

## THEATER

Calla Henkel and Max Pitegoff

CONTEMPORARY  
TIME-BASED  
ART

September 12 – December 14, 2024

Opening Wednesday, September 11, 2024, 6–10 pm

Press Preview Wednesday, September 11, 2024, 11 am

and by appointment

As part of Berlin Art Week 2024, Fluentum presents *THEATER*, a solo exhibition by artist duo Calla Henkel and Max Pitegoff that reflects on live performance in an age of radical change. *THEATER* marks the beginning of their newest durational film, with the first three episodes commissioned by Fluentum and premiering there in September.

Calla Henkel and Max Pitegoff's new film *THEATER* is set and shot at New Theater Hollywood in Los Angeles, the black box theater space the two artists have been operating since January 2024. Blending fiction and performance documentation, *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. In the film's first three episodes premiering at Fluentum, 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, and the maddening reality of living inside of other people's ambitions.

For their solo exhibition at Fluentum, the artist duo connects their activities back to their former base in Berlin with their ongoing photo series *Casts* (2018–), which brings together portraits of past and present collaborators, documented by Henkel and Pitegoff in their dual roles as fictional characters and real individuals. Tightly hung and repeatedly reconfigured, the photographs form ensembles from which a diverse potential for narratives emerges. *THEATER* comes directly after Henkel and Pitegoff's last film, *Paradise* (2020–2022), shot over three years at TV Bar, the bar they operated in Berlin-Schöneberg. Both films run on of the unpredictable electricity of these spaces and the people who populate them, letting lived experiences guide the films' narratives while asking broader questions about documentation, the performance of labor, and collective memory. Like *Paradise*, *THEATER* is shot on 16mm film and narrated via subtitles, unspooling somewhere between long-form poetry and photography, with a score by MK Velsorf. Episodic in form, new installments of *THEATER* will continue to be made as long as New Theater Hollywood continues to operate.

Curated by Dennis Brzek and Junia Thiede.

**Press preview**

The press preview will take place at the exhibition space on Wednesday, September 11, at 11 am. To attend, please sign up by writing an e-mail to [Katharine Spatz](mailto:Katharine.Spatz@fluentum.com) (Communication and Outreach, Fluentum).

Film stills and other press materials are available [at this link](#).

**Program**

**Artist Talk** On Saturday, September 14, at 2 pm, Fluentum will host an artist talk with Calla Henkel and Max Pitegoff, moderated by the curators Dennis Brzek and Junia Thiede. The talk will be in English, registration is not required. Admission is free, with limited seating available.

**Publication** The opening of *THEATER* will also see the release of *German Theater 2010–2022*, the most comprehensive monograph to date on the work of Henkel and Pitegoff, edited by Fabrice Stroun and published by Inventory Press. *German Theater 2010–2022* is published on the occasion of an exhibition at Kunsthalle Fri Art in Fribourg and was realized with support from Fluentum.

**Performance** During Berlin Art Week Galerie Isabella Bortolozzi presents the performance *A Hole Is A Hole* by Lily McMenemy, which had its US premiere at the New Theater Hollywood. *A Hole Is A Hole* will be shown on September 12 and 13 at Theater Schalotte in Charlottenburg, at 7.30 pm.

**About Calla Henkel and Max Pitegoff**

Calla Henkel (b.1988, US) and Max Pitegoff (b.1987, US) are an artist duo who have worked together for over a decade, developing a practice that is embedded in the founding and running of venues as sites of social and collaborative artistic work. They currently operate New Theater Hollywood, a black box theater in Los Angeles. Previously, in Berlin, they ran TV Bar (2019–2022, a bar and performance space, as well as New Theater (2013–2015, a storefront where they wrote and produced plays with artists, writers, and musicians. Their expanded documentation of these spaces takes form through filmmaking, photography, sculpture, and writing, and traces the economic, political, and personal rules and conditions under which shared space can exist.

Henkel and Pitegoff have exhibited their artwork and performances in solo exhibitions at Reena Spaulings, New York; O-Town House, Los Angeles; Galerie Isabella Bortolozzi, Berlin; Fri Art Kunsthalle, Fribourg; Cabinet, London; Kunstverein Hamburg; Schinkel Pavillon,

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Berlin; and The Whitney Museum, New York, among others. Group exhibitions include MAMCO, Geneva; Front Triennial, Cleveland; Hamburger Bahnhof, Berlin; Neuer Berliner Kunstverein, Berlin; Manifesta 13, Marseille; Pinakothek der Moderne, Munich; Museum Ludwig, Cologne; and the Berlin Biennale.

## About New Theater Hollywood

New Theater Hollywood is a theater in Los Angeles founded by Henkel and Pitegoff in January 2024. Conceived as a space to develop and stage original theatrical productions, New Theater Hollywood operates with an ethos of community theater: a space to test work in front of an audience of peers, and an experiment in cross-contaminating siloed creative practices in Los Angeles and beyond. Since opening, New Theater Hollywood has staged and produced shows by Lily McMenemy, Ruby McCollister, Karl Holmqvist & Arto Lindsay, Jasmine Johnson, and Colin Self & Diamond Stingily. In the fall, plays will be presented by David Louis Zuckerman & Rebecca Hazlewood, Kalena Yiaueki, Klein, Casey Jane Ellison, and Stephanie LaCava.

## About Fluentum

Fluentum is a nonprofit, privately run institution dedicated to exhibiting, producing, and collecting contemporary art, with a special focus on time-based media such as film and video. An initiative of Berlin-based entrepreneur and collector Markus Hannebauer, Fluentum opened its exhibition space in a former military complex in Berlin in 2019.

[More.](#)

Fluentum is an official partner of Berlin Art Week and media partner of arte, Monopol and Yorck Kinogruppe.

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## Press Images

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## Press Contact

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CONTEMPORARY  
TIME-BASED  
ART

## Opening hours

Fr 11 am – 5 pm  
Sat 11 am – 4 pm

## Special opening hours Berlin Art Week

Thu–Sun 11 am – 6 pm

## Opening and reception

Wed, September 11, 2024  
6 – 10 pm

Clayalle 174  
14195 Berlin

Admission free

## Accessibility

Wheelchair-accessible ground floor. The Lift for access to the 1st floor is only partially suitable for wheelchairs. Parking on site.

In case you need assistance, please do not hesitate to contact Contact our team.

## Partner

BERLIN  
ART 11—15 SEP 2024  
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