

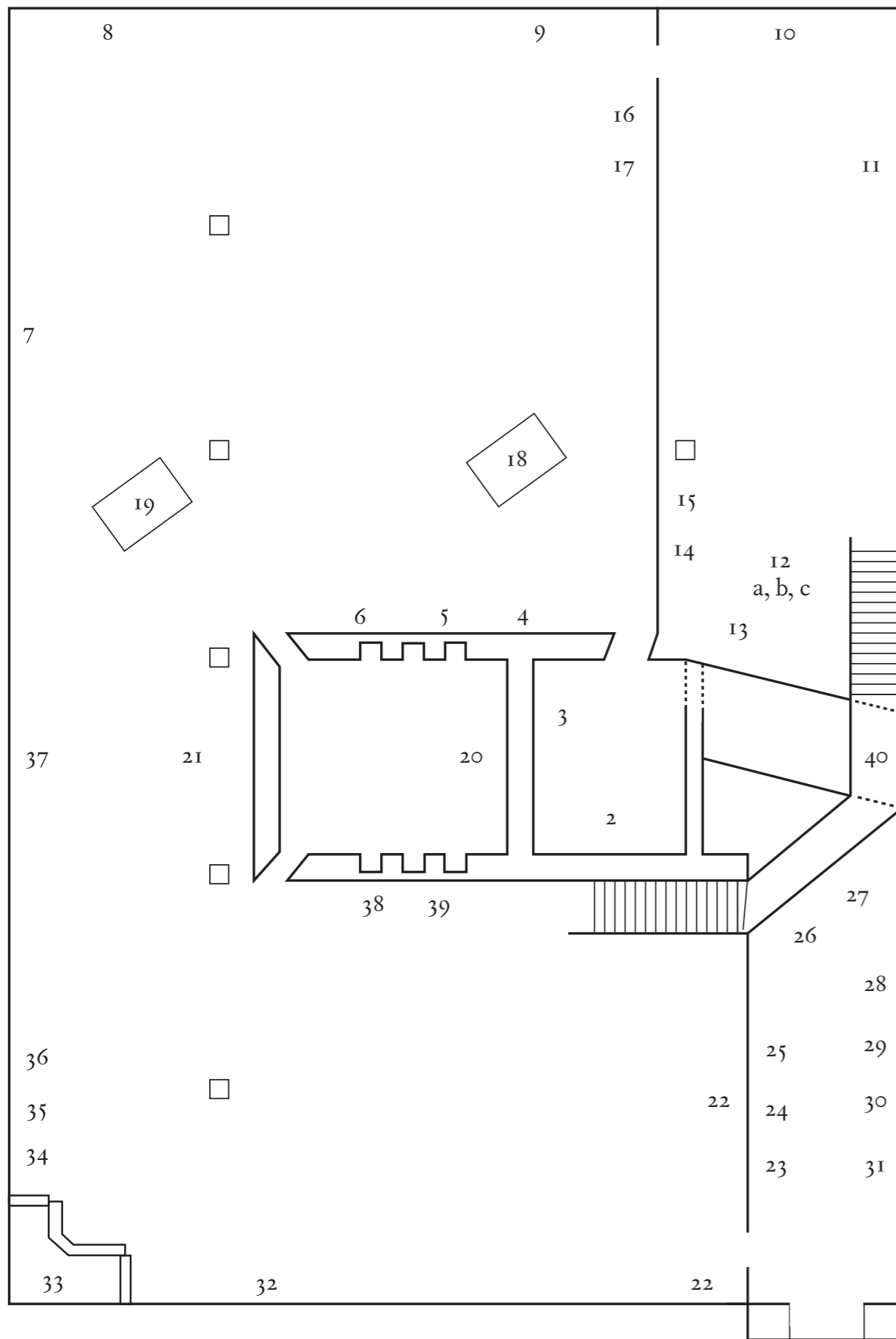
Ada Frände, James T. Hong, Julia Heyward, Udo Lefn
 11 May
 Rachel Reupke, Bernard Szajner, Camilla Wills
 28 July
It is light Blalla W. Hallmann

