



Eine Kulturinstitution  
der Stadt Zürich

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Zurich, 22 September 2021

## Press Release

### Helmhaus Zürich

24 September–14 November 2021

**Media Preview:** Thursday, 23 September 2021, 11 a.m.  
Please let us know by email or phone (see above) if you plan to attend.

**Vernissage:** Thursday, 23 September 2021, 6 p.m.

## Where to?

### Investigations in Art

with: #BigDreams, Céline Brunko, Felipe Castelblanco, Lydia Zimmermann, Nambi Rimai Collective, Nadia Leonhard, Michael Meier & Christoph Franz, Anissa Nussbaumer, Maria Pomiansky

“Where to?” The question seems to arise quite often in our troubled times. Helmhaus has invited seven artists and collectives who delve deep, investing their energies in their investigations, enquiries and explorations, unveiling realities that are concealed, obscured, suppressed. Thematically, the focus of the exhibition is on artistic research and investigation, on sociopolitical and environmental concerns, on collective and private values, and on the human quest for happiness.

In Moscow and in Tel Aviv, in Basel and in Zurich, witty, earnest and contradictory answers are offered at the start of the exhibition in response to the question of what constitutes happiness and what fear is. The next room provides the opportunity of following people in the public space – within the boundaries of the law, of course. Which, in itself, makes those boundaries the focal point. The room after that tells of a long journey across many borders, each one of which has been crossed in the opposite direction by a street lamp. It recalls the historically momentous journey from Zurich to St Petersburg that unleashed nothing less than a revolution. A new and different light is shed by art, in the room that follows, on a case that engrosses the judiciary and its enforcement just as much as it captivates the media: in the work of #BigDreams the person concerned, so widely discussed, while the authorities would prefer to keep quiet, has a say – both as protagonist and as co-author.

The path through the exhibition continues, leading to Moldova. “Why Moldova? Why now? You should have come sooner, during the Soviet era: it was far lovelier here then.” But art does not necessarily emerge when things are at their loveliest. And in the next room it returns to anger. It asks why we have such a fear of fear. Finally, the exhibition concludes

with a look at a region in Colombia where mineral resources, water, drugs and spiritual enlightenment are sought, and fought over, by unequal means. Here, too, the connections stretch all the way to Zurich.

The freedoms of investigation in art differ from those in journalism. It deploys its own methods. The connections that art reveals open up new fields of knowledge and contextuality – driven by the question “where to?”. Here and there in the course of these investigations, we catch a glimpse of the potential for realities to be different from the way things are.

## **Events**

At the vernissage, an artist encourages visitors to confront their own fears by letting her give them a tattoo. For the first time, Helmhaus is offering crash courses in the terminology of contemporary art, using works in the exhibition as illustrative examples. A discussion with the artists involved centres on their various different investigative methods. One discussion evening is devoted entirely to a special collaboration between two artists based in Switzerland and a media collective in Colombia. The concept of intersectionality between lines of discrimination is the subject of a discussion between climate strike activists. And, finally, a well-known psychoanalyst talks about angst.

For names and dates, please see the enclosed invitation card or visit [www.helmhaus.org](http://www.helmhaus.org) and our social media platforms.

For further information and press photos, please contact Nathalie Killias, tel. +41 (0)44 415 56 77, email: [nathalie.killias@helmhaus.org](mailto:nathalie.killias@helmhaus.org)