



**ATO Art Takes Over**  
From June 29th through September 2021

**ATO Art Takes Over** presents from Tuesday 29th June *Unterwegs (On the road)* a contemporary art exhibition installed in the shop windows of Via della Spiga 48 in Milan with works by Kerstin Brätsch and Judith Hopf, two internationally acclaimed German artists, represented respectively by the galleries Gió Marconi and kaufmann repetto. The site-specific installations will be on view 24/7 from June 29th through September.

Following the success of the first edition of art installations in vacant storefronts in Milan's fashion luxury district in spring 2021, **ATO Art Takes Over** is pleased to present the second edition of its program. ATO Art Takes Over renews its commitment to the urban regeneration of the high-class shopping district in the centre of Milan known as the *Quadrilatero della Moda* ('Fashion District') situated between Via della Spiga and Via Montenapoleone, affected by the recent pandemic. The project manager, Nicole Saikalis Bay, explains: "*Transforming the commercial vacancies into an opportunity and fostering the cooperation of leading international art galleries and landlords, ATO Art Takes Over creates a meeting ground between contemporary art and the wider public*".

As part of the project, ATO Art Takes Over continues the *#ATO Stories* which will accompany each new edition, presenting interesting facts and anecdotes highlighting the past of Milan's historical city centre and in particular its longstanding connections to the art world.

The second edition presents a duo of German artists, Kerstin Brätsch (Hamburg, 1979) and Judith Hopf (Karlsruhe, 1969). Both interested in the critical scrutiny of the contemporary digital dependence, their works encompass painting, sculpture and installation, while *#ATO Stories* will reiterate the history of the first art galleries in Milan's centre starting in the 19th century.

Kerstin Brätsch's practice moves fluidly between mediums and between individual and collective practice, giving life to hybrids of painting, design and performance, exploring the nature and boundaries of painting in the digital age.

For this occasion, the artist presents a marbling painting on paper and a series of self-supporting structures, partially illuminated by neon light, which incorporate ancient glasses made in Switzerland and subsequently reworked.

On display will also be a stucco from the latest series of works created by the German artist using the marble stucco technique, in collaboration with the Roman craftsman Walter Cipriani. This process uses the 17th century Italian technique in which the pigments are mixed with wet plaster and glue and finally polished to create a marble effect.

Brätsch's interest in old techniques is partly to preserve them from disappearance. Another fascinating factor for the artist is the alchemical process in which the material transforms from the simple ingredients of water and powder into a solid.



Judith Hopf aims to provoke gaps in power relations, inserting slap-stick humor, the domestic and the absurd into the space of art, questioning our preconceptions and stereotypes.

The exponentially growing importance of digital communication is addressed in *Untitled (Email Lines)* where three strings of violet, blue and green LED lights are suspended from the ceiling, reminding us of the ever-present influx of emails distracting contemporary life. Next to this installation, a group of precarious, brutalist animals is invading the space: the herbivores depicted in *Flock of Sheep* are expressionless and immobile – a gesture, as the artist put it, “to the flexible society we live in, where we are always ready to move from one job to the next”.

In *Openings* gauzy fabrics are decorated with the batik technique. Inspired by an 18th-century wallpaper, illustrating colonial life, the artist reinterprets these territories as islands, permeated by mysterious signs, prompting us to open our eyes to inner worlds, undefinable by society’s norms and parameters.

Brätsch’s and Hopf’s installations will be on view till end of September, offering Milanese and foreign visitors the opportunity for a walk in Milan’s historical city centre while enjoying the unexpected view of contemporary art installations.

### **# ATO details**

Unterwegs (*On the road*)

with works by **Kerstin Brätsch e Judith Hopf**

An exhibition organized by Art takes Over ATO in collaboration with the art galleries **Gió Marconi**, **kaufmann repetto** and the Landlords.

**From 29th June through September 2021**

Via della Spiga 48, Milano

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## # ATO Stories

Starting in the late 19th century and through the late 1950s/1960s numerous art galleries opened in what is now known as the “Quadrilatero della Moda” (the Fashion District) of Milan, in Via della Spiga, Via Montenapoleone, Via Santo Spirito, Corso Littorio (now Corso Matteotti), Via Manzoni, Via Sant’Andrea, and more.

The seeds of the contemporary art’s presence in Milan were laid down through the creation in 1869 of the *Esposizione Permanente di Belle Arti*, with the objective of promoting public exhibitions of contemporary art, and in 1873 of the *Famiglia Artistica Milanese*, a self-managed partnership of artists, including the *Scapigliati*, who wanted to bring together art and the public, and wished that the bourgeoisie be involved in the nascent Italian artistic life.

