Dr. Sylvia Metz



Painting by Finnish artist Kirsi Mikkola

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You are known for having a good eye for the work of young artists long before they become internationally successful. What criteria do you follow when buying art?

I only collect for myself works that I like, and with no consideration for their market potential. Of course I have a sense of satisfaction when an artist develops well and becomes known in the market. But that's not the most important thing for me, and for that matter, I also collect works by artists who are already known and successful in the market.

Do you have favorite artists within the collection?

Yes, there are, for example Albert Oehlen and

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Editions

Regine Schuman

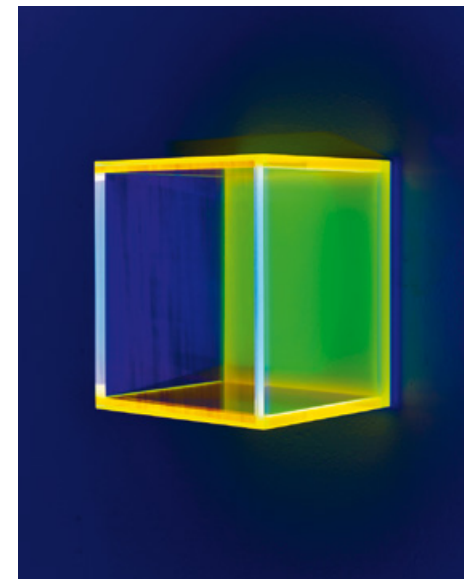


Photo: © Eberhard Weible

colormirror rainbow wien, 2020

Fluorescent acrylic glass
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● more on bit.ly/_RegineSchumannEdition

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45 x 33 cm (17.7 x 13 inches), framed
10 unique works
1.000 Euro (incl. 5% VAT)

● more on bit.ly/_PeterJellitschEdition

Jonny Niesche



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● more on bit.ly/_JonnyNiescheEdition2

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Photo: © Katharina Pobjizki

A cold and dry quality radiates from the objects and mixed media assemblages created by Alex Ito in his studio in Queens. Chrome and other smooth surfaces, found objects, and aesthetic compositions convey historical imagery evoking positive suggestions of progress and technological achievement. Essentially, however, Alex Ito's works bear witness to the concealed or marginalized stories of cultural eradication, practices of exclusion, colonialism, and violence that we accept in our culture in the wake of social change, material growth and capitalistic reproduction.



You Promised Catastrophe, installation view, 2019
Photo: © Courtesy Zeller Van Almsick

Alex, you often deal with inherently violent subject matter, from atomic bombs to Winchester rifles, where did that come from and what made you gravitate towards the theme?
From an American standpoint, these violent images are a part of pop culture vernacular. The first time I saw a mushroom cloud was in a Looney Tunes short. Westerns are a monumental archetype in global cinema. Both are narrative frameworks that have departed from their historical origin and now buttress the facades that surround our contemporary fictions. So I'm not necessarily drawn to them, but they are omnipresent in contemporary life. Unfortunately, I don't have to reach very far to access these kinds of violent topics.

Many of your sculptures are of an alien-like quality; chromed and smooth like the finish of some sort of technological device. Some

also display areas of oxidation and rust on their surfaces, suggesting a condition of age. What are these objects and are they from the future or the past?
I began making these objects after reading Timothy Morton's *Hyperobjects*. For Morton, a hyperobject is something that has presence but can travel and outlast human measure. Some of the examples are storms, icebergs, waste, and plutonium – things that are seemingly everlasting in that they embody time outside of human experience. Although his analysis is mainly environmental, I wanted to think of this in terms of cultural memory and historical violence. I was wondering how objects retain experience and shape the future through their historical contexts and the cultural wavelengths that they emit. It brought me to think of family heirlooms and historically concrete objects like weapons and innovative technology. With my chromed sculptural objects, I wanted to imagine something that embodied both signifiers of the future – metal, dynamism, and cleanliness – but also embodied an element of temporality subject to time – the chrome. However, I didn't want the object to be too recognizable for its utility, like a readymade, but to remain in an off-kilter state of familiarity.

»Utility and instrumentality are a part of human social organization. We will never break free from it but we can learn to exist with it responsibly, ethically, and with care.«

Is there anything in particular that you'd like your art to stir in or do with a viewer?
Overall, I would like to advocate for a general refusal of what is presented as a singular reality or history. Especially in the age of infor-

mation, it is important to use the tools and perspectives around us to strive against the common grain. Criticism is essential to this as well as the ability to exercise some restraint with our viewership and what we consume. When I refer to restraint, I refer to the ability to pause and to push against the impulse of spectacle. Spectacle, even more than ever, penetrates us everyday and visual art, as much as poetry, literature and critical thought, opens the opportunity to refuse the coercion of false fantasy. This fantasy is singular and linear – a windowless hallway in which to avoid the other and get lost within. But the wonderment of that fantasy is one of forgetting – forgetting the outside adversities we cannot or choose not to see. So what I offer is not a beautiful painting or an infinity room. All I offer are tools to refuse. Through refusal, we access a web of memory that is tangled, difficult, frustrating and, ultimately, filled with intimate life.

Your work seems to be a wake-up call that brings to light the disguises of technological progress and their historically violent effects. My practice is reframing contexts through the analysis of history and possibility. Future and possibility are similar but, in my opinion, are opposed to one another. A future is singular – as if looking at the path ahead through a measurement of time. Possibility exists in all directions as a form of potential. Humans have utilized technology since the first tools began to be used. Utility and instrumentality are a part of human social organization. We will never break free from it but we can learn to exist with it responsibly, ethically, and with care.

● read the full story on bit.ly/_AlexIto

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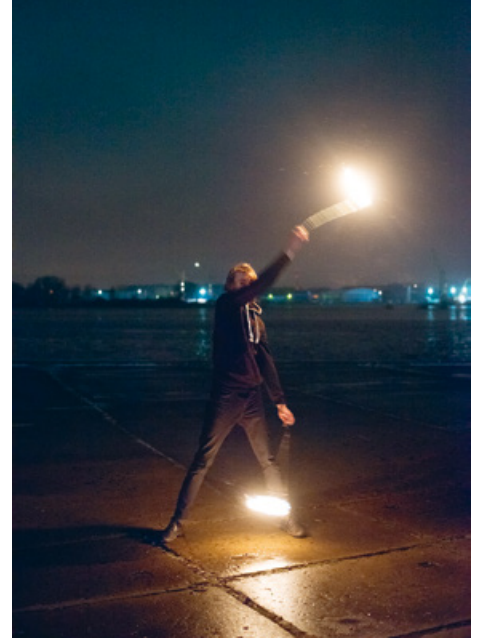
Stefanie Moshhammer

**Fred's Sword, 2015**

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Edition of 5 + 2 AP
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● [more on bit.ly/_StefanieMoshhammerEdition](https://bit.ly/_StefanieMoshhammerEdition)

Tobias Zielony

**Fire Boy, 2018**

From the series *Golden*
Archival Pigment Print
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Publisher: Collectors Agenda – C Agenda KG, Franz-Josefs-Kai 3/16, 1010 Vienna
Editor in Chief: Florian Langhammer
Art Direction & Design: Agnes Wartner, kepler-studio.de
Translation and Copy Editing: Uta Hoffmann

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Printed by Holzhausen Druck GmbH, Wolkersdorf, Austria
Paper: ARENA Extra White Smooth 80 g/m²
Kindly supported by
Federal Chancellery of Austria and
Fedrigoni Austria

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