

Out of Office

25 Years of the VP Bank Art Foundation



12 November 2021 – 13 March 2022



**KUNSTMUSEUM
LIECHTENSTEIN**

Out of Office

25 Years of the VP Bank Art Foundation

To mark the twenty-fifth anniversary of the VP Bank Art Foundation, these artworks are now set to leave their usual homes in the bank buildings in Vaduz, Triesen and Zurich for the first time – for an exhibition at the Kunstmuseum Liechtenstein. The art is thus venturing forth from the working world at the VP Bank, where it is usually viewed in passing, and taking centre stage as it is showcased to a wide audience.

The display focuses on exponents of painting, who form the collection's main focus as established by the VP Bank Art Foundation.

The concept of the exhibition addresses juxtapositions – be it a moving gesture contrasting with a calm, monochrome surface, saturated colours adjacent to a reduced use of colour or abstract works and their interplay with figurative approaches – to emphasise the particular qualities of each painterly position.

To accentuate further the primacy of painting, the idea arose to invite the artist Hanna Roeckle to develop a colour concept. The aim was for her to frame the overall exhibition with her modular method of working and her reduced, rather cool palette, thus extending the painting into three-dimensional space. The artist's underlying approach was her choice of works and their installation and, primarily, the palette of her *Wave* (7). Instead of repeating the colours with which she composed the individual elements of *Wave*, the artist broadened her palette, adapting it to the placement of the works. The watercolours of Georg Malin (8, 9, 10), for example, are hung on a wall painted a gold-bronze hue, a colour that plays a prominent role in Malin's painting and sculpture. By extending her palette, Roeckle thus combines the colour concept inherent in her work with the artworks in the exhibition in a sensitive, respectful manner.

Photographs by Barbara Bühler, in turn, afford visitors an insight into the interactions between the various artworks in the world of work.

The inception of the VP Bank's art collection originates with Dr Heinz Batliner, then General Manager, who began acquiring artworks for the bank in the 1970s. His aim was to integrate art into the world of work: art was not to be tucked away in storage, but rather made accessible to customers and staff in the bank's spaces, a principle

that still holds true today. One aim of the VP Bank Art Foundation, established in 1996, was to refine the concept of the collection, with painting coming to be the main emphasis. Since then, acquisitions have focused on exponents of non-objective art from the post-war period to the present. The VP Bank Art Foundation collects international, regional and local artists, some over many years of their artistic activities.

Seitenlichtsaal

Aurélie Nemours

1910 Paris – 2005 Paris

David Reed

*1946 San Diego, California; lives in New York

1, 2

The exhibition begins with the juxtaposition of two works by Aurélie Nemours and David Reed that initially appear in stark contrast: Nemours' square canvas as opposed to Reed's elongated, upright rectangular support; Nemours' strict, constructivist and two-dimensional subject as compared with Reed's animated, colourful, three-dimensional painting.

After the late 1940s, Nemours pursued a form of painting that broke away from representation and illusion, being marked by a reduced range of forms founded on basic geometric shapes. The black shapes applied on a white ground are as two-dimensional as the square canvas. Four identical shapes of different sizes are positioned at the centre of each quadrant of the canvas. The black shapes themselves are also essentially square, although the upper left quarter of each square is omitted, thus creating a reversed L-shape. Despite the geometric stringency of the image, the composition has a certain optical lightness, which appears almost playful. Only on closer inspection does one notice a distinctive surface structure created by brushstrokes that reflect glancing light. This lends a certain depth to the flat, two-dimensional composition. Thus on closer examination, the initial contrast between the two images' two- or three-dimensionality appears lessened.

The work by the New York-based Reed, made almost twenty years later, draws on photography and film for its compositional devices, but follows the painterly approaches of Barnett Newman, Willem de Kooning and Roy Lichtenstein. Similarly to Nemours, Reed strove early on to achieve reduction in painting, one that is, however, manifested in his work not in constructivist rigour, but rather in the elementary qualities of painting: brushwork and the vitality of colour.

