Strange, unsettling weeks lie behind us. Museum Brandhorst was also forced suddenly to close its doors due to the Covid-19 pandemic, and had to reconsider its approach in the new situation. Originally this magazine was intended to mark the finale of “Forever Young” – and thus our anniversary year – and highlight the numerous events taking place on our premises. These have now fallen by the wayside, such as the summer fest planned for July 4th. But things have now turned a corner: Since May 12th, Museum Brandhorst is once again open for you. It is a great feeling to be able to once more welcome visitors to our museum. Naturally, your safety has the highest priority which is why your visit is subject to certain precautionary measures (p. 56). This allows you to enjoy the art secure in the knowledge that you are safe. Against the backdrop of current events, many of the works open up completely new perspectives. For example, “Mean Clown Welcome” (1985) by Bruce Nauman: especially at a time of “physical distancing” the jumping neon gestures of the two male clowns suggest the subliminal aggression of shaking hands. Since we have all desperately missed the world of art, we have made space here in the Cahier for an especially large number of collection pieces, as well as expanding our digital offers (from p. 14).

The topic of this issue is “Really Old?”. How art ages, collections remain relevant, and why a second and a third look is always worthwhile – questions such as these are addressed by Paul-Philipp Hanske and Jacob Proctor, based on the example of our current exhibition and our collection (p. 3). Taking ageing quite literally, I add a few thoughts on page 30 about late works, such as Cy Twombly’s rose paintings from 2008. And the originator of the motto also has a say: In an interview from page 36, our curator Monika Bayer-Wermuth talks to the great Ed Ruscha – whose tapering painting from 2016, entitled “Really Old”, forms the center of the current exhibition. Since the impression of ageing is best countered by comparison, and yesterday’s Zeitgeist is at the same time a springboard for the positions of tomorrow, we also take a look ahead at our next exhibition: curator Jacob Proctor speaks with Lucy McKenzie (p. 48) about her first retrospective exhibition.

We hope you enjoy reading this issue, and wish you many pleasant moments with the artworks!

Achim Hochdörfer
Director Museum Brandhorst

Get to know our team on Instagram.
Times Are Always Changing. An Invitation to Constantly Engage with Collections

Paul-Philipp Hanske
in conversation with Jacob Proctor

Collections like that of Museum Brandhorst are of a permanent nature – and yet they are anything but static. This is due not only to new acquisitions, but also primarily to the treasury of varied references that emerge among each other and in the context of the respective zeitgeist.
Collection is a term that describes both an activity and its result. And while the notion of “a collection” carries with it a sense of permanence, the ongoing process of collection leads to a continual redefinition of what has already been collected. That is also true of the Brandhorst Collection. In the late 1960s, Anette Petersen, later Brandhorst, and Udo Brandhorst began to collect modern and contemporary art. It all started with Cy Twombly and the neo-avantgarde; in subsequent years and decades the Brandhorsts gradually expanded their selection of pieces: with works from critical post-modernism, Arte Povera, and above all by Andy Warhol. The collection – now represented by Museum Brandhorst – grew and still grows continuously, just like a tree trunk, ring by ring. The focus has always been on contemporary art. However, the question that now arises is how contemporary such a collection can be, having been shaped by personal decisions that in some cases go back many decades. In light of a constantly growing historical body of work, does the “contemporary” not at some stage get left behind? Is it not inevitable that the collection becomes “Really Old”, to quote Ed Ruscha’s famous tapered painting from 2016, which is the centerpiece, both spatially and metaphorically, of the current exhibition “Forever Young – 10 Years Museum Brandhorst”?

Three arguments refute this assumption – and all three refer to the relationship between art and society. On the one hand, the context in which the artworks can be found changes. Since our view of the past and the present constantly renews itself, art never simply stays the same. Secondly, more recent positions also ensure this: by making reference to previous works, artists relate them to the present. And, not least, collections like that of Museum Brandhorst are continuously updated through curation and the setting of themes, the scholarly assessment of the inventory and the associated targeted selection of new acquisitions, leading constantly to new angles and references. All of these factors mean that the collection is never static, but instead in a constant state of flux.

Regarding the first point: Artworks are always anchored in the context of the time of their creation. They can have a completely different effect within only a few decades. “This can be especially interesting in terms of technology,” says Jacob Proctor, curator at Museum Brandhorst. “Many artists work with such new technologies that the pieces can appear surprising or even futuristic when they are made, but read quite differently later on. For example, Bruce Nauman’s work ‘Mean Clowns Welcome’”. True, blinking neon tubes were not exactly new at the time of its creation in 1985, and indeed belonged as standard to the appearance of cities in the West. “Nevertheless, Nauman’s use of the material was absolutely ‘high level’ at that time,” says Proctor. The neon works by Nauman have lost none of their fascination to this day, even though the analog blinking apparatuses can no longer be regarded as state-of-the-art. Rather, we see in them the technical-cultural zeitgeist of the age of their creation: the emphasis on nervous big city noise, the desire to dazzle, the joy in the coldness of neon light. From a temporal distance, therefore, the artwork has a different effect. The suddenness, the shock of the new that exerts such an impact in the present necessarily declines over time. What instead becomes visible is the integration into social and cultural contexts. “It will be interesting to see how works that today appear to be utterly innovative will age,” says Proctor. “I’m thinking especially of Seth Price’s vacuumed bomber jacket or the works by Wade Guyton or GuytonWalker, which all play with digital aesthetics. It is impossible to predict what future generations will see in them.”

In quite a different manner, the view of the most popular artist in the Brandhorst Collection also changed over the decades: Andy Warhol. If we look at his work from the 1970s and 1980s now, the queer aspects of his oeuvre are impossible to ignore: his portrait series “Ladies and Gentlemen” from 1975, but also his works that refer back to the cohabitation in the Factory, his self-portraits or his colorful “Camouflage” series from 1986. It all points the present-day viewer to the topic areas of gender, sexual orientation, identity politics and not least Warhol’s own queerness. Yet until well into the 1990s there was a kind of cultural blindness towards these aspects. Not even art critics or
curators appeared to be interested. There was unanimity: Warhol’s work is concerned with media and capitalism. Queerness was not an issue. Inconceivable from today’s perspective, indeed it is the “elephant in the room”. Further proof that art is not static, but rather changes and will continue to change.

