

Super Super Markt

Cyryl Polaczek, *Lebensmittel*
January 22 – March 8, 2026
Super Super Markt, Brunnenstr. 22, Berlin

We're pleased to present *Lebensmittel*, a solo exhibition by Cyryl Polaczek (b. 1989 in Zielona Góra, Poland). Comprising a new series of oil paintings, *Lebensmittel* marks the artist's first solo exhibition with the gallery.

Food has been a ubiquitous and enduring subject of painting across cultures and centuries, yet it also remains one of its most deceptive. In *Lebensmittel*, Cyryl Polaczek approaches still life not as a genre of abundance or decoration, but as a site of quiet tension and transformation. In this exhibition, his paintings depict staple, everyday foods – bread, fish, cabbage – rendered with an intensity that resists both nostalgia and spectacle. In recent paintings, the artist has expanded the act of mark-making beyond the brush, coaxing subjects into being with the edge of paper (painting paper), the delicacy of a cat's whisker for the subject of an insect, and an ever-widening array of humble, unconventional tools – string, wire, foil – each re-imagining how materiality can shape the painted surface.

The German title *Lebensmittel* translates into English as 'means of life'. It points not only to nourishment, but to dependency, vulnerability, and time. Polaczek's works ask what it means to sustain life through materials that themselves are fragile, perishable, and marked by labour. Each object carries traces of handling, cutting, wrapping, or peeling – gestures that sit somewhere between domestic routine and ritual.

The vanitas paintings of the 17th Century, especially that of Dutch and Flemish painting from Northern Europe often focused on perishable foods, symbolizing the transience of life and the inevitability of death. Looking closer at the paintings in *Lebensmittel*, Polaczek includes insects dwarfed by the vegetables and the still life they find themselves a part of.

Across these works, Polaczek treats food as a bearer of memory, labor, and mortality. The still lifes do not offer abundance in the traditional sense; instead, they dwell in moments of pause – before eating, before spoilage, before disappearance. His restrained palette and tactile surfaces slow the viewer's gaze, insisting on attention rather than appetite.

Lebensmittel ultimately reframes still life as a meditation on sustenance in its broadest sense. In Polaczek's hands, food becomes a quiet but insistent mirror of human existence: necessary, temporary, and deeply material.