The first Milanese modern art gallery, founded by the Grubicy brothers in 1876, was followed by several others, with a great expansion during the inter-war period. The art galleries became the scene for gallerists, artists, critics, collectors to meet and discuss. Those galleries played a fundamental role in shaping the increasingly international taste of the public, in the education of the artists and in the development of the most important Italian artistic currents, which often influenced artists abroad. Thus, between the end of ‘800 and the first half of the ‘900, Milan was unique in Europe in its role, inspiring the works of leading artists and literally giving birth to worldclass artistic movements, such as the Novecento, Futurism and Spatialism.

Among the most important galleries opening in that period is *Galleria d’arte del Naviglio*, founded by Carlo Cardazzo, located in Via Manzoni 45 (at the corner with Via della Spiga). Here, started the Spatialism of Fontana, with a number of important exhibitions. Galleria Milano, in Via Croce Rossa 6, had very important shows, notably the “*First exhibition of Italian painters residents in Paris*”, in 1930, with works by Campigli, De Chirico, De Pisis, etc. In Via della Spiga 9, at 20 years of age Ernesto Treccani opened *La Bottega di Corrente* (1940), which then became *Galleria della Spiga e di Corrente* and finally *Galleria della Spiga*. Under Treccani, the gallery organized exhibitions of works by Treccani himself, Birolli, Cassinari, Sassu, Guttuso, Morlotti, Vedova e Paganin. Here, 1947, the Galleria hosted “*The First Exhibition of Fronte Nuovo delle Arti*”, a second post-cubism movement, with works by Birolli, Guttuso, Vedova; its very interesting catalogue included a short essay by an artist (Guttuso) or an intellectual (Argan, Moravia, Valsecchi) for each of the artists.

As is the case nowadays, art galleries also found beautiful locations to exhibit their artists. *Galleria Centrale* presented the “*Great Futurist National Exhibition*”, curated by Marinetti himself (1919) at Palazzo Cova in via Manzoni 1, the original location where the confectioner had very ample public spaces. Palazzo Poldi Pezzoli, also in Via Manzoni, hosted several exhibitions of *Galleria Pesaro*. The 1921 exhibition “*Contemporary Italian Art*” was the cradle, not without scandals and clamor, of Italian modern art. Among the most famous exhibitions here was “*Thirty three Futurists*” in 1929 with works by Balla, Munari, Rosso, etc.



## **#ATO Artists' Bios**

### **KERSTIN BRÄTSCH**

Kerstin Brätsch (Hamburg, 1979) lives and works in New York. Known for her colorful, large-scale compositions, she uses oil paint and a range of other materials to explore the nature of painting in the digital age. From her signature paintings—many of which resemble geodes or marbled surfaces—to her installations and performances, Brätsch's work explores collaboration, the circulation of images, and the role of chance in image-making.

Selected solo and group shows include: Quadro, Deichtorhallen, Hamburg (2020); Fossil Psychics for Christa, The Museum of Modern Art, New York (2019); Full-Fall presents Kerstin Brätsch, Gió Marconi, Milan (2016); INNOVATION, MMuseum Brandhorst, Munich (2017); Ruine / KAYA\_KOVO, Fondazione Memmo, Rome (2018); Kerstin Brätsch and Adele Röder as DAS INSTITUT, Serpentine Sackler Gallery, London, UK (2016); Painting 2.0: Expression in the information age, Museum Brandhorst, Munich, Germany (2015); The Forever Now Contemporary Painting in an Atemporal World, Curated by Laura Hoptman, The Museum of Modern Art, New York, NY (2014); EXP01: New York, MoMA/PS1, Long Island City, New York as DAS INSTITUT and UNITED BROTHERS (2013).

### **JUDITH HOPF**

Judith Hopf (Karlsruhe, 1969) lives and works in Berlin. Spanning video, performance, sculpture and installation, the artists uses her immediate environment and vernacular, everyday objects and materials as a creative point of departure. Her practice can be thought of in connection to the term bricolage, a method outlined most eloquently by Claude Lévi-Strauss, whose seminal work "The Savage Mind," describes a 'working with what you got' approach or an 'untamed' way of thinking. Hopf's oeuvre is inscribed with humor and simplicity, formulating a succinct language that playfully interrupts our routinized interpretations and expectations.

Selected solo and group shows include: SMK – National Gallery of Denmark, Copenhagen (2018); KW Institute for Contemporary Art, Berlin (2018); Hammer Museum, Los Angeles (2017); Museion, Bozen (2016); Neue Galerie, Kassel (2015); 8th Liverpool Biennial, Liverpool (2014); Fondazione Morra Greco, Naples (2013); Sculpture Center, New York (2014); dOCUMENTA13, Kassel (2012). Judith Hopf is professor of Fine Arts at the Städelschule in Frankfurt.