GALERIE
THOMAS
SCHULTE



GALERIE
THOMAS
SCHULTE



WALID RAAD



LIKE A RUBBER RUNG ON A LADDER

PREVIEW

2 MAY TO 6 JUNE 2026

With *Like a rubber rung on a ladder*, Galerie Thomas Schulte presents a solo exhibition by Walid Raad in its street-facing Corner Space and adjacent window space. The two installations, which largely consist of fragmentary and composited wall-based elements, activate and visually connect interior and exterior.

As in much of Raad's practice, his artworks engage the stories and forms made possible by events of extreme violence. These stories and forms are always a blend of the personal and collective, the found and the created. His long term art project, *The Atlas Group* (1989 - 2004) explored the history of car bombs in the Lebanese wars, kidnapping and captivity narratives, the renaming of Lebanese waterfalls, as well as the color coding of bullets by ammunition manufacturers, among others.

Better be watching the clouds again and again sprawls over two adjacent walls in the front window space. Though it may appear cheerful at first glance, its title hints at something ominous, an attempt to catch the unpredictable, a potential warning. The scattered flowers of different species and all varieties of color, with their own symbolic and geographic affiliations and displacements, form a landscape in bloom that slowly gives way to deeper ambiguity. The flowers frame the faces of dozens of black-and-white figures dressed in formal or military attire—highlighting and obscuring the presence of global political and military leaders of the last century. One narrative that has been associated with iterations of this work concerns Fadwa Hassoun, a fictional officer in the Lebanese Army trained as a botanist, who, during the war—an ongoing point of departure in Raad's practice—assigned flowers as code names to politicians.

These identities, both doubled and concealed, are devoid of further context or indication. The colorless photographs, ostensibly belonging to the past yet enduring, contrast with the vibrancy and fragility of the flowers—fully alive, fully present. The photomontaged figures hover before the wall, casting varied shadows that create a gap, opening a space. Further shadows are inserted into the image, between head and flower, flower and body, adding an imaginary dimension that contributes to a heightened realism, while emphasizing a constructed nature. In juxtaposition with the flowers that disguise and subsume them, the politicians' bodies become a kind of shadow themselves.

The installation in the Corner Space is similarly colorful and enlivened, as bursts of handwriting, like celebratory fireworks, at turns playful and threatening, are graffitied onto the walls. Through these apparently ephemeral, marginal gestures, *Festival of (In)Gratitude: Love Notes* brings the gallery's interior to meet the external facades of the street outside. The writings in various scripts and languages, including English, Russian, Arabic, Hebrew, and French, disrupt and overlay one another. Referencing soldiers' graffiti on bombs, the chaotic, layered inscriptions stage aggressive demonstrations of nationalist, imperialist, and violent sentiment that may slyly appear otherwise at times: signed with hearts and "xoxo", with mention of gifts. In the embattled landscape contained within the frame of the gallery's windows, bombs are simulated ("Boom, Boom")—shouting loudly through an echoing silence. A central element within the installation is an overturned vintage Volkswagen Beetle—flipped on its back like a helpless insect, as though by excessive, explosive force. Cars and their engines have appeared elsewhere in Raad's work in the context of war, engaging, for example, with the history of the car bomb during the Lebanese Wars. Here, the VW Beetle may also point to other references: its production as a military vehicle in Nazi Germany; its pop-cultural status as the "Love Bug"; the moniker "flying Volkswagens" given to the heavy artillery shells fired by the U.S. on Beirut in the 1980s.

Again and again in Raad's work, a singular moment or reference is stretched, transformed and mutated through overlaps, gaps, and palimpsest. Here, 1983 Beirut folds into 2026 Beirut, Tehran, Gaza City, Tel Aviv, the Western Front, and the Eastern Front; the historical world into the natural world; "Run Romel Run" into "America Loves Israel." How can we not be "out of breath yet"?