But a dynamism can also enter a collection in another way. For instance, when artists make reference to older works and thus alter the way we see them from the present. A prime example of this is the relationship between Cy Twombly and Jean-Michel Basquiat. The first thing usually associated with Twombly is antiquity: mythology, naval battles, the entire ancient European treasure of knowledge, which Twombly reworks so uniquely in his paintings. But then someone like Basquiat comes along from a completely different place in the 1980s, and makes reference to the painter prince. Basquiat was interested in the young Twombly and brought some aspects of his to the fore that were not so prominent in the 1980s: for example, the fact that many of Twombly’s works resembled graffiti, that his oftentimes obscene scribblings provoked scandal in the art world at the time, that he broke with the orthodoxies of post-war painting. Basquiat’s success in the 1980s gave art lovers a different insight into his “predecessor” Twombly.

Andy Warhol provides another instance of how referencing can lead to the carving out of individual aspects of a landmark work. When, starting in 1965, the painter Sturtevant replicated Warhol’s famous image of Marilyn Monroe in her “Warhol Marilyn” series, she not only pointed out that Warhol also made use of prefabricated image material, but also in general to the fact that now, in our time, the circulation of images has long since eclipsed the
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Patrizia Dander
Head Curator
Museum Brandhorst

Installation 1993”. Here the artist exhibits his journalistic and freelance editorial photography, in which he examines the young rave scene, as art – thus posing the question as to what actually characterizes art, and what happens to a lively scene when it is photographed, placed on the walls of an art gallery, and previously separate categories merge.

And there is yet a third mechanism that ensures the vitalization of a collection. The most obvious aspect, but one which is closely interlinked with the two aforementioned aspects, is the updating of the collection by means of new acquisitions, the scholarly assessment of the inventory and the specific contextualization within exhibitions such as “Forever Young”. “It is very clear that curatorial practice is also rooted in its own respective time,” says Proctor. “It’s not about criticizing decisions regarding the collection that were made in the 1970s or 1980s. But sometimes, decades later, a different light is cast on scenes and trends – and new histories can be articulated as a result.” This is no longer necessary with regard to Warhol and his queerness, as it is widely known today. The Rhineland painting scene of the 1980s is a different matter. While it was incredibly visible and important, the public was taken in much too easily by the self-projection of the wild, loud, heavy-drinking men, who reprised once again the garish theater of the original genius. What was unnoticed amidst all the bluster was that women such as Charline von Heyl and Jutta Koether also played a significant part in renewing the art of painting; they just didn’t promote themselves so gaudily. “By increasingly buying and exhibiting work by women in recent years, the Brandhorst Collection has worked to intervene and rectify some of these old narratives – and in the process make the collection more comprehensive, richer and more interesting,” says Proctor.

These three processes, the reevaluation of old works, the incessant play of references, and targeted curatorial decisions on purchases and presentations, all take place simultaneously, alternate, complement and make reference to each other. And they all ensure that the Brandhorst Collection is both: “Really Old” and “Forever Young”.

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Books are containers for information, prose and poetry, they are fetish objects and a means of communication, and they represent the democratization of knowledge like no other medium. Their cultural, social as well as historical significance has not dimmed in the digital age. The current “Spot On” presentation traces the ongoing interaction by artists in the Brandhorst Collection with “the book” as an object and an idea.
From the beginning of May, seminal new acquisitions can be seen on the ground floor of Museum Brandhorst, which address the book on the one hand as a reflective space and as a formal means, on the other hand as a place of political debate. Artists’ books are a comparatively young medium, playing a more prominent role only from the 1960s – especially in Conceptual Art, where they have attracted attention as artworks in their own right. Ed Ruscha’s early artist books, with which he established himself as one of the most important representatives of the medium, are a good example. His publications, from “Twentysix Gasoline Stations” (1963) to “Hard Light” (1978) play ironically with viewing and reading habits, deliberately evoke boredom where one might expect drama, or break the linearity of a narrative by means of a seemingly paradoxical conclusion.

**BETWEEN CONCEPT AND OBJECT**

Pictures dominate the artists’ publications gathered in the exhibition: photographs, collages, silhouettes, paintings. White Ruscha focuses on (clichéd) pictures of everyday American life, Lawrence Weiner and Paul Chan address political issues. With his “Schiff Ahoy – Tied to Apron Strings” collages (1989), Weiner shows the ideological content of photographic images. In “Book Set” (2010–2014) Chan collects his own publications, which are dedicated to socioeconomic and cultural contexts – from Marquis de Sade and Karl Marx to Silvio Berlusconi’s sexual escapades and the roots of the Wu-Tang Clan. Arthur Jafa and Kara Walker, on the other hand, direct their focus to Black cultural history. Walker’s “Freedom, a Fable” (1997) tells of a Black woman’s path from slavery to freedom, where she once again encounters oppression and violence. Jafa’s “Notebooks” (1980–2007) transfer these topics to the present: In his image collection he contrasts the White cultural canon with its precursors from African and African American cultural history, revealing just how systematically this history has been supplanted and overlooked.

**THE BOOK AS SUBJECT**

In addition to artists’ publications, a second exhibition room shows works by Ed Ruscha and Richard Artschwager that treat the book as a painterly motif or sculptural object. With a cool aesthetic, Richard Artschwager has used the stylistic idiom of everyday objects as the basis for his sculptures from industrial materials since the early 1960s. The eerie, expressionless works, which often resemble real pieces of furniture, represent both the depiction of an object and the object itself. In the case of “Encyclopedia Britannica” (1963), for example, the wood-grained Resopal exists both as a copy of the organic material and as a portrayal of real wooden planks, while we perceive its shelf-like form and the books therein as furniture, as sculpture, and as a picture, at one and the same time.