Speaking with Dr Eva Zeltner, the custodian and carer of Blalla W. Hallmann's estate, we reflected on the inner necessity and energy of this body of work. At times, she also cared for Blalla: the intensity was occasionally difficult to reconcile or contain with the demands of what it means to function, to be functional. Each painting holds everything and loops back on itself – a circular trap, a circular joke. He is an important anchor in this show: the will and desperation of this prolific total work, collapsing into life, into art and vice versa. It is unhinged history painting – too much – and, as all effective history painting, a science-fiction of the present.

As a way of introduction, Zeltner shared her first memory: the light of a bunker opening. The light is blinding. The memory has been told many times, its original borders fussy. "We are responsible for the child but we don't know how it feels about us. Half the story is missing."

Reflecting on it, she thinks this is why she might have connected with Blalla's work in the first place, that sense of light, a life force, an intensity, and a certain stubborn belief in the crack. This is a belief, or hope, that sometimes shines through from beneath what is shown.

With special thanks to Andreas Hölscher. With much gratitude to Dr Eva Zeltner and Patrick Ebensperger.



It is light

Bonner Kunstverein
 11 May – 28 July 2024
 Curated by Fatima Hellberg

It is light is a two-part
 exhibition realised between
 Bonner Kunstverein
 and Haus Mödrath
 – Räume für Kunst

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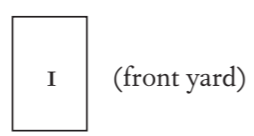
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Bonner Kunstverein e.V.
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 53119 Bonn
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Opening hours
 Tuesday–Sunday, 12–6pm

With special thanks to and
 with the generous support of
 Andreas Hölscher

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 the team and Board of Bonner
 Kunstverein and to the host
 of people who have been
 part of making this happen,
 including: Dr Eva Zeltner,
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Bonner Kunstverein



childhood, he had heard of the stories of his uncle who had been sent to Auschwitz and had disappeared. His experience would go on to influence his musical composition later in life. For *It is light* he presents excerpts from his album *Some Deaths Take Forever*.

CAMILLA WILLS

is an artist and publisher. For Wills, splitting, doubling and insight are interconnected. As part of *It is light*, a pair of works entitled *Recognition* and *Misrecognition* have been produced. As often is the case with Wills' work, the imagery is on one level innocuous to the point of blankness: a tight arrangement of flowers, labels and words at the intersection between photography, digital collage and assemblage. Yet this image is also complicated and 'off', holding on to an unspoken quality: to that stubborn undertone and weight of violence which loops back in the work of Wills.