Text by Julianne Cordray

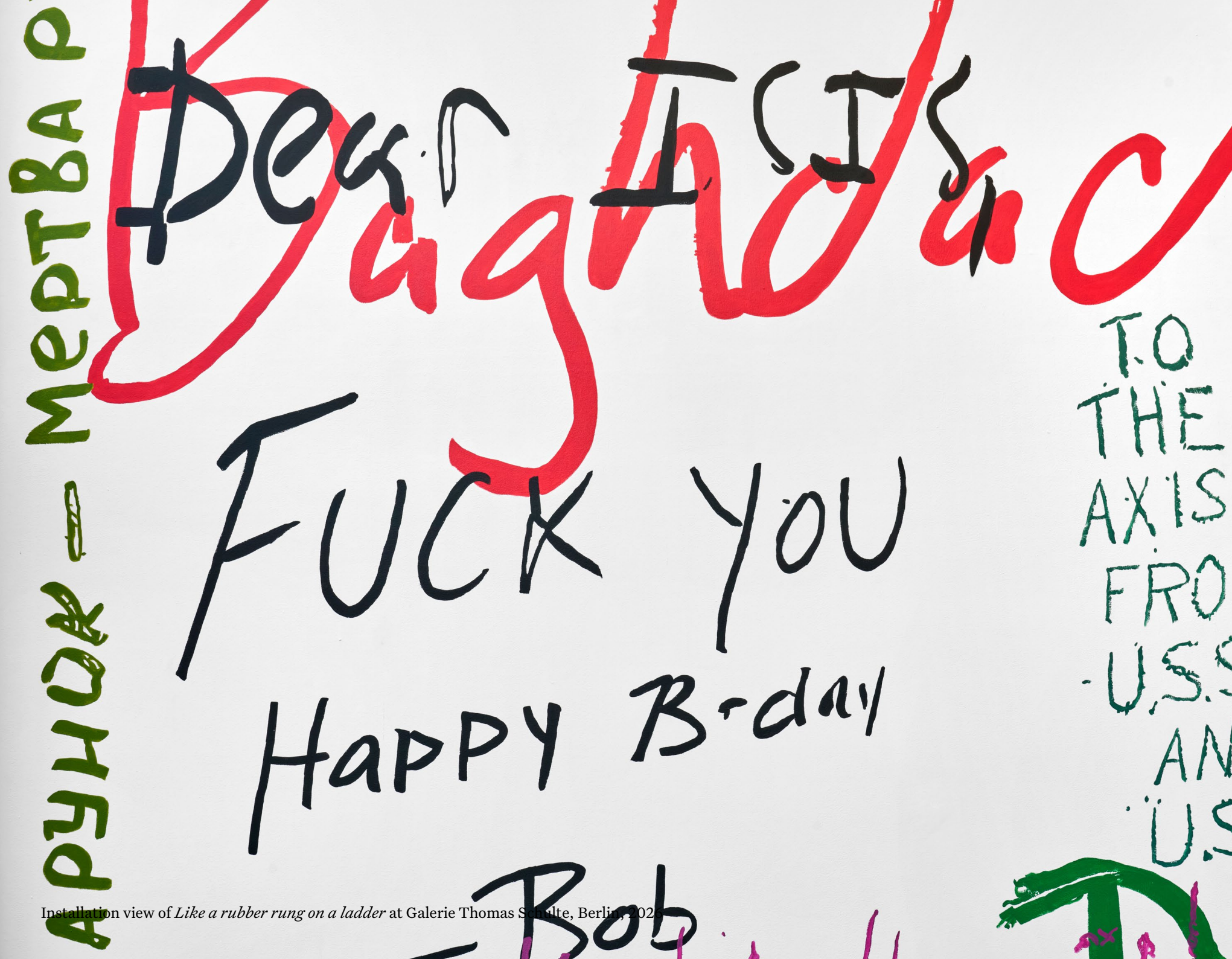


Installation view of *Like a rubber rung on a ladder* at Galerie Thomas Schulte, Berlin, 2026

Festival of (In)Gratitude: Love Notes, 2026

mixed media installation
dimensions variable
variation of 3
USD 150,000.00 + VAT and transport





Installation view of *Like a rubber rung on a ladder* at Galerie Thomas Schulte, Berlin, 202