In Ed Ruscha’s book objects from the 1990s, the book becomes a substrate for painting. He paints the canvas-covered book with bleach and paint, thus creating an aesthetic and substantive tension between the original content, which remains hidden from us, and the new, often abstract cover. Ruscha’s monumental book paintings from 2011 and 2012 also refrain from revealing any content. Both the open, blank pages and their format aim to illustrate their symbolic emptiness. Is Ruscha making reference to the “expiry date” or the excess of information? That remains unclear. One thing is certain, however: his “aging” books prompt us to think about the relationship between reality and effigy, between that which is shown and its metaphorical meaning, between seeing and reading – and thus about fundamental questions in the field of painting.

**SPOT ON**

Under the title “Spot On”, recently acquired groups of works by different artists are displayed in two rooms on the ground floor and in the media rooms of the lower level. The presentations change over the course of the anniversary year and the accompanying exhibition “Forever Young – 10 Years of Museum Brandhorst” and beyond.
We didn’t imagine that things would turn out quite like this. For us, mediating between art and the public is a social act that takes place within the museum. The Covid-19 virus makes such a direct encounter more difficult. The museum was closed. We had to cancel our events until further notice. This affected numerous planned dates with our team, the curators, artists, freelance educators, and above all with you, our visitors.

Museum Brandhorst was already very active in the digital realm prior to its closure, via social media and with numerous pieces on its own website. Our art education team uses these channels to attract global interest and to present, discuss and interpret works from the museum. Suggestions are made for children and families, to encourage their own creativity. Under the title #MBCloseUp, artworks from the collection are examined in closer detail in short videos, and under #MBMeetTheTeam we introduce ourselves and our work.

Our art education work also uses the possibilities of live tours per Instagram in order to discuss one particular work at a time: This is filmed during the interview in the museum by one of the speakers, while the other interlocutor is in his or her home office, for example. Participants can ask questions and post statements live. We shall continue this special form of location-independent educational programming even after the museum reopens, actively inviting Instagram followers to events in Museum Brandhorst, the Pinakothek museums and the Schack Collection.

Against the backdrop of current events, many works open up completely new perspectives. On the following pages, we therefore present some of the collection’s pieces in more detail. They are accompanied by personal commentary and tips from our staff. The texts were written in home offices, and reflect the authors’ own experiences with this often-surreal time, their circumstances and the particular questions that arise as a result. External guests were also invited to contribute pieces on their favorite works.

We hope you enjoy reading it.

Alexandra Bircken, “New Model Army” (2016)

Bodies have always played a prominent role in art – also in modern and contemporary art. Our collection contains numerous works that refer in a very specific manner to the human body in the present. For example, the sculpture group from the series “New Model Army” by Alexandra Bircken (2016). We see four headless mannequins in rank and file: a kind of postapocalyptic army. The figures are dressed in biking gear, which gives them a martial, violent appearance. Yet upon closer inspection we can also see that they are also adorned with thin, fragile nylon material. The individual sections of clothing are sewn roughly together, creating a network of scars that cover the body. All of this points to the extremely hybrid condition of the body: to protection and exposure, but also to drill and vulnerability. The current situation has added a further dimension to the importance of our body and our skin as an external boundary, but also the manner in which we protect ourselves and our bodies, and prevent injury, using textiles.

We will be showing more work by the artist in the coming year and are currently preparing a large solo exhibition for next spring.

With his perfectly staged works, Damien Hirst generates a permanent shock experience. His pieces on display at Museum Brandhorst are conspicuously topical with regard to the omnipresent Covid-19 pandemic. “E.M.I.” and “Waste (Twice)” belong to one of Hirst’s groups of works that examine the possibilities and limitations of modern medicine. They tackle a blind confidence in the potential effect of medicine, and at the same time the panic-stricken fear of its failure, or of becoming caught in its narcotic fangs.

The pharmacist’s cabinet of “E.M.I.”, filled with empty medication packaging – quasi the embodiment of the placebo effect – addresses the now commonplace trust in pain-relieving and health-restoring pharmaceuticals. Within the art context, Hirst’s “cabinet of miracles” becomes an altar of applied science. With its sober objectivity and sterility and its minimalistic forms of advertising, it invites us to flee from existing realities: The real madness of everyday life is merely numbed.

With “Waste (Twice)”, the artist raises the subject of the medical waste of affluent western society in the form of medical equipment. The clinical utensils, which once promised a cure, have mutated into hazardous waste. This impression is contrasted with the remaining echoes of their original, aseptic purity. Hirst shows the compromised remnants of a mostly demystified society whose obsession with youth and cult of the body leave no room for the reality of illness, decline and death. In the process, the fields of medicine and pharmacy assume the role of a contemporary substitute religion that promises the hope of redemption. Or as Hirst puts it: “Well, I just can’t help thinking that science is the new religion for many people. It’s as simple, and as complicated, as that, really.”

The painkillers I procured against a severe case of flu while studying art in Newcastle upon Tyne, from the Poundland store, were garishly colorful and had an intensive effect. Quite the opposite of Damien Hirst’s arrangement of pharmaceutical packaging, which with its respectable objectivity promises us apparently certain healing. At present there is nothing we yearn for more than a drug that can beat the Corona virus. But Hirst’s hospital waste in glass display cases dims our hopes and instead shows us how an artist can make money in an overheated market from civilizational waste. The two display cases cause us to reflect on the relationship between money, medicine and art.

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On 22 June our conservators will start to dismantle Hirst’s “In This Terrible Moment We Are All Victims of an Environment That Refuses to Acknowledge the Soul” (2002). You can watch how 27,639 pills are removed individually from the large display case, cleaned and neatly stored away. The precision of the disassembly ensures that the work can be reconstructed again in the future in exactly the form intended by the artist.
Whenever I am overwhelmed by stimuli (in the museum), when my thoughts are spinning and my mind threatens to go empty, my brain switches over to imagination. I start to associate, to recall stories, to think beyond that which I perceive. I let go from the sudden changes of light and discern the battling current as an absurd dance. How strange can choreographies of movement be? Irritation and entertainment are combined.