- 1 Ada Frände, *To keep our exposure*, 2024, mixed media, dimensions variable
- 2 Blalla W. Hallmann, *Die erweiterte heilige Familie geht auf der Milchstraße spazieren – Blalla Stern Koffer für meinen Vater den Maler Ewald Hallmann*, 1904–1950. Back: *Sterne haben viel Spaß im Himmelbett (The Extended Holy Family goes for a Walk on the Milky Way – Blalla Star Bag for my Father, the Painter Ewald Hallmann*, 1904–1950. Back: *Stars having a lot of Fun in the Heavenly Bed*), 1981/83, acrylic on wooden box, 50 × 60.5 × 9 cm
- 3 Blalla W. Hallmann, *Blallas Spezereischränk (Blalla's Gourmet Cupboard)*, date unknown, mixed materials, dimensions variable
- 4 Blalla W. Hallmann, *Der Nachruf (The Obituary)*, 1996, acrylic on canvas, 150 × 110 cm
- 5 Blalla W. Hallmann, *Das Hohelied auf die Kaisergoldfliege (Calliphoridae) Schmeißfliege (The Song of Songs of the Emperor Gold Fly (Calliphoridae) Blowfly)*, 1996, acrylic on canvas, 150 × 110 cm
- 6 Blalla W. Hallmann, *LUNACY (Der Mutter aller Mütter gewidmet. Du Schöne – so Grauenhaft sadistisch (Oh Maria hilf?) (Gelobt sei was hart macht!) (LUNACY (Dedicated to the Mother of all Mothers. You beautiful – so horribly sadistic) (Oh Maria help?) (Praised be what makes hard!))*, 1984, relief, mixed material on wooden board, 84 × 203.5 × 33 cm
- 7 Julia Heyward, *Conscious Knocks Unconscious*, 1977, video, colour, sound, 24 min 26 sec
- 8 James T. Hong, *Condor: A Film from California*, 1998, 16mm and super 8, digitised, sound, 7 min
- 9 Udo Lefin, *Cuántas ventanas tiene tu casa? (How many Windows does your House Have?)*, 1988, pigment and lacquer on canvas, 200 × 145 cm
- 10 Blalla W. Hallmann, *Filizid*, 1995, acrylic on canvas, 150 × 110 cm
- 11 Udo Lefin, *Untitled (Cuántos pasos me regalas) (How many Steps you Give me)*, 1986, pigment and lacquer on wood, 180 × 200 cm
- 12 a) Blalla W. Hallmann, *Blalla-Spielothek für Kinder: zum spielerischen Erlernen der biblischen Themen: „Mütter-Söhnchen“ (Blalla-Spielothek for Children: to Learn the Biblical Themes in a Playful Way: “Mothers and Sons”)*, 1993, mixed media, 58.5 × 58.5 × 30 cm
- b) Blalla W. Hallmann, *Blalla-Spielothek für Kinder: zum besseren gegenseitigen Kennenlernen der Eltern – Kinder (Blalla-Spielothek for Children: To Help Parents and Children get to know Each Other Better)*, 1993, mixed media, 58.5 × 58.5 × 30 cm
- c) Blalla W. Hallmann, *Blalla-Spielothek für Kinder: tieferen Verstehen der kosmischen Zusammenhänge von Religion: Gott-Mensch (Blalla-Spielothek for Children: Deeper Understanding of the Cosmic Connections between Religion: God-Human)*, 1993, mixed media, 58.5 × 58.5 × 30 cm
- 13 Blalla W. Hallmann, *Ein Kerz, ein Sträußl... Was will der Mensch noch mehr...?! (A Candle, a Bouquet... What more could a person want...?!)*, 1996, acrylic on board, 72 × 101 cm
- 14 Blalla W. Hallmann, *Filizid*, 1993, relief, mixed materials on board, 112 × 80 × 24 cm
- 15 Blalla W. Hallmann, *Die Stunde der Hohlkreuzsänger (The Hour of the Hollow Cross Singers)*, 1989, mixed media, 125.5 × 89.5 × 27.5 cm
- 16 Blalla W. Hallmann, *Blalla Studios*, undated, Mustang jeans jacket, size 50, embroidery, badges