During the 1980s, Reed began to lessen the stringency in his application of colour and composition, introducing interweaving swirls whose three-dimensional effect in contrasting colours are reminiscent of the light and transparency of late Baroque and Mannerist painting.

Strict rectangular areas overlap or delimit, creating a sense of order that contrasts with the dynamics of the image.

The final composition of the image continues to evolve as the artist's work processes became increasingly complex. This image was created over several years, the artist also made several detailed drawings reflecting on and revising the painting.

Juxtaposed with Nemour's work, the asymmetry of the different sized, overlapping areas takes on a constructive aspect, one which prompts the viewer to reflect on the process employed by Reed in creating this complex composition. The sweeping swirls, the stroke of the brush and rake and the alternating surfaces between matte and shiny colour lend this piece a particular sense of vitality.

HU

Barbara Bühler

*1968 Eschen, Liechtenstein; lives in Vaduz and Basel

3, 4

The two framed photographs by Barbara Bühler on the blue wall are usually found hanging in room 116 of the VP Bank in Vaduz – which is also where they were photographed, before and after a meeting with a client. What traces remain? How different are the two photographs? Bühler has created a whole series of these before-and-after photographs of conference rooms in Liechtenstein. For the book marking the twenty-fifth anniversary of the VP Bank Art Foundation, Bühler photographed artworks in various rooms of the bank in Triesen, Vaduz and Zurich. You will find a selection in the form of wallpaper on the wall opposite and you can take a seat at the conference table.

SK

Conference Room in Liechtenstein

The first image:

A quiet room, a tidy room. It is ready to receive people. The room is untouched, it is timeless and silent. The light comes in through the windows, as if from another world. Outside is noise and movement, inside is nothing. These rooms open up possibilities, enable confidential discussions, new contacts. They are screened off. No access for the public.

The second image:

Something has taken place, a meeting, a conference, talks, a rustling of paper, a quiet clinking of china cups as they are placed back on saucers. The room speaks, the conversation still hangs in the room. People have been here, doing business, agreeing terms or not. No one will know who was here, what happened here. Was someone here who left no traces at all? The scene yields no helpful clues. Only this: how many cigarettes were smoked? What was drunk? Soon the cleaning lady will come and the room will be as spotless as before, as if no one was ever here.

The image in between, the invisible image:

These little changes in the images are at the same time the big changes out there: after a few decades of booming as a financial centre, Liechtenstein has become unrecognisable. While almost nothing changes in these rooms, these rooms change the country massively. 30,000 visible people live in Liechtenstein, and more than twice that number of 'persons' are invisible inhabitants: the foundations that pay taxes and influence politics. Their money wants to live in banks and the investment trusts that were created for them. Their taxes go to pay for roads and tennis courts, their money turns Liechtensteiners into millionaires. But they remain invisible. The images show the reality: there is no one here doing anything that can be seen. They drink coffee and mineral water.

I feel like a culprit, a voyeur, and then I'm the police, processing the crime scene.

©2001

Barbara Bühler

Regina Marxer

*1951 Vaduz; lives in Vaduz

5, 6

The dots in Regina Marxer's images follow a clear concept set out by the artist:

To paint a picture in which there is no focal point.

A pattern consisting not of identical but similar things.

A colour space in which the eye roams aimlessly.

Every picture has a black and a white dot, that is to say, it integrates maximum lightness and maximum darkness so as to be unremarkable.

Every dot has a different hue and slightly different shape.

No two are the same in any one picture.

The number of dots per picture is either 49, 64, 81 or 100.

This is a number which allows us still to see dots as dots.

The different background colour of the paintings defines the colour scale of the dots.

Each picture needs its own space and its own distance to the viewer.

Marxer first exhibited forty-nine of these images, each on its own easel, with three garden tables and around twenty garden chairs at the Kunstraum Engländerbau in 2005.

Hanna Roeckle

*1950 Vaduz; lives in Zurich

7, 11, 12, 43

Hanna Roeckle has developed a modular system, a kind of database of painting, that clearly reflects her conceptual approach to painting. She uses her works to create structures, no module exists in isolation, instead the painterly spectrum evolves through a mutual interaction. It is an investigation of what lies in between, of the movement between the separate parts: an exploration of the phenomena of transport.