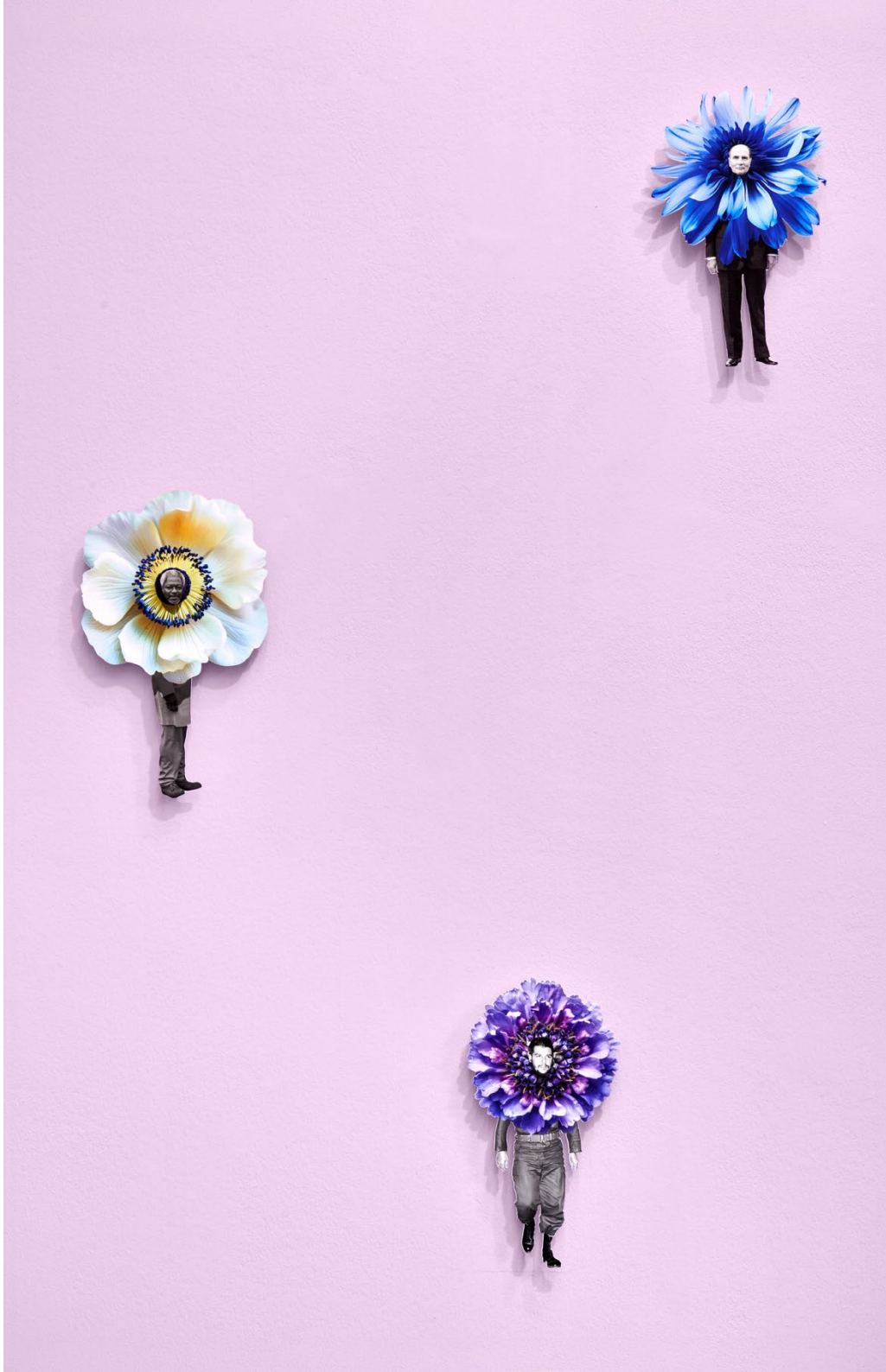
Installation view of *Like a rubber rung on a ladder* at Galerie Thomas Schulte, Berlin, 2026



Installation view of *Like a rubber rung on a ladder* at Galerie Thomas Schulte, Berlin, 2026

