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Press release:

Zürich Biennale

8 October 2023–21 January 2024
Press preview Friday 6 October 2023, 11 am
Opening Friday 6 October 2023 6–9 pm

The exhibition is curated by Mitchell Anderson, artist and founder of Plymouth Rock, and Daniel Baumann, Director of Kunsthalle Zurich; both will be present at the press preview.

Across the 500 m² lower level of the Kunsthalle Zürich, the Zürich Biennial presents approximately 50 positions and more than 200 works from the following artists:

Osama Alrayyan
Tolia Astakhishvili
James Bantone
Juan Barcia Mas & Shen He (Sexkino)
Mark Barker
Sarah Benslimane
Vittorio Brodmann
Matt Browning
Centre D'Editions Melbourne
Tornike Chapodze
Anjesa Dellova
Nathalie du Pasquier
Cédric Eisenring
FitArt App
Madge Gill
Renee Gladman
Rafik Greiss
Raphael Hefti
Hardy Hill
Lonnie Holley
David Hominal
Brook Hsu
Shamiran Istifan
Lisa Jo

Jean Katambayi Mukendi
Miriam Laura Leonardi
Shuang Li
Lorenza Longhi
Danny McDonald
Jasper Marsalis
Alexandra Metcalf
Daniel Moldoveanu
Sveta Mordovskaya
Maurice Morel
Marianne Mueller
Jonathan Okoronkwo
Juan Antonio Olivares
Margit Palme
Cora Pongracz
Sophie Reinhold
Frode Felipe Schjelderup
Leopold Strobl
Kelly Tissot
Cassidy Toner
Ilaria Vinci
Dena Yago
Bruno Zhu

Zürich Biennale:

The act of organising exhibitions, at its heart, is one of discovery and sharing. We share with an unknown audience; we share artists and individual artworks that we believe are thought provoking, and may be beautiful. We share with the belief that those works might have the same effect on others.

From the start, this was an exhibition whose theme and reason to be was art. We live in a moment in which it seems as if the only option for group exhibitions is the thematic exhibition. This is false, and minimises the visual and conceptual impact of what is exhibited. Art is enough in its ambiguous anythingness. Art is not just a symptom.

What happens when you look at art? When you select works you are drawn to? When you try to understand an artist's art making? You expect to end up with an arbitrary selection, but this is an

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illusion. You end up with a collection of voices that talk to you about the world in which we live. You discover a potential exhibition and choose a generic title like 'Zurich Biennale' to keep the voices independent, so that they can stand on their own two feet.

Many options for the presentation of art are represented here: some works are new productions created for the exhibition; others are existing works recontextualised here; there are historical works expressing a current vitality; and new works direct from the artists' studios. This is a diverse and international collection of works framed by the place, the institution and the city in which it is exhibited. It's a biennial, across only 500m² and a single room, reaching, as biennials do, around the world; it is a small, disparate fraction of the thrilling work across many media existing around us.

Yet, there is (at least) one common thing. We call it 'windschief,' or, to use a literal translation, warped by the wind. Many of the works in this exhibition use the language of exaggeration, the grotesque and caricature. They use a language of abrasion, both optimistic in its humor and pessimistic about the state of things. This shouldn't come as a surprise in a time obsessed with exposure, perfection, control and fear. The grotesque offers a way out, the exaggeration allows one to say 'un-things' while signaling self-awareness; caricature is a place of oblique truth and humor. Through a variety of media, the artists here mirror our world, telling the truth, but telling it slant, like Emily Dickinson urged. Architecture in particular is stripped of its practical roots throughout the show, in a variety of ways becoming aesthetic and sculptural, shaping one's movement as it is made redundant and non-functional. All these tropes seem appropriate in a time like ours.

Press contact

Should you require further images or wish to organize a conversation with the curator, please contact Aoife Rosenmeyer: +41 (0)44 272 15 15 oder presse@kunsthallezurich.ch

Mediation

The exhibition is accompanied by an extensive mediation programme with, for example, workshops for schools and a free tour of the exhibition every Thursday evening at 6.30 pm, except during Zürich school holidays. Further information can be found on our [mediation page](#).

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