CMS

Evi Kliemand

*1946 Grabs, Switzerland; lives in Vaduz and Ticino, Switzerland

15

Der dunkle Grund – helle Rhythmen – The Dark Ground – Light Rhythms, 1997

Evi Kliemand operates between dimensions, their states and conditions, on stretched and draped canvases.

An area of 180 × 190 cm, spread out on the floor, corresponds to her energy and force. While painting, she looks down, where she moves acrylic, mineral powder, mineral colours, quartz sand with water, her body stretched out or bent. Sometimes she pushes herself up and walks across the wet paint, making paths, blurring the boundary between wet and dry. Layer by layer, the distance decreases between the background and her body. Hands, feet and eyes become accustomed to the dimensions and movements of paint, water and quartz sand. Evanescent, the image comes and goes in the flow of materials.

‘When I am thinking, I feel more secure than when I am painting, that’s why I paint.’

‘What I am interested in is the transparency of colour that extends down to the ground of the canvas, allowing us to see the structure of the intermediate layers – from the surface down to the ground.’

KF

1

David Reed

*1946 San Diego, California; lives in New York

#560, 2007, 2005–2007

Oil and alkyd on canvas

259 × 91.5 cm

2

Aurélie Nemours

*1910 Paris – 2005 Paris

Polyedra, 1987

Oil on canvas

120 × 120 cm

3

Barbara Bühler

*1968 Eschen, Liechtenstein; lives in Vaduz and Basel

Sitzungszimmer in Liechtenstein, 2001 | Conference Room in Liechtenstein

Colour photograph

Framed size: 100 × 70 cm

4

Barbara Bühler

*1968 Eschen, Liechtenstein; lives in Vaduz and Basel

Sitzungszimmer in Liechtenstein, 2001 | Conference Room in Liechtenstein

Colour photograph

Framed size: 100 × 70 cm

5

Regina Marxer

*1951 Vaduz; lives in Vaduz

wir, 2005 | we

Oil on canvas

80 × 80 × 4 cm

6

Regina Marxer

*1951 Vaduz; lives in Vaduz

wir, 2005 | we

Oil on canvas

80 × 80 × 4 cm

7

Hanna Roeckle

*1950 Vaduz; lives in Zurich

Wave, 2011

Mixed media on birch

100 × 333 × 20 cm

8

Georg Malin

*1926 Mauren, Liechtenstein; lives in Mauren

Hortensien Blau, 1988 | Hydrangeas Blue

Watercolour on paper

76 × 56.5 cm

9

Georg Malin

*1926 Mauren, Liechtenstein; lives in Mauren

Hortensien Purpur, 1988 | Hydrangeas Purple

Watercolour on paper

78.5 × 57 cm

10

Georg Malin

*1926 Mauren, Liechtenstein; lives in Mauren

Aquarell, 1995 | Watercolour

Watercolour on paper

90 × 70 cm

11

Hanna Roeckle

*1950 Vaduz; lives in Zurich

Aquarius, 2016

Car paint on glass fibre reinforced plastic

125 × 99 × 99 cm

12

Hanna Roeckle

*1950 Vaduz; lives in Zurich

Transportphänomene, 1996 | Transport Phenomena

Mixed media on canvas

4 parts, each 180 × 60 cm

13

Karina Wisniewska

*1966 Venice, Italy; lives in Baden, Switzerland

The Dream Is the Aquarium of the Night I, 2011

Acrylic and oil on canvas

220 × 160 cm

14

Karina Wisniewska

*1966 Venice, Italy; lives in Baden, Switzerland

The Dream Is the Aquarium of the Night II, 2011

Acrylic and oil on canvas

220 × 160 cm

15

Evi Kliemand

*1946 Grabs, Switzerland; lives in Vaduz and Ticino,
Switzerland

**Der dunkle Grund – helle Rhythmen, 1997 | The Dark
Ground – Light Rhythms**

Acrylic on gesso on canvas

180 x 190 cm

Kunstlichtsaal

Joseph Marioni

*1943 Cincinnati, Ohio; lives in New York

16, 38, 39

The exhibition features three paintings by Joseph Marioni, an exponent of Radical Painting. His painting is radical in the sense that he concentrates on colour. Colour is the theme and material of the image. The artist allows his thin, custom-made mixtures to flow across the canvas, which is primed, enabling the colour to spread readily. Marioni's intervention in this process is minimal. The final layer is a transparent glaze which he lays over the painting. As he says, every colour calls for its own format. And: 'The role of a radical painting is to invite the viewer's ego to enter into a visual encounter as a conscious act of engagement.' What effect do the white, yellow and green paintings have on you?