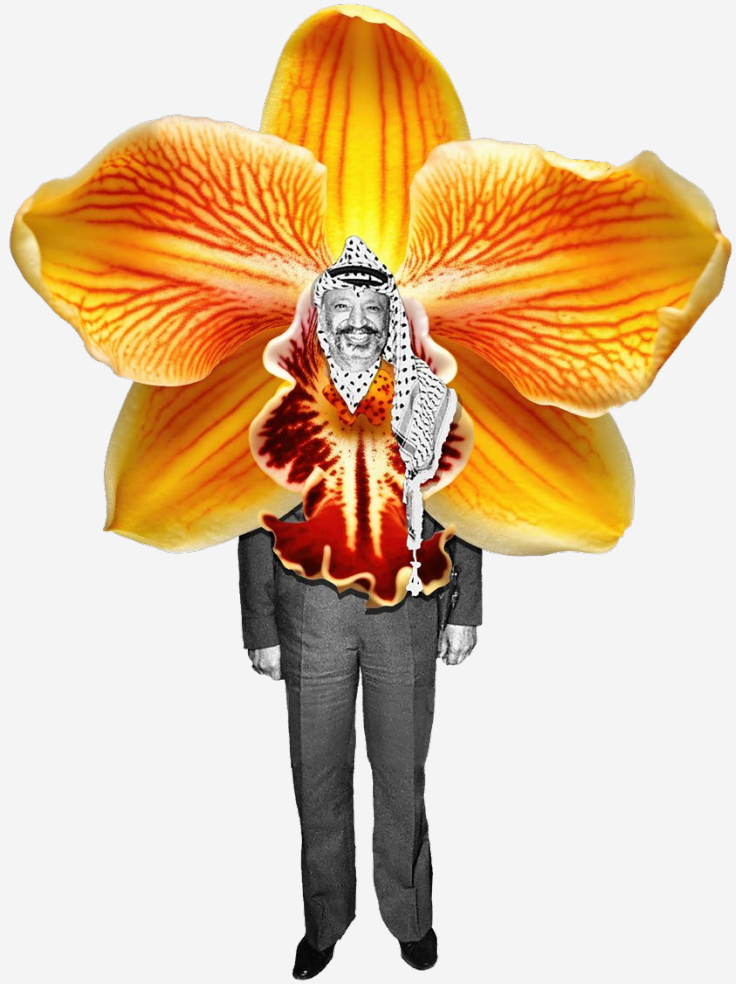
Better be watching the clouds again and again, 2026

35-part work
pigmented inkjet prints on paper mounted on PVC
each approx. 30 × 20 cm | 11 3/4 × 7 7/8 in
edition of 3 plus 2 AP
USD 50,000.00 + VAT and transport



Better be watching the clouds again and again_ Yasser Arafat, 2026

pigmented inkjet print on paper mounted on PVC
approx. 30 × 20 cm | 11 3/4 × 7 7/8 in



Better be watching the clouds again and again_ Benjamin Netanyahu, 2026

pigmented inkjet print on paper mounted on PVC
approx. 30 × 20 cm | 11 3/4 × 7 7/8 in





Installation view of *Like a rubber rung on a ladder* at Galerie Thomas Schulte, Berlin, 2026

Better be watching the clouds again and again_Nikita Khrushchev, 2026

pigmented inkjet print on paper mounted on PVC
approx. 30 × 20 cm | 11 3/4 × 7 7/8 in



Better be watching the clouds again and again_Helmut Kohl, 2026

pigmented inkjet print on paper mounted on PVC
approx. 30 × 20 cm | 11 3/4 × 7 7/8 in