Tropical birds of paradise are renowned for their courtship. Their elaborate mating dances have brought them fame in the human world. Here, courtship means more than everything else, it is essential to life, flirtatious, inevitable, indeed desirable – both romanticized and eroticized by the human eye. The male dancers are very attractive creatures. The contrast between their velvety black plumage and the reflective, intensively colored parts that reveal themselves when the long black side feathers spread out like a skirt during the courtship is seductive. The movement of the feathers maximizes the visual impact: the appeal. The ritual is conducted with great care, as transparently as possible – and yet we are tempted to discern a secretive ease in the dance.

Just as this practice is ambivalent to us, and therefore attractive, I often wish that we could greet each other in the form of a dance, that our movements were oriented towards the other person, while we fly past each other without touching, liberating ourselves from the image of a smart greeting per strong handshake, which usually means: meeting, greeting and already touching, so suddenly, automatically, simply encoded. A handshake is cold and invasive; a dance, on the other hand, can be so varied, maintaining distance, vibrating. The spectrum of movements is unlimited, independent of physical capability. There are no limits to the choreography, it is oriented on the desires of both persons – whether in the form of physical contact, a brief light touch, or in the motion of bodies that greet each other only via the vibrations in the air.
A feast for the eye and the palate: The cookbook by Andy Warhol and Suzie Frankfurt compiles recipes with a twinkle in the eye. With a currently enhanced passion for cooking, the colorful illustrations inspire me to record my own favorite recipes with a similar joy in design and irony. And thus to make some lemonade from lemons.

As an homage to Andy Warhol’s passion for boxing, we offered various training sessions by Boxwerk in Munich over Museum Brandhorst’s anniversary weekend, under the title "Workout with Warhol". In this issue we have put together an effective mixture of strength and stretching exercises to counteract some of that muscle tenseness that may have accumulated during lockdown. So come on: loosen up!
Since the early 1980s Louise Lawler has been photographing artworks as they are presented and preserved in museums. She is not only interested in the contexts of art, but also how these are imbued with historical events or political conditions. In "No Drones" she directs her camera lens at Gerhard Richter’s “Mustang Staffel” (1964), in which the artist painted – based on a photograph – a formation of Allied fighter jets over Germany during the Second World War. Lawler photographed the painting from a skewed angle, including its hanging apparatus. But her photograph is "adjusted to fit" – it is adapted to the size of each respective museum wall as vinyl wallpaper. This history of the terror is thus distorted and at the same time updated. Even the disco ball "Crazy", which hangs from the ceiling as part of the presentation, is given new meaning: Its lights, which dance wildly around the room, and the laser show of red and green dots no longer recall only all-night dancing, but also rapid machine-gun fire and remote targeting.

While it feels like our own disco ball, Earth, is spinning ever faster these days, and much appears to be vanished and displaced, conflict situations are concealed in more and more new costumes. The credo should really be updated to NO WARS, NO NUKES, NO DRONES, NO VIRUSES…

TIP
Louise Lawler has translated many of her photographs into line drawings, which can currently be downloaded free of charge from the MoMA website, printed out, and colored in.

In the 2000s, Jutta Koether subjected her art to strict, self-defined rules. Within one year she created 170 pictures in the same format of 50 x 40 cm. Using only the [non-] color black, she painted pale streaks, compositions of spots and circular forms, or bleak vortices on the canvas. Like with a diary, there could be only one painting per day. Museum Brandhorst presents the entire series of “Fresh Aufhebung” in a large-scale installation. Spread closely together across the walls, they are almost overpowering in their variety and diversity. Some of the pictures seem veritably terse in their gestures, while others are incredibly condensed. From the restriction of the world, the uniform boxes that frame our lives, and from the limitation to one single color, Koether develops expression, emotions and capacities for action. She shows that every exception proves the rule, and every rule the exception.

Installation view from the exhibition “Forever Young – 10 Years Museum Brandhorst” (2019/2020)

In the essay from p. 3, Jacob Proctor tells of the Rhineland painting scene of the 1980s, which was dominated by the self-projection of wild, loud-mouthed men. In hindsight, this photograph by Hans-Jörg Mayer (1991) from the Brandhorst Collection shows incisively how female artists like Jutta Koether, Charline von Heyl, Michaela Eichwald and Cosima von Bonin were already starting to seize their place in the history of painting, despite the hype surrounding their male colleagues.

Restricting herself voluntarily to black acrylic paint and an unchanging format, Jutta Koether painted 170 pictures, one per day, while listening to punk rock. Despite, or perhaps precisely because of this technical limitation, the resulting pictures are extremely expressive, both individually and as a complete work. A deliberate limitation can therefore create the space for something new. It becomes a structure, a productivity, and – with attentive observation – it can create possibilities. Perhaps such a manner of working motivates us, especially in a monotonous time of quarantine, to capture moods and to notice openly and impartially what is happening.

Carla Nagel
Freelance illustrator and graphic designer, including of our creative booklet that accompanies the exhibition “Forever Young” (2019/2020)
Mark Leckey’s video work “Fiorucci Made Me Hardcore (20 Year Anniversary Remaster)” (1999–2019) from 1999 to 2019 is part of the Brandhorst Collection. Based on “found footage”, Leckey takes a look at the development of one of the most vibrant and differentiated music cultures ever: dance music in the UK. His research journey goes from the 1960s to the beginning of the 1990s: from Northern Soul to UK hardcore techno. You can now also delve into the wild world of UK club culture from the comfort of your own home, based on tracks that were important for each respective music scene. Hope you enjoy listening!

The scene developed at the end of the 1960s in the industrial towns of northern England. Working class kids danced to rare soul records from the USA. Important clubs included the Wigan Casino and the Blackpool Mecca.

The UK disco scene in the 1970s was by no means as large as that of the USA, but it did exist. Important clubs included Bang, The Embassy and Heaven, all of which were in London. Some of the important bands are listed on the left.

When house music came to London from Chicago at the end of the 1980s, things got wild: tens of thousands partied at outdoor raves, and thousands in clubs such as Shoom in London and the Haçienda in Manchester.