SK

Heimrad Prem

1934 Roding, Germany – 1978 Munich

25

How I paint

When I begin to paint, even if I put the right brown next to the right blue, I may start to yawn out of sheer boredom. It doesn't matter if I bring all my thirty years of experience to bear, plan a good composition and proceed with great care. What's the point? Why am I even painting? It bores me to do all the good and right things. Now begins the fight against boredom. Or, painting. The best thing is to paint a big patch into the picture. That grabs you, that sweeps you up. You need to take hold with rescuing hands, the adventure begins, you don't know where the journey will take you, but you're on the train.

Painting is an adventure, it leads us into an unknown world.

Before you start painting, you don't know what the final outcome will be. It's like falling asleep, you cannot plan the dream you're going to have in advance. When you're in the middle of painting and you've almost forgotten that you once had artistic intelligence, with instinctive sureness you reach for a colour that you would never have discovered even if you had thought about it rationally for hours on end. You feel it, colour, as colour, as a flat surface, as three-dimensional space. You feel it as

warmth, as fiery or pleasantly cool, or even ice-cold. You can taste colour too, even the stomach plays a part in painting. Now you know what shape each patch needs to be, and everything falls into place. You know exactly whether to press the brush down firmly or whether just to touch the colour on lightly, and even the theme begins to take shape on its own.

After working for about sixteen hours, the brushes start to fall from your hand. Before you fall asleep, you wonder whether the painting will turn out well. But you know that once again you have possessed it completely, that it has given itself to you completely, and it is magnificent, painting.

The next day you regard the painting enraptured, like a lover regards his mistress, and you never stop discovering new things, and you never tire of marvelling.

A few weeks later, you might even consider the painting with critical rationality, but why should you, I ask, waste your time on this boring trade? It is so much nicer to start painting again.

Heimrad Prem

From: *Spurbuch*, Art Cologne 1991, edited by Christa Schübbe

Hanns Kunitzberger

*1955 Salzburg; lives in Berlin

17, 18, 19

Hanns Kunitzberger's interest in painting is expressed in a subtle and sensitive attention to colour; instead of binding it to natural or abstract forms, he presents colour as a three-dimensional colour continuum, free and for its own sake, alone, as an atmospheric *sfumato*. Consequently, the eye searches in vain for any fixed point in the painting, as the colour, although brushed on, is applied in matte, edgeless transitions, with no orchestrated style. Only on closer inspection does its material quality become apparent, along with that of the linen or cotton support. The continuum of colour is bounded solely by the edges of the painting. Where the colour content becomes denser or more intense towards the centre of the painting, as is the case in many of the painter's works, they are transformed into a kind of imaginary 'stage space'.

Kunitzberger paints from the depths of the ground, layering pigmented oil glaze upon glaze. Although appearing three-dimensional, almost as if floating, the colour does not extend expansively beyond the edges of the painting, being mostly concentrated at its centre. Instead, it draws the observer's eye into the depths of

the stage space, absorbing and enshrouding it. Indeed, all of the colours, be they of a warm or cold, light or dark nature, are inherently still and reticent and possessed of a gently bound inner light. Kunitzberger's works invite contemplation while at the same time drawing attention to the invisible by probing the visible.

