

LIVIE

STILLEBEN | STILL LIFE

SARAH BOGNER, RALPH BÜRGIN, ANDRÉ BUTZER, AUSTIN EDDY

ERNST LUDWIG KIRCHNER, EMIL NOLDE, SIGMAR POLKE, FÉLIX VALLOTTON

OCTOBER 3, 2025 – JANUARY 16, 2026

OPENING | THURSDAY, OCTOBER 2, 6-8PM

Livie Gallery is pleased to present *Stilleben | Still Life*, an exhibition that brings together four contemporary artists from the gallery's program in dialogue with works by masters of the 20th century.

When it became apparent that Sarah Bogner, André Butzer, Austin Eddy and Ralph Bürgin were all engaging with still life in their respective practices, the idea emerged to curate a focused presentation - one that opens a space for reflection on the genre's history while also engaging its contemporary and future possibilities, with the aim to contribute meaningfully to the ongoing discourse around painting today.

We are honored to include in the exhibition two seminal paintings by Ernst Ludwig Kirchner, both executed in 1918 yet strikingly different in character. One still routed in the hard lines of Expressionism, the other, finished in 1919, already paving the way to a softer more playful approach, possibly reflecting an end of the war and conflict. A small painting by Emil Nolde of a vase with flowers from 1915 is a beautiful example of a reorientation towards the proximate and tangible in times of great turmoil. These historic works are completed by a painting by Félix Vallotton from 1922, which seems deceptively classical at first sight, and a gouache by Sigmar Polke from 2000, poking fun at the bourgeoisie aspects of flower painting.

We are grateful to the four participating artists for contributing personal statements about their works in the show, which we are delighted to share with you.

My still lifes of fruit and flowers are my rootings, my counterweights, and grounding forces — ornamental and concrete, classical and progressive at the same time. This is a series I am continuing to develop. I work on paper, raw cotton, and primed canvas. I like ink for its permeability, egg tempera because it's never quite the same, and acrylic because it causes no problems. In short: water, oil, and plastic. I see painting as a relay — everything has already been painted, and everything is in the process of being painted. The outcome is uncertain from the vantage point of now. The task is to paint the next possible image and to advocate for an unfinished future, without losing connection to the painters who came before. My painting is always rooted in the present, without being tied to the zeitgeist. I stand on the shoulders of painting. Friendship is essential. Many of the friends I speak with about painting have been dead for centuries. It's a Janus-faced practice. I look both forward and back. Immersion matters more to me than inspiration.

– Sarah Bogner

We see Mediterranean fruits, peaches, oranges and lemons, laid out and dispersed, descending and ascending, floating about. The abundant red of the canvas does not only constitute the surrounding ambience or an interior, in union with the spaces between the delicate hues it is the site of the image itself. The fruits come in and out of appearance. Everything is accommodated in the complete existence of the image, in which every-

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thing that was, is and will be, is present at the same time. In this temporal coherence, the fruits are cyclically rounded in themselves and embody new beginnings, maturing, rebirth and renewed ripening. Their appearance is both a decorative ornament and protective peel, the completion of an old life and the vessel for a new one.

– Christian Malycha on André Butzer

Before I paint a still life, I sit down at a table and close my eyes. I look at a world without shadows, without light. A room, a window, a table. There is a teapot, a chair, a skull, a cup here and there, perhaps a teaspoon. At first, everything appears dark and vague, then gradually brightens like a Polaroid photo in the development process. It is illuminated and enlivened by something that is simply the experience of painting.

– Ralph Bürgin

There is a complex simplicity to painting something mundane and everyday. These everyday objects are deeply relatable and extremely open ended. This openness is a way to quietly open the door to complicated and metaphorical issues via something pretty universally understood.

The painting of a flower has innumerable meanings, and each person brings their own relationship to the table. Still life paintings provide not only a group of formal objects to abstract, but also a way to bury a narrative and create an open dialogue with the viewer. Painting objects is not just painting what one sees, but a way to paint life and all its complicated emotions and relationships both internal and external.

– Austin Eddy

Sarah Bogner (*1980, Munich, Germany; lives and works in Vienna, Austria) is a painter, part of the publishing house Harpune Vienna and musician. Her paintings often depict stylised, dynamic horse figures and reflect a playful yet precise engagement with line, rhythm, and colour.