The hardcore scene developed in parallel with the more cheerful acid house. The beats were faster and fractured. Important clubs included London’s Labyrinth, where The Prodigy had their first appearance, and The Eclipse in Coventry.

The sounds of the early 1990s exert an influence on UK club music to this day. Jamie XX, for example, made direct reference to it and, in the track listed on the left, used samples from the “Fiorucci Made Me Hardcore” soundtrack, which Mark Leckey released as an LP in 2012.
David LaChapelle is known for his opulently staged photographs of stars and supermodels. He owed the start of his brilliant career as a celebrity photographer to Andy Warhol, who awarded him his first contracts for “Interview” magazine in the early 1980s. The series “Recollections in America” is in every way untypical of LaChapelle’s work. The photos resemble party snapshots; the persons shown do not so much play a role as fall out of their role: an elderly lady who pukes in public, an apparently drunken man filling Kahlúa into a baby’s bottle. The longer we look at the photos, the more inconsistencies we notice. Who on earth would place a hand grenade on a sideboard, and why does the same guy appear so often? Photo albums of the 1970s and 1980s form the basis for this series. LaChapelle pasted elements like the hand grenade digitally into the photos. These collages reveal a thought-provoking image of suburban life in the United States – the dark downside of the “American dream.”

Such (apparently) excessive party photos with friends and family, with close physical contact, are not possible at present. We have to rethink our approach, and search for other photo subjects: @tussenkunsten-quarantaine (translation: between art and quarantine) is the Instagram account of two young Dutch women, who post simulated artworks by users from all over the world. Perhaps someone might make an attempt at David LaChapelle’s series?
Late work: the expression alone evokes a certain gravity. One cannot help but think of last wills and legacies. The 19th century was obsessed with the idea of late work as an independent category. There was a belief that – faced with imminent death – artists liberated themselves from all fashions and conventions, and focused solely on the absolute. The term faded with the onset of modernity. Now all interest was firmly directed towards early work, with its audacious frictions. Yet that is not to say that late works became irrelevant – quite the contrary. Rather, they became reflective: in them, artists explicitly confront the expectations placed on a late work.

Museum Brandhorst has some especially important examples in its collection. Such as Andy Warhol’s “Last Supper” from 1986: countless reproductions of Leonardo da Vinci’s famous Jesus. It endows the last supper, as an assignment to his disciples to disseminate his teachings, with a very concrete meaning. Ed Ruscha’s “Really Old” from 2016 should be taken with a very large pinch of salt. I regard the tapered shape as a symbol of driving a wedge into the current dynamics of the art world, where “BRAND NEW” is still only a minor issue. The wide part at the top could be interpreted as the replete, complacent position of members of the establishment, the price of which however is the fact that they are “REALLY OLD”.

Perhaps the most significant late work in the collection is by Cy Twombly: his famous rose paintings from 2008. Twombly also addressed the question of how the ageing body of the artist behaves in front of the canvas. He painted using a paintbrush attached to a broomstick, which inevitably conjures up an association with a prothetic or crutch. At the same time, however, the artist returns to something akin to the ontogenetic origin of painting: every child initially paints loops. Twombly’s roses are reminiscent of these. In the rose he also chose an image that could hardly be more symbolically loaded. From the rose that represents love, the Mother of God, and secrecy, to the withering rose that loses its blossoms. The rose encompasses the entire cultural history of the Western world. Above all, however, the rose stands for poetry and thus the very art form that Twombly repeatedly integrated into his paintings. This all comes together in his rose pictures. Legacy is not too big a word to describe them. In one of the pictures, Twombly quotes a slightly adapted version of the epitaph on the grave of the poet Rainer Maria Rilke, who died in 1926: Rose, oh pure contradiction, joy, of being No-one’s sleep under so many petals. [‘Rose, oh reiner Widerspruch, Lust, / Niemandes Schlaf zu sein unter soviel Blütenblättern.’]

In the final years of his life, Twombly created an impressive body of late work, reminiscent of the painterly richness of Titian, William Turner and Claude Monet at the end of their careers. The six large-format rose paintings conceived by Twombly specifically for the central room on the upper level on the occasion of the opening of Museum Brandhorst in May 2009 form part of that late work. He chose a particular poem for each of the four-part paintings,altering them in places in his own manner. Twombly limited himself to one form in presenting his roses, starting with the ‘primeval form’ of the spot of color. From here he traced an arc to his nervous-clumsy lines, reminiscent of children’s drawings, now monumentalized at an advanced age. The spots, lines and dripping paints transcend themselves and transform into imaginative events. The monumental roses take on different meanings, appearing as a symbol of poetic beauty, while also symbolizing pain or physical lust.

Cy Twombly, “Untitled (Roses)” (2008)

Three young artists occupied themselves intensively with the Brandhorst Collection and created commentaries for the exhibition “Forever Young” in the form of (dis)orientation maps that can be picked up in the galleries. One year has passed since then; the museum was forced to close for several weeks, which meant that the everyday (working) life of the artists, along with their artistic perspectives, also changed. High time to check back in with them.

Maximiliane Baumgartner

In response to a query for a comment from the Studio-Off, I chose this study of mine, since it also subscribes to triangular formations, but from my painterly perspective.

For four years now this form and this pattern has wandered though my public outdoor murals, marking my thoughts and actions in the context of a feminist-artistic pedagogy. Thus they also form a partial element of my mural “Schäfflers Grid”, which was installed on the architecture of the Fahrender Raum in Munich from 2017 to 2019.
I took over as manager of the Walther König Bookshop in Haus der Kunst only at the beginning of March, now I am spending a lot of time in bed. The museums are closed, as are the bookshops. Sales continue online, and I am at home, reading a lot. I have just finished “Vermessene Zeit: Der Wecker, der Knast und ich” by Ingrid Strobl (Fig. 1). I am still right in the middle of “Lebenserinnerungen der Komödiantin Karoline Schulze-Kummerfeld” (Fig. 2). With short diary entries and letters, the book, edited by Inge Buck, is one of the few testimonies from the world of the traveling theaters of the 18th century. When I look up from my reading, another comic figure appears: Barbarina from Mozart’s Marriage of Figaro, at the center of the painting by Laura Ziegler [Fig. 3], which hangs in my bedroom, on the wall facing the foot of my bed. Integrated into it is the orientation plan for Cy Twombly’s oeuvre, which I designed for Museum Brandhorst and which nobody can currently access – all of the museums are closed. I am looking forward to seeing people again soon in the bookshop and the museum. I don’t really feel like making art at the moment – I prefer doing the grocery shopping for neighbors, sometimes there’s even a piece of cake in it for me.
Monika Bayer-Wermuth: Last year Museum Brandhorst celebrated its 10th anniversary. For us it was an occasion to showcase the museum’s collection – with a special focus on recent acquisitions – for a whole year in all rooms of the museum. We decided to use this period to not only think about the collection but also its future.