UW

Arno Oehri

*1962 Eschen; lives in Ruggell, Liechtenstein

26–36

Arno Oehri spent two years in New York City in 1991–92 on a studio residency awarded by the government of Liechtenstein and later took part in artist-in-residence programmes lasting several months in Russia. During this time, he focused in depth on the writings of Carl Jung, above all his book *Psychology and Alchemy* (1944). Employing a small format in these works, Oehri explores that primal substance from which all forms can be explained and transformed.

‘The focus for me was the idea that the process of making alchemical gold is not about transmuting matter, but rather refining the soul.’

The combination of enigmatic drawings and verbal ‘spells’ in Latin or Russian stands for a symbolic content, which appears to elude rational understanding. Here, artistic practice itself is celebrated as alchemical change.

KF

Rachel Lumsden

*1968 Newcastle upon Tyne, England;
lives in Schaan, Liechtenstein

40, 41, 42

The process of painting takes place in a continuum. What can be painted in 2015, could not be painted in 2014. What can be painted in 2015 is based upon what could be painted in 2014.

For many years now I have been trying to capture and explain the painting process in writing. Although I am increasingly succeeding in defining my parameters for painting, at the same time I am increasingly coming to understand that painting only happens on the canvas, at the moment of painting. I can research subjects, collect material for images, experiment with compositions in Photoshop, do sketches – but it's all really just preparing

for the moment when I put paint to canvas with a brush. This is when you enter a sphere that cannot be put into writing because painting is a wild boar running through the forest. I am riding on its back, clutching on to it, and sometimes tearing out a few bristles.

Rachel Lumsden

16

Joseph Marioni

*1943 Cincinnati, Ohio; lives in New York

Green Painting, 2006

Acrylic on canvas on stretcher

76 × 81 cm

17

Hanns Kunitzberger

*1955 Salzburg; lives in Berlin

Anfang 2007 später, 2007 | Early 2007 later, 2007

Oil on burlap

80 × 65 × 4 cm

18

Hanns Kunitzberger

*1955 Salzburg; lives in Berlin

Mitte 2011 später, 2011 | Mid-2011 later, 2011

Oil on burlap

80 × 65 × 4 cm

19

Hanns Kunitzberger

*1955 Salzburg; lives in Berlin

Anfang 2013 später, 2013 | Early 2013 earlier, 2013

Oil on burlap

80 × 65 × 4 cm

20

Bruno Kaufmann

*1944 Balzers, Liechtenstein; lives in Balzers

111006, Modulation, 2011

Acrylic on wood

60 × 60 × 3 cm

21

Bruno Kaufmann

*1944 Balzers, Liechtenstein; lives in Balzers

110817, Modulation, 2011

Acrylic on wood

60 × 60 × 3 cm

22

Bruno Kaufmann

*1944 Balzers, Liechtenstein; lives in Balzers

970118 Quale Echtrot, 1997 | 970118 Quale True Red, 1997

Mixed media and sand on Polystyrene

125 × 100 × 5 cm

23

Bruno Kaufmann

*1944 Balzers, Liechtenstein; lives in Balzers

970117 Quale Ultramarin, 1997 | 970117 Quale Ultramarine, 1997

Mixed media and sand on Polystyrene

125 × 100 × 5 cm

24

Bruno Kaufmann

*1944 Balzers, Liechtenstein; lives in Balzers

970119 Quale Eisenoxydschwarz, 1997 | 970119 Quale Iron Oxide Black, 1997

Mixed media and sand on Polystyrene

125 × 100 × 5 cm

25

Heimrad Prem

*1934 Roding, Germany – 1978 Munich

Ohne Titel, Gruppe SPUR, 1961 | Untitled, SPUR Group, 1961

Oil and collage on canvas

200 × 200 cm

26

Arno Oehri

*1962 Eschen; lives in Ruggell, Liechtenstein

MECTO (Ort), 1993 | MECTO (Place), 1993

Pencil on paper

30.5 × 23 cm

27

Arno Oehri

*1962 Eschen; lives in Ruggell, Liechtenstein

HO BCE-TAKN (Aber trotzdem), 1993 | HO BCE-TAKN (But anyway), 1993

Pencil on paper

30.5 × 23 cm

28

Arno Oehri

*1962 Eschen; lives in Ruggell, Liechtenstein

Aenigma regis (Das königliche Rätsel), 1993 | Aenigma regis (Enigma of the King), 1993