- 17 Blalla W. Hallmann, *Mützlein BLALLA is the ONE*, 1984, cap, embroidery, paint, 26 × 18 × 10 cm
- 18 Ada Frände, *Haltestelle I*, 2024, wood, cement, corrugated polyester sheeting, acrylic, 165 × 220 × 129 cm
- 19 Ada Frände, *Haltestelle II*, 2024, wood, cement, LDPE film, gravel, acrylic, 172 × 180 × 91 cm
- 20 Julia Heyward, *Shake Daddy Shake*, 1976, video, sound, 5 min
- 21 James T. Hong, *Surveillance of a Camp in Spring*, 2010, video, sound, 6 min 30 sec
- 22 Ada Frände, *Ada Frände presents the Männer Museum*, ongoing, mixed media, sound, dimensions variable
- 23 Blalla W. Hallmann, *OoooooH OoooooH*, acrylic behind glass, 120 × 110 cm
- 24 Blalla W. Hallmann, *Du sollst Vater u. Mutter ehren (You shall honour your Father and Mother)*, acrylic behind glass, 120 × 110 cm
- 25 Blalla W. Hallmann, *Heinis Pflicht geh – Vaterland Endlich Hoch-Zeit auf dem Boden der westlichen Wertegemeinschaft (Heini's Duty Goes – Fatherland High-time at Last on the Soil of the Western Community of Values)*, acrylic behind glass, 120 × 110 cm
- 26 Blalla W. Hallmann, *Vater, Vater, warum haßt Du mich verlassen! (Father, Father, why have you forsaken me!)*, acrylic behind glass, 120 × 110 cm
- 27 Blalla W. Hallmann, *Wen das HERR liebt, das züchtigt ES (Whom the LORD Loves, he Chastens IT)*, 1990, acrylic behind glass, 120 × 110 cm
- 28 Blalla W. Hallmann, *Ecce – Homo*, 1990, acrylic behind glass, 120 × 110 cm
- 29 Blalla W. Hallmann, *JAJA (YES YES)*, 1990, acrylic behind glass, 120 × 110 cm
- 30 Blalla W. Hallmann, *heilig, heilig, heilig (holy, holy, holy)*, 1990, acrylic behind glass, 120 × 110 cm
- 31 Blalla W. Hallmann, *Vater, nicht mein, sondern Dein Willi geschehe! Wie auf Erden so im Himmel (Father, not my Will but yours be done! As on Earth, so in Heaven)*, 1990, acrylic behind glass, 120 × 110 cm
- 32 James T. Hong, *The Duck of Nature/ The Duck of God*, 2010, video, sound, 4 min
- 33 Bernard Szajner, *Some Deaths Take Forever*, 1980/2024, mixed media, sound
- 34 Blalla W. Hallmann, *Heiliger Beschiss (Das Geheimnis; Erscheinung vom 11.7.1993) (Holy Fraud (The Secret; Apparition of 11.7.1993))*, 1993, relief, acrylic on wood, papier-mâché, plaster, 161 × 103 × 12 cm
- 35 Blalla W. Hallmann, *Helliot's schwere Geburt (Helliot's Difficult Birth)*, 1986, acrylic on canvas, 154 × 103.5 cm
- 36 Blalla W. Hallmann, *Die Umwandlung Unwerten Lebens In Hochwertige Fleischkonserven. (Nach einem Entwurf des Herrn Dr. Engele mit freundl. Genehmigung des Ministeriums für Soziales)*, *(The transformation of Unworthy Life into High-quality Canned meat (Based on a draft by Dr. Engele with the Kind Courtesy of the Ministry of Social Affairs))*, 1985, acrylic on wood, 150 × 100 cm
- 37 Blalla W. Hallmann, *Der Gefangenenchor von Baku Buko an Beelzebub's Rechenmaschine (The Prisoners' Chorus from Baku Buko at Beelzebub's Calculation-Machine)*, 1994, acrylic on canvas, 110 × 150 cm
- 38 Camilla Wills, *Recognition*, 2020, Giclee print on uncoated paper, 57.6 × 59.6 cm
- 39 Camilla Wills, *Misrecognition*, 2024, Giclee print on uncoated paper, 57.6 × 59.6 cm
- 40 Rachel Reupke, *Interlude*, 2020, video, 15 min ^(upper level)