In a way your painting Really Old became our plan to navigate the year. Brand New, Half-Way and Really Old: Where do we stand? That question accompanied us in many conversations. What I like about that painting is that its form expands from bottom to top; it is narrow where it says “brand new” and wide where it says “really old”. Somehow it is a promise that you don’t stop growing. But maybe I am overinterpreting here. Can you tell us a little bit about this work e.g. about the shape of its canvas, the font and the colors?

Ed Ruscha: “Really Old” is a picture from a group of paintings that I called “Extremes and in-betweens”. I have always resisted any attraction to the idea of shaped canvases. I was never inspired by art made this way, but the forward motion of time opened up the idea of the megaphonic shape to create this statement and there you go, a shaped canvas! The font is like a reliable old friend that comes from a world devoid of style. It tells a story in a neutral way. The background: Raw Umber mixed with Plus White – this turned out as a complete and welcome surprise because it became a color that forgot it was a color – it approximated the sound of a neutral room tone and I was satisfied with its emptiness.

MBW: Words as images and the combination of words and images play a key role in your work. As a visual artist what are the qualities of words that made you interested in them?

ER: Anything on a printed piece of paper had a nourishing value to me. As I would paint a picture of the letter “S”, let’s say, I would not forget that this letter was really invented and created by not me but someone earlier than myself. This always amused me as I was only delineating someone else’s invention.

MBW: Sometimes you use whole phrases and quotes that you set against an image background. Thus neither can the words be regarded purely as text nor the image purely as visual, they become an inseparable couple where the identity of each part depends on and influences its counterpart. At what point in your process do you decide that a word and an image go together?

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Any Art is an Odd Practice

Ed Ruscha in conversation with Monika Bayer-Wermuth
ER: This is where blind faith and impulse come together to require me to not think too much about what I’m doing – I only use forward motion.

MBW: Other times it is just a single word that you set against a monochrome background. They are short and simple words like “Smash”, “Boss” or “Eat”. Everyone can relate to these words in one way or another, so the selection of words feels quite democratic. Where do these words come from and what is it about them that attracts you?

ER: Early on, I responded to words that suggested noise or impact such as monosyllabic words from the comics. Words as cartoons. Words lifted from somebody’s fantasies.

MBW: Another aspect is that the sound of the word becomes part of the work. To me I inevitably have the word in my mind constantly while standing in front of these paintings. They have power but they are also very open for projections of meaning – in that sense they are pretty abstract. Is this something you would agree with?

ER: Since all calligraphy could be seen as abstract, these crazy shapes all have their own character. Then they all are lined up in such a way as to actually mean something. You could say it is a very simple miracle.

MBW: Our painting Not Only Securing the Last Letter But Damaging It as Well (Boss) from 1964 incorporates two screw clamps. It is not certain whether they are trying to undo the “s” from the canvas or fix it. The letter becomes physical, it appears to be made of a very soft fabric or a glossy film. It loses its flatness and becomes illusionistic. To me it also feels like a tongue-in-cheek way to state that this isn’t writing but painting. Is this something you had in mind? Can you tell us a little bit about this way of dealing with letters?

ER: With this painting I recall searching for an alternative to a static picture. I was 26 years old when this was done and not old enough to judge my level of maturity. I may have felt that I needed the screw clamps to “aggravate” the theme.

MBW: Another work prominently featured in our current show is Psycho Spaghetti Western #14 (2013-14). It introduces a completely different scene – quite a surreal one: an abandoned landscape of discarded objects. And it also refers to cinema. Both the trash as well as the landscape look like perfectly, albeit unnaturally lit protagonists of a movie. The title is quite charged with the history of cinema as well. Can you tell us a little bit about the “Psycho Spaghetti Western” series?

ER: This series was like picking ripe fruit off a tree except the subjects were discards off the highway. The objects are meant to be both heroic and tragic at the same time.

--- Ed Ruscha

ED RUSCHA

Ed Ruscha, “Psycho Spaghetti Western #14” (2013/2014)
Finally, any art is an odd practice that evades being explained or clarified. It lies in the realm of the ambiguous. Maybe that is where it belongs.

— Ed Ruscha
Following Andy Warhol’s example, a new education space is being created at Museum Brandhorst. In future – just like in Warhol’s Factory – the focus here will be placed on experimental, interdisciplinary artistic practice.

Almost 60 years have passed since Andy Warhol founded his iconic studio in New York. For Warhol, “The Factory” was not only a creative space in itself; it also described his progressive handling of artistic processes. Now, closely oriented on the museum’s own collection of more than 120 works by Warhol, a new art education space called “The Factory” is being created at Museum Brandhorst, representing a new, interdisciplinary, experimental production space. This space aims to create a link between the artworks that are exhibited in the collection, and their places of production – the studios and ateliers of the artists. “The Factory” thus brings an important aspect of contemporary art – that of its production – directly into the museum.

In the spirit of one of the most famous production sites of the 20th century for screen prints, artists’ books, underground film and much more, “The Factory” at Museum Brandhorst will be equipped with a multifaceted “maker space” program. Various different methods, from painting, printing, and sewing techniques to digital media in creative formats, can be taught and experienced both practically and theoretically. Tailored programs will be developed by means of collaborations – including with the Catholic University of Eichstätt-Ingolstadt, the University of Television and Film Munich and the Museumspädagogisches Zentrum – but also in direct cooperation with artists and experts from other creative professions. The individual program modules will integrate inclusive and cross-generational strategies for examining the many facets of contemporary art production.

