

# LIVIE

**ANDRÉ BUTZER**  
**HERR MÄNDELCHEN (2002)**

**JUNE 7 – AUGUST 22, 2024**  
**OPENING | FRIDAY, JUNE 7, 2024, 6-9PM**

It is with great pleasure that we present the solo exhibition *Herr Mändelchen (2002)* by André Butzer (\*1973 Stuttgart, lives in Berlin, Germany), which opens on the occasion of the Zurich Art Weekend.

*Herr Mändelchen*, 2002, is one of the earliest characters created by André Butzer. With his »crimson red coat«, he is reminiscent of a figure from folk song or the fairy tale's gingerbread man, who everyone nibbles on until he is eventually »all gone«. The almond itself is bittersweet. A rose plant whose kernels can be turned into marzipan, contain lead or, as is the blue homunculus, are enriched with hydrogen cyanide, prussic acid. The painting's diminutive title possibly evokes Heinrich Mandel (1919–1979), physicist, member of the Waffen SS and president of the German Atomic Forum during the Cold War. The childlike »little man« as the personification of human fallibility. Possibly poetry: »Make me bitter. / Count me among the almonds.« Or possibly the imagination. The almond as an eye, looking wide open into the past and the future, beholding ruin and hope alike. As emblems of human existence, Butzer's iconic characters thus embody the contradictions and recurring extremes of history.

In Zurich, Butzer sides *Herr Mändelchen* with a monumental portrait of a woman: *Untitled*, 2023. Unlike her counterpart, painterly placed in the open, the woman with her blue-violet robe seems to be located in an interior. Empathetically integrated into the brown color field surrounding her with a golden shimmer, she is simply there, as if she dwelt in her possibility. As a young girl, as a woman. On the left in the upper corner is a dark block. Virtually like a window, in which the world veils itself. The woman verges constantly on the brink of the inside and the outside. Painterly, she unites this world and the beyond and turns the painting into an immaterial threshold between what is there and that which, absent, can only be fathomed in its concealment. Her gaze, surpassing the merely visible, makes evident how colors and planes become flowers, fruit or leaves, a vessel, a jug and a bottle, and how bottle, jug, vessel, how leaves, fruit, flowers become planes and colors again. Almost a still life, in which things come in and out of appearance, form a densely built whole and yet retain their own. Almost a still life, in which the colors repel and equally support each other. For Butzer, painting is fulfilled and realized in this cyclical process of passing and returning. The pictorial act is filled with the world and, in suffering and joy, a testimony to being itself. Truth dwells in the inherent light of color.

Completing the exhibition, there are four more delicate pencil drawings as well as three small paintings, which, with only with a few brushstrokes, lay bare the rich coloristic heritage of Butzer's painting. Each color he places is not isolated but continuously related to the whole of the colored plane. In their potentiality the brushstrokes reveal the elementary relational being of color as the planar-ornamental origin of all appearance. Being neither merely figurative nor merely abstract, the expressive marks mutually resonate with one another and thereby create the fragile balance of the painterly whole.

## **André Butzer**

Born in Stuttgart in 1973, lives in Berlin

Solo exhibitions of his work have been held in international institutions including Gesellschaft für Gegenwartskunst, Augsburg, Museo Novecento, Florence, Museo Stefano Bardini, Florence, and St Nikolaus, Innsbruck (2024); Museo Nacional Thyssen-Bornemisza, Madrid, Keibel Villa | Oberpfälzer Künstlerhaus, Schwandorf, Mieltinen Collection, Berlin, and Kunstverein Friedrichshafen (2023); Friedrichs Foundation, Weidingen (2022); Yuz Museum, Shanghai, and Museum of the Light, Hokuto (2020); IKOB Musée d'Art Contemporain, Eupen (2018); Växjö Konsthall, Växjö (2017); Bayerisches Armeemuseum, Ingolstadt, and Neue Galerie Gladbeck (2016); Kunstverein Reutlingen (2015); Halle für Kunst, Graz (2014); Kestnergesellschaft, Hanover, and Kunsthistorisches Museum / Theseustempel, Vienna (2011); Kunsthalle Nuremberg (2009); Kunstverein Ulm (2005); Kunstverein Heilbronn (2004).

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Works by André Butzer are in the collections of Aïshti Foundation, Beirut; Art Institute of Chicago; Aurora Museum, Shanghai; Carré d'Art, Nîmes; Children's Museum of the Arts, New York; CICA Center of International Contemporary Art, Vancouver; Contemporary Art Collection of the Federal Republic of Germany, Bonn; Deichtorhallen, Hamburg; Friedrichs Foundation, Weidingen / Bonn; Galerie moderního umění, Hradci Králové; Galerie Stadt Sindelfingen; Hall Art Foundation, Reading / VT | Derneburg; Hamburger Bahnhof – Nationalgalerie der Gegenwart, Berlin; Hölderlinturm, Tübingen; IKOB Musée d'Art Contemporain, Eupen; Kupferstichkabinett / Staatliche Museen zu Berlin, Berlin; LACMA Los Angeles County Museum of Art, Los Angeles; Marciano Art Collection, Los Angeles; MARE Museum, Bucharest; MOCA Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles; Museo Nacional Thyssen-Bornemisza, Madrid; Museo Novecento, Florence; Museum Reinhard Ernst, Wiesbaden; Paula Modersohn-Becker Museum, Bremen; Pinakothek der Moderne, Munich; Rubell Museum, Miami; Sammlung Goetz, Munich; Space K, Seoul; Ståhl Collection, Norrköping; Städtische Galerie im Lenbachhaus / Gabriele Münter- und Johannes Eichner-Stiftung, Munich; Tiroler Landesmuseum Ferdinandeum, Innsbruck; University of Washington, Seattle; Wooyang Museum of Contemporary Art, Gyeongju-si; Yuz Museum, Shanghai, among others.

Opening hours: Tuesday to Friday | 11 am to 8 pm, Saturday | 12 – 5 pm, and by appointment

For more information and high-resolution images please contact us:

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