BLALLA W. HALLMANN

An important reference point and body of work for the two chapters of *It is light* across Bonner Kunstverein and Haus Mödrath is the work of Blalla W. Hallmann. Born in 1941 in Quirl in Niederschlesien, Hallmann studied art: first during a shorter stint in Düsseldorf and subsequently at the academy in Nürnberg. His practice is characterised by an immersive cosmos of paintings, sculptures, printmaking and ephemera, driven as much by an inner necessity of making as an intensively lived and felt sense of mission. There is recurrently a self-contained circular quality of the work: a sense of being not merely part of but trapped in history. Recurring themes in his prolific output were social injustice, religious bigotry, a ferocious capitalist critique – intensified after his time in San Francisco (1967–69) – and a continuous return to the trauma and remnants of the Second World War. In his explorations, there is a significant collapsing between the personal experience and historical and systemic violence: a looping and inter-connected dramaturgy based in the self-contained scene, in the *Kammerspiel*. In this world of trappings and darkness there are also moments of transcendence, and a stubborn belief in art: an intensity of commitment and obsession which often generated a dual and slippery status, between Hallmann as an artist and a person on the ‘outside.’ In this in-between space, he was highly aware of structures of dominance and exploitation, including those of the art world itself.

ADA FRÄNDE

It is light comprises a series of new commissions by Ada Frände: three parts channeling the show and its individual works. Entitled *To keep our exposure*, *Haltestelle I and II* and *Ada Frände presents the Männer Museum** they take the form of sculptures, installations and ready-mades. The works unfold across reflections around the literal and metaphorical shadow, and a sense of anticipation and dysfunction.

* The Männer Museum is an ongoing collection built up over the last two decades by art historian and writer Michael Fehr.

** Ada Frände is an artist and an alter ego of Annika Eriksson and Fatima Hellberg.

JULIA HEYWARD

Faith, spirituality, class and gender, autobiographical and societal mythologies are just some of the recurring strands that can be followed through Julia Heyward’s richly layered video performances. At the center of all of them is Heyward herself, whose direct-camera addresses have an intensity, trance-like at times, with obtusely symbolic and associative props and sight gags. After completing the Whitney Museum’s Independent Study Program in 1973, Heyward became a prominent figure in New York’s downtown performance scene, and ultimately a key influence and participant in No Wave,

the post-punk movement of bands, artists, and filmmakers with which she is closely associated.

JAMES T. HONG

is a filmmaker and artist based in Taiwan who has been producing thought-provoking, unconventional and occasionally controversial films and videos for over twenty years. Hong has made works about Heidegger, Spinoza, biological warfare, the Opium Wars, and most recently completed a documentary about nationalism and disputed territory in the East China Sea. Within this layering of references of philosophy, histories of colonialism, ecology and war, there is a particular tone and voice, oscillating between a great, at times unbearable weight, and a quality we might describe as banal, even absurdist.

UDO LEFIN

Udo Lefin’s paintings often conceal a secret imagery or phrasing under multiple layers of lacquer, pigment and transparent varnishes. In this way, each painting gradually produces multiple states. Lefin’s painting *Cuantas ventanas tiene tu casa?* (*How many windows does your house have?*) recalls Francisco Goya’s *El Sueno de la razón produce monstruos* (*The Sleep of Reason Produces Monsters*), in which the artist also rests his head. This image of melancholy contemplation is combined in Lefin’s work with the question of ‘how many windows...’ – how many openings, how much awareness does one permit? Lefin’s enigmatic works seem on one hand to call for a decoding, and on the other hand to be self-contained in their sheen and luminosity. In his oeuvre, primarily realised in the 1980s and 90s, we see an ongoing fascination with the crossing of boundaries and the slippages between knowing and the unknowable, between the brilliantly reflected and the barely perceivable.

RACHEL REUPKE

is an artist working primarily with video. As part of a broadcast programme called *Limit as Material* by and for the artistic estate of Ian White, Reupke developed an interlude for the occasion. The video that emerged within this framework of limitation, was made within the idea of the ‘productive limit’: those invisible or unstated conditions which could potentially be made explicit, and therefore negotiated or contested. This slippery video, tinged with anticipation and loss, gradually transforms as time progresses and daylight dissipates.

BERNARD SZAJNER

is a composer, musical theorist, visual artist. He was born in Grenoble, France in 1944, into a family of Polish Jews. He was given the name ‘Wolf’ and spent his earlier times hidden in a cellar. During his