The newly conceived space will allow visitors to become creative in an environment with a concept borrowed from the idea of an artist’s studio. Creating one’s own art enables one to explore the complexity and variety with which creative ideas can be implemented. At the same time there is an opportunity to become aware of the processes of one’s own decision-making. The objective of

Totally cool, a real workshop, even for us kids!

— Lukas, 9 years

A great statement to all children, young people and adults – a Factory for all!

— Verena von Essen and Susanne Theil, Museumspädagogisches Zentrum
"The Factory", therefore, is not only to be a workshop for artistic experimentation, but also a competence center for inclusive multimedia art education.

"While taking stock of our collection prior to the tenth anniversary, the need for such a space became clearer than ever. We regard it as one of our key missions to provide as many people as possible with an open and wide-ranging access to the museum, enabling them to engage with our artworks and exhibitions. The main focus is on experimenting with various different techniques of creative design, and on an active way of looking that challenges traditional viewing habits. We are convinced that this enriches our own expressiveness and freedom of thought," say the two project managers, Monika Bayer-Wermuth and Kirsten Starz. And furthermore: "To date there has not been any room at Museum Brandhorst that allows this. In recent years, this gap has been filled temporarily by various interventions, with very gratifying results, which underlined the demand for such a space. Now, as we embark on our second decade, a space will be created that invites people to a barrier-free and open exchange of views and experiences by means of its amenities, program and location in the freely accessible area of the museum. Warhol’s Factory serves as an inspiring fixed star for this vision."

The service provided by ‘The Factory’ aims to invite people of all generations to explore and give free rein to their own creativity. The space is conceived to also explicitly attract children and young people and to communicate in a playful manner that contemporary art has something to do with themselves and their own everyday reality. Whether painting, drawing, crafting, sewing, expressing oneself creatively with digital media, daring to carry out printing experiments at the screen printing station, learning how to use a 3D printer or mixing materials ranging from plastic film to canvas to nylon pantyhose – there are no artistic limitations in ‘The Factory’.

“The Factory” is a space, and at the same time represents a substantive educational concept that is enhanced by exchanges with numerous cooperating institutions and individuals in artistic professions, as well as protagonists of exemplary art education work. The architecture studio Sauerbruch Hutton will mold these ideas into their spatial form. Thanks to the generous support of the Bünemann Foundation, the space will become reality in the coming year. Our employees – both internal and external – and the various existing and planned cooperations will inject ‘The Factory’ with life.

We are already looking forward to welcoming you there in 2021. —

—

Prof. Dr. Rainer Wenrich
Catholic University of Eichstatt-Ingolstadt

"Education in an art museum is a dynamic process. It needs space, and is based on forward-looking concepts for acquiring the skills to read and understand pictures. To this end, the planned Factory at Museum Brandhorst will create an exemplary action space for sustainable art education in the art museum of the 21st century."

Prof. Dr. Rainer Wenrich
Catholic University of Eichstatt-Ingolstadt
Mindmap for a New Art Education Space at Museum Brandhorst

- Inclusive Encounters
- Being Inspired
- Working together
- Exchanging Social Structures
- Questioning
- Reflecting
- Examining Artistic Strategies
- Critical Perception
- Breakout of the Daily Grind
- Discussion
- Trying things out without a set
- Experimental Process
- Finding in Inventing
- Creative Space
- Graphic Design
- Andy Warhol’s Factory
- Filming
- Advertising
- Digital Media
- Studio
- Recognizing Conflicts
- New References
- Conceiving the Future
- Creating
- Friction
- Everyday Realities
- Challenging
- Authorship
- Learning from your own experiences
- Complementary Center
- Competence Center
- SPA Conceptary
- Finding a taste of art production
- Workroom
- Laboratory
- A Wide Range of Techniques
- Painting
- Screen Printing
- Design
- Textile
- Cooperation with other cultural institutions
- Meeting Point
Lucy McKenzie speaks with curator Jacob Proctor about her upcoming survey exhibition at Museum Brandhorst and the constructive desire to be in the skin of something or someone that you find exciting.
Jacob Proctor: Lucy, obviously you have done a plentitude of museum shows over the years. But those shows have always been about presenting new bodies of work. How has it been to think about this show, which really goes back to the very beginning in a more systematic way?

Lucy McKenzie: Well firstly, whenever I did those projects, they were made in a complete fever dream of excitement, a kind of frothy frenzy of hysteria. And so it is strange to do a show which doesn’t have that kind of dimension. But I am very happy to look at everything with a little bit of distance and just think about what you can read in the work today that I couldn’t read at the time, because certain themes have emerged and certain things have fallen away. It is a really enjoyable experience to think about what it is that actually connects all these things. What connects Tintin with the Olympic Games with Art Nouveau and trompe l’oeil? That is a real puzzle, but it is my puzzle and it feels great to have the chance to really piece all these things together and try to solve it.

JP: In general, mixing things up and changing perspective has always been very important to you. You seem to enjoy working collaboratively, exploring new professional areas and genres. In the past twenty years, you have run a gallery, a bar, and a record label; you went back to school to study decorative painting; you have at various points immersed yourself in the genres of crime stories, comics, and architectural drawing. Also, 13 years ago, you started Atelier E.B. with Beca Lipscombe, presenting your first collection in 2011 and periodically ever since. While pursuing all these collaborative projects successfully, you never became a fashion designer, a crime author, or a music producer per se. It rather feels like you enjoyed the analysis of or confrontation with different aesthetic professions, as it enabled you to explore a kind of productive friction between those different systems. How would you say that these forays into other fields and collaborative practices have changed your relationship to your solo practice?