Her most recent solo exhibitions include Volley at Gerberhaus Fehring, AT; Freunde des Lichts at Livie Gallery, Zurich, CH; Unter der Sonne wie im Schatten at Kunstverein Heppenheim, DE; Arrière Garde at Galerie Christine Mayer, Munich, DE; Contemporary Dialogue with Tobias Hantmann and René Luckhardt, Galerie Bernd Kugler, Innsbruck AT; Sein wie ein Stein, denken wie ein Pferd at Milchstrasse 4, Munich, DE. She has also been included in various group exhibitions at Mozin'arts Montreuil, Paris FR; Secci Gallery in Florence, IT; Ehrhardt Floréz in Madrid, ES; Spurs Gallery in Beijing, CN; Mauer in Cologne, DE; Casa Manno in Alghero, IT.

André Butzer (*1973, Stuttgart, Germany; lives in Berlin) fuses European expressionism (e.g. Matisse) and the conceptual seriality of post-war American art (e.g. Warhol) in a 30+ years oeuvre that bears testament to his courageous and continuous inquiry into societal contradictions and social non-conformity.

Works of his are part of the permanent collections of the Musée d'art moderne de Paris; Städel Museum, Frankfurt am Main; of both LACMA Los Angeles County Museum of Art and MOCA Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles; Museo Nacional Thyssen-Bornemisza, Madrid; Paula Modersohn-Becker Museum, Bremen; Carré d'Art, Nîmes; Pinakothek der Moderne, Munich; Yuz Museum, Shanghai; among many others.

Ralph Bürgin (*1980, Basel, Switzerland; lives in Basel and works in Alsace, France) is a painter and sculptor. His practice investigates such wide-reaching and universal themes as the human condition and the interaction of mankind and nature.

Ralph Bürgin was awarded with the Alexander Clavel Stiftung Award in Switzerland in 2023.

Recent solo exhibitions include Forum at Livie Gallery, Zurich, CH; The Great Escape at Livie Gallery, Zurich, CH; Watching a Peaceful River at Galerie Barbara Seiler, Zurich, CH; La place at Centre culturel suisse, Paris, FR. Ralph Bürgin's work has been included in numerous group exhibitions, including at Hiflow, Geneva, CH; Plymouth Rock, Zurich, CH; Alexander Clavel Stiftung (Kulturförderpreis), Kunsthalle Zurich and Kunsthaut Baselland, CH; Kunsthaut Pasquart, CH.

In 2019, a publication was dedicated to the artist as part of the Cahier d'Artistes series published by the Swiss Arts Council Pro Helvetia, with a text by Felicity Lunn. The artist has also realized several projects in public spaces, including Gasträume 2020 in Zurich, curated by Christoph Doswald, and "I, You, You, Me, We" at Heuwaage in Basel, Switzerland, initiated by Kunstcredit Basel-Stadt in collaboration with the Department of Construction and Transport.

Austin Eddy's (*1986, Boston, USA; lives and works in Brooklyn, New York) paintings and collages are characterised by bold shapes, rhythmic abstraction, and references to modernist traditions, exploring themes of memory, perception, and daily life.

His most recent solo exhibitions include: Vogel, Fisch und Farbe, at Museum Penzberg, Penzberg, DE; Still Life, at Kunstverein Heilbronn, Heilbronn, DE; Everything In It's Place, at Wentrup Gallery, Berlin, DE; Sea Song, at Emden Museum, Emden, DE; Ooples And Banoonoos, at Baldwin Gallery, Aspen, USA; Bird Song, at De Brock Gallery, Knokke, BE; Longing For The Light. Love Letters From The Gloaming, at Pace Prints, New York, USA; Songs For The Sun, at Galerie Eva Presenhuber, Vienna, AT and In The Off-Hours, at Livie Gallery, Zurich, CH. He has also been included in various group exhibitions at Galerie Eva Presenhuber xP21, Seoul, KR; De Brock Gallery, Brussels, BE; Pace Prints, Miami, USA; Southampton Arts Center, USA; Berggruen Gallery, San Francisco, USA; The Pit, Los Angeles, USA; Shrine Gallery, New York, USA; Alexander Berggruen, New York, USA; Adams And Ollman, Portland, Oregon, USA; Galleri Thomassen, Gothenburg, SE.

Opening hours: Tuesday to Friday | 11 am to 6 pm, Saturday | 12 – 5 pm, and by appointment

For more information and high-resolution images please contact us:

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