Pencil on paper

30.5 × 23 cm

29

Arno Oehri

*1962 Eschen; lives in Ruggell, Liechtenstein

Gelat et ardet (Erkaltet und brennt), 1993 | Gelat et ardet (Freezes and burns), 1993

Pencil with white highlights on paper

30.5 × 23 cm

30

Arno Oehri

*1962 Eschen; lives in Ruggell, Liechtenstein

HO BCE-TAKN (Aber trotzdem), 1993 | HO BCE-TAKN (But anyway), 1993

Pencil on paper

30.6 × 23 cm

31

Arno Oehri

*1962 Eschen; lives in Ruggell, Liechtenstein

Ohne Titel, 1993 | Untitled, 1993

Pencil on paper

30.5 × 23 cm

32

Arno Oehri

*1962 Eschen; lives in Ruggell, Liechtenstein

mecmo ganero om meda pagon c modon cobcen b mede, 1994

Pencil and coloured ink on paper

42 × 29.7 cm

33

Arno Oehri

*1962 Eschen; lives in Ruggell, Liechtenstein

pagon c modon, 1994

Pencil and coloured ink on paper

42 × 29.7 cm

34

Arno Oehri

*1962 Eschen; lives in Ruggell, Liechtenstein

MECTO (Ort), 1994 | MECTO (Place), 1994

Pencil and coloured ink on paper

42 × 29.7 cm

35

Arno Oehri

*1962 Eschen; lives in Ruggell, Liechtenstein

Ohne Titel, 1994 | Untitled, 1994

Pencil on paper

42 × 29.7 cm

36

Arno Oehri

*1962 Eschen; lives in Ruggell, Liechtenstein

MECTO – DALEKO OTTEG (Ort, fern von dir, nahe bei dir, ganz in dir ...), 1994 | MECTO – DALEKO OTTEG (Place, far from you, near by you, completely in you ...), 1994

Pencil on paper

42 × 29.7 cm

37

Jürgen Partenheimer

*1947 Munich; lives near Munich

Ada 1, 2007

Oil on canvas

180 × 140 cm

38

Joseph Marioni

*1943 Cincinnati, Ohio; lives in New York

White Painting, 2002

Acrylic on canvas on stretcher

138 × 127 cm

39

Joseph Marioni

*1943 Cincinnati, Ohio; lives in New York

Yellow Painting, 2002

Acrylic on canvas on stretcher

214 × 183 cm

40

Rachel Lumsden

*1968 Newcastle upon Tyne, England; lives in Schaan, Liechtenstein

Silent Inhabitants: Kriechstrom, 2006 | Silent Inhabitants: Leakage Current, 2006

Acrylic on cotton

180 × 170 cm

41

Rachel Lumsden

*1968 Newcastle upon Tyne, England; lives in Schaan, Liechtenstein

Les jeux sont fait | The Die Is Cast, 2009

Oil on canvas

190 × 210 cm

42

Rachel Lumsden

*1968 Newcastle upon Tyne, England; lives in Schaan,
Liechtenstein

Armchair Thriller, 2012

Oil on cotton duck

170 × 210 cm

43

Hanna Roeckle

*1950 Vaduz

Xoana M, 2004

Mixed media on birch

60 × 260 × 4 cm

Exhibition

Christiane Meyer-Stoll and Henrik Utermöhle

Texts

Klara Frick

Susanne Kudorfer

Christiane Meyer-Stoll

Henrik Utermöhle

Uwe Wieczorek

Exhibition installation

Marcel Meier (head)

Rita Frommelt

Zeno Langenbahn

Peter Ott

Stephan Sude

Marc Zerbini

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