LMK: On the one hand, it has thrown everything into sharp relief, both the positives and the negatives. A more collaborative and sharing practice has always been important to me as a counterbalance to the more studio-intensive things that I create on my own. It can be super lonely just making these incredibly detailed paintings. So I have always needed that balance of also doing things that have a different set of criteria, where you are not just relying on your own set of ethics or style. And I would say working closely and productively with someone from a different discipline – as is the case with Beca and me – is a brilliant experience. Sometimes it can be complicated collaborating with another fine artist, but with design, there is just so much more flexibility and space for each person to come to the fore at different times. What connects crime fiction and, say, fashion, is the structural limitations that shape those creative forms – limitations that fine art does not have. Just as being an Erasmus exchange student to Karlsruhe in 1997 helped me see the particularities of my own cultural background, working in these other ‘genres’ helps me articulate exactly what
LMK: Yeah, it’s wet rather than dry. You know, we’re not academics, but we certainly do our best to be as rigorous as we can to take our research to a certain level. And then we take what we have and we apply that to objects and exhibitions. And so, in turn, those things reflect back on the research material, and other things come from that which are much more subjective and weird. We’re constantly going between these three different fields, and letting research, design and art interact and enrich each other — or cancel each other out.

JP: Within the forthcoming catalog accompanying the exhibition at the Brandhorst, Mason Leaver-Yap titles their essay about your artistic practice “In Search of a Good Host”. And for me that makes a very good point about what I would like to call the ‘anachronism’ that is visible in your practice of looking back. Because essentially, one of the things that you’ve done over the last 20 years has been to weave together an alternative history of painting, which does not replace the trajectory of modernism but exists alongside it. What I feel you’ve done — very much in the realm of fine art — is to have articulated a kind of alternative history where the applied arts, graphic design, certain artisanal and collaborative practices, all of which were marginalized in the official narrative of modernism, really take center stage. I wonder to what extent was that a conscious decision? Or did it just develop that way and is only so visible in hindsight?

LMK: That’s music to my ears. I’ve been asked so often: why do you only work with this kind of older material. I can say is, for example, when you go to Venice, you’re looking at a city that is made of hundreds of years of different cultures. It’s a complete patchwork of periods and ideas. But it reads harmoniously because it is beautiful. There’s no point in time where everything is just contemporary. If you were in a situation that was purely contemporary, you would suffocate.

I’ve always been interested in art as a practice that engages with a wider idea of cultural production. The way that fine art painting is naturally connected to commercial or decorative painting, various kinds of illustration, fashion drawing, architectural drawing, interior design — they’re all connected. It’s not about mining cultural material and transforming it into an artwork, but somehow just letting these things slide together. And then in the end you’ve added yourself to it, put your soul into it as well.

Lots of other things come into play that blur the border between producer and consumer. For example, when you have an interest in something like architecture or design, and that kind of enthusiasm translates into making something yourself, almost as an act of fandom. For me, I would say this comes from being introduced to art, as a young person, primarily through pop and music culture. In the way that the smart music of the late seventies and early eighties drew on certain art movements, like the futurists or the surrealists or the Russian avant-garde, so seemed like an extension of, or naturally connected to, this kind of subculture.

Coming from this context, I learned early on that
high and low are concepts that it’s easier to just throw out, to ignore the dichotomy in the first place – and it gives credit, focus and respect to the much-maligned middle ground! Rather than repeating a system which is so flawed, maybe the most productive thing you can do is just start believing that the things that you’re preoccupied with have value. It’s not about trying to prove to anyone else that they are important, you just know that they are. You simply state it rather than asking permission to put certain things together. 

JP: Your work involves a lot of sources that exist in the world already, but it’s not appropriation in the classical sense of 1980s appropriation art. It feels to me quite different, and I wonder how you feel about that term “appropriation” and whether you actually see it as being useful for thinking about your work. Or whether there’s a better way to think about your relationship to existing cultural production.

LMK: Well, that’s definitely something I look forward to really diving into with the show, because it’s not a question that has really needed to be answered until we came to do this. Within my practice, I don’t have anything like an “original” in the sense that if you asked me to just do a painting from my imagination, I would have no idea what to do. Everything I make is in response to something else. It’s always driven by a desire to understand, almost like an act of veneration; it’s something slightly perverse – caressing someone’s cheek with your paintbrush by painting in a similar style. It’s pure pleasure to be in the skin of something or someone that you find exciting.

Even though everything can seem so stiff in my work, it’s all driven by very exciting and excited emotions to engage. Sometimes I can almost force myself to dream about certain things. If I go to a certain place and then read about it, I can engineer my dreams to put me somewhere. And making paintings is a bit the same. You get to be in your head in this place where you want to be, whether it’s the Soviet Union in the 1930s or Expo 58 in Brussels. You can indulge yourself in this genuine desire which is maybe unexplainable. You then produce something else. You become part of a cultural phenomenon.
Museum Brandhorst is now once again open regularly from Tuesday to Sunday from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. and on Thursdays from 10 a.m. to 8 p.m. The opening times of the bookshop and café may vary depending on the current situation.

To ensure that minimum distances can be observed, for the foreseeable future only 130 persons can be present in the building at any one time. Unfortunately, tours and group visits are not possible. Furthermore, for reasons of hygiene no audio guides, sample catalog copies or pens for the creative booklet can be issued. Our audio guide will soon be made available to use with your own headphones. As the situation changes so will our regulations. You can find updated information on our website and in the museum.

For the sake of our mutual protection, please do not visit the museum if you feel ill, or if you have had contact in the last 14 days with any person who has contracted Covid-19.

Please show consideration to others and observe the rules concerning hygiene and physical distancing.

Please note that it is compulsory to wear a mask in the museum.

Please maintain a minimum distance of 1.5 meters to other persons.

Please avoid forming groups.

Please keep to the guided paths through the museum.

Please observe the regulations on the maximum number of persons admitted per room.

**Visiting the Museum**

**THE EXHIBITION IS SUPPORTED BY**

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FOREVER YOUNG
10 Years Museum Brandhorst
Anniversary Exhibition
24 May 2019 to 19 July 2020

Museum Brandhorst
Theresienstrasse 35a
80333 Munich

Opening hours
Daily 10 a.m.–6 p.m., except Monday
Thursday 10 a.m.–8 p.m

Admission € 7
Concessions € 5
Sunday € 1

#MBForeverYoung

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