

OPEN END

11 June – 27 September 2026

With Stephan Dilleuth,
Fid. Fischer,
Calla Henkel & Max Pitegoff

OPEN END explores the conditions of artistic self-organization, its scope for action, and its long-term continuity. Bringing together the VHS video archive of Friesenwall 120 (1990–1994), presented by Stephan Dilleuth, and THEATER, a film by Calla Henkel and Max Pitegoff, the exhibition juxtaposes two documentary approaches in which, even without a physical venue, the archive and the narrative themselves become ongoing and evolving practices.

Over time, the VHS video archive of Friesenwall 120 accumulated in the back room of the Cologne-based art space, developing into an extensive collection and a model of a counter-public sphere: approximately 800 VHS tapes containing exhibition documentation, artists' films, activist material, and television excerpts. Throughout OPEN END, the archive will be collectively viewed, activated, and digitized. The five-part film THEATER by Calla Henkel and Max Pitegoff is set at New Theater Hollywood, a small theater they have operated in Los Angeles since 2024. Drawing on documentary footage

from actual rehearsals, the narrative tells the story of the fictional theater owner Kennedy and her longing for community.

Fid. Fischer's site-specific mural *The Resilient Residency*, together with sofas from youth clubs in Saxony, a coffee machine and a photocopier, creates a setting in which IDEAL becomes a salon during the summer months, hosting an ongoing program of network meetings, discussions, film screenings, and workshops. The program explores possibilities for self-organization, resilience, and structures and spaces for action based on solidarity, against the backdrop of intensifying (cultural) political shifts and growing pressure on art venues. Collectives currently without a permanent space are also invited to activate this setting together with us through jam sessions, readings, and workshops. Further information about the program will be announced in due course via our newsletter, as well as on our website and Instagram.

OPEN. END is a project by Clara Hofmann and Gregor Peschko with support from Adrian Lück. Graphic design by Cristina Zickert.

THEATER

Calla Henkel & Max Pitegoff

Film in 5 episodes

2024–2025

Calla Henkel and Max Pitegoff's 5-part film *THEATER* is set and shot at New Theater Hollywood in Los Angeles, the theater space the two artists have been operating since January 2024. Henkel and Pitegoff's film practice weaves together the lived reality of the spaces they run with fictional narratives, living somewhere between photography, theater, documentation, and long-form poetry. Shot on 16mm film, *THEATER* is narrated by subtitled text and scored by musician MK Velsorf.

THEATER uses footage shot during rehearsals of productions staged at New Theater Hollywood to construct a narrative around a character named Kennedy, played by filmmaker Leilah Weinraub, who buys a fifty-seat theater after a car accident and subsequent cash settlement. Soon after, Kennedy moves into the theater and attempts to build an ensemble. In her desire for community, she faces the cult-like power it takes to keep a group together, and the unyielding hope of transformation through fame—all haunted by strikes, ghosts, exploitation, love, and the maddening reality of living inside of other people's ambitions.

The Friesenwall Video Archive

Stephan Dillelmoth

800 VHS tapes, monitor, archive index
1990–1994

The VHS video archive of the Friesenwall 120 art space, comprising 800 videotapes, will be reviewed and selectively digitized by the IDEAL team and visitors throughout the duration of the exhibition. At film and bar nights announced on short notice, we will screen curated selections from this collection and discuss the archive's relevance and significance today.

Friesenwall 120 was an art space in Cologne founded by Stephan Dillelmoth in 1990. Until 1994, the small storefront with a display window, front room, and back room served as a key hub for the art scene of the time.

Working in shifting constellations with artists including Josef Strau, Nils Norman, Kiron Khosla, and Merlin Carpenter, they experimented with the possibilities of curating and with the exhibition space itself. In contrast to the object-centered art production of the time, the space functioned as an archive, an exhibition hall, and an extended living room, drawing its vitality from its network and mutual exchange. The exhibition itself became an explicit artistic medium, and moving beyond a traditional presentation of art objects, the exhibitions typically drew upon an open pool of materials, media, found objects, and social and political contexts. They thrived on the attempt to destabilize categories such as "work" and "authorship." As a blueprint for an artistic practice in opposition to, alongside, and parallel to the art market and institutional contexts, the project stood for a model of artistic self-organization that enabled an independent mode of artistic practice and developed over the course of the 1990s into a network of spaces, fanzines, and temporary activities.

With exhibitions featuring groups such as „Paper Tiger Television“ and its own growing VHS video archive, FW120 served not only as a venue for experimental exhibitions but also as a model for an alternative public sphere. What began with the exhibition Old News and an archive of the Munich video group BOA grew over the years into a broad network and an extensive VHS collection in the back room of FW120, which accompanied and documented the group's own vision and practice within the space. Camcorder exhibition documentations appear alongside mainstream blockbusters and art films, TV recordings, and activist materials. The collection's index speaks for itself, reflecting the era and the position of FW120 as well as its artistic and political context.

Sofas

In the exhibition space, three sofas provide a setting for events and gatherings during the exhibition. Through the AGJF (Arbeitsgemeinschaft Jugendfreizeitstätten Sachsen e.V.), the sofas were rented for the duration of the exhibition by three youth clubs in rural Saxony: the Treibhaus Döbeln, the Kulturwerkstatt Geithain, and the Jugendklub Kirchberg. For us, the sofas are not merely pieces of furniture, but are also associated with a specific feeling and symbolic value. They represent a young generation's cultural freedom, social participation, and personal agency, as well as their perspective. At the same time, the rented sofas serve as a gesture of solidarity with these spaces and youth clubs, which are under increasing pressure in the current cultural policy debate due to budget cuts and right-wing influence.

The Resilience Residency

Fid. Fischer

Site-specific mural, graphite powder

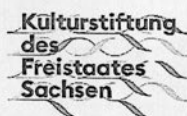
2026

The woodlice hang out at Café Chaos. They've developed a toughness. Yet it was they who left the sea; it's their own fault. Why on earth did these creatures want to come ashore with their gills and their crab-like tails? At least that way they wouldn't have ended up in exclusive gourmet restaurants, cooked alive in their shells. Instead, they stayed amongst themselves, hidden in the dark, damp cellar. Nobody there takes any interest in them. Except when the exterminators say: Arrested for causing disgust.

Resistance no longer takes place in the outside world; it has reached the inside. Yet the direction of the pressure is crucial. A constant strain that shapes robustness. The strength that holds firm against it, without eliminating the tension. It remains unclear whether this tenacity is directed against everything that is not the self. The friction etches itself into the small, armoured body. To become harder, it moults more than ten times (sexual maturity must wait). Its own excretions are repeatedly reabsorbed and utilised. Is resilience, then, the greatest possible independence from one's own environment? Shrimping around as a psychological benefit. The roly-poly toy that remains constantly upright and hidden. Please extend your feelers. Wiggle against the hard and the soft. Whilst Grandad was not part of the resistance, the woodlice and their bodies have been for a long time.

Fid. Fischer

Funded by



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