ABOUT THE ARTIST

Walid Raad (b. 1967, Chbanieh, Lebanon) is an artist and a Professor of Art in (the still-charging-tuition) The Cooper Union (New York, USA). Raad's works include *The Atlas Group*, a fifteen-year project between 1989 and 2004 about the contemporary history of Lebanon, and the ongoing projects *Scratching on Things I Could Disavow* and *Sweet Talk: Commissions (Beirut)*. His books include *Walkthrough, The Truth Will Be Known When The Last Witness Is Dead, My Neck Is Thinner Than A Hair, Let's Be Honest The Weather Helped*, and *Scratching on Things I Could Disavow*. Raad's solo exhibitions include the Louvre (Paris), The Museum of Modern Art (New York, USA), ICA (Boston, USA), Museo Jumex (Mexico City, Mexico), Kunsthalle Zurich (Zurich, Switzerland), The Whitechapel Art Gallery (London, UK), Festival d'Automne (Paris, France), Kunsten Festival des Arts (Brussels, Belgium), The Hamburger Bahnhof (Berlin, Germany). His works have also been shown in Documenta 11 and 13 (Kassel, Germany), The Venice Biennale (Venice, Italy), Whitney Bienniale 2000 and 2002 (New York, USA), Sao Paulo Bienale (Sao Paulo, Brazil), Istanbul Biennal (Istanbul, Turkey), Homeworks I and IV (Beirut, Lebanon) and numerous other museums, biennales and venues in Europe, the Middle East, Asia, and the Americas. Raad is the recipient of the Aachener Kunstpreis (2018), ICP Infinity Award (2016), the Hasselblad Award (2011), a Guggenheim Fellowship (2009), the Alpert Award in Visual Arts (2007), the Deutsche Börse Photography Prize (2007), the Camera Austria Award (2005), a Rockefeller Fellowship (2003), among other grants, prizes and awards.



PUBLIC COLLECTIONS

Bristol Museum & Art Gallery, Bristol, UK
Carré d'Art, Nîmes, France
Centre Pompidou, Paris, France
FNAC: Fonds National d'Art Contemporain, Paris, France
FRAC: Fonds Régional d'Art Contemporain, Besançon, France
Gallery of Modern Art, Glasgow, UK
Guggenheim Museum, New York, USA
Hamburger Bahnhof, Berlin, Germany
Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden, Washington DC, USA
IFEMA: Institución Ferial de Madrid, Madrid, Spain
Kunsthaus Zürich, Zurich, Switzerland
Kunstmuseum Stuttgart, Stuttgart, Germany
Mathaf: Arab Museum of Modern Art, Doha, Qatar
mumok: Museum Moderner Kunst Stiftung Ludwig Wien, Vienna, Austria
Museion, Bolzano, Italy
Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofia, Madrid, Spain
MMK: Museum für Moderne Kunst, Frankfurt, Germany
EMST: National Museum of Contemporary Art, Athens, Greece
MoMA: Museum Of Modern Art, New York, USA
SFMoMA: San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, San Francisco, USA
Fundação de Serralves, Porto, Portugal
Tate Modern, London, UK
The British Museum, London, UK
The Met: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, USA
Walker Art Center, Minneapolis, USA
Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, USA
Hamburger Kunsthalle, Hamburg, Germany
Sharjah Art Foundation, Sharjah, UAE
Kadist Art Foundation, San Francisco/Paris, USA/France
Kamel Lazaar Foundation, Tunis, Tunisia
National Gallery Of Canada, Ottawa, Canada
Art Jameel, Dubai/Jeddah, Saudi Arabia/UAE
Pinakothek der Moderne München, Munich, Germany
Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam, Netherlands
MCA Chicago: Museum of Contemporary Art Chicago, Illinois, USA
Onassis Foundation, Athens, Greece
Darat Al Funun: The Khalid Shoman Foundation, Amman, Jordan
Louis Vuitton Foundation, Paris, France
MFAH: Museum of Fine Arts Houston, Houston, USA

CONTACT
GALERIE THOMAS SCHULTE
CHARLOTTENSTRASSE 24
10117 BERLIN
FON: +49 (0)30 2060 8990

GALERIE THOMAS SCHULTE POTSDAMER STRASSE
POTSDAMER STRASSE 81B
10785 BERLIN
FON: +49 (0)30 2062 7550

MAIL@THOMASSCHULTE.COM
WWW.THOMASSCHULTE.COM

GONZALO ALARCÓN
+49 (0)173 66 46 623
GONZALO@THOMASSCHULTE.COM

JULIANE KLOPFER
+49 (0)152 34 64 91 18
JULIANE@THOMASSCHULTE.COM

RONJA KARL
+49 (0)172 32 20 444
RONJAMALVINAKARL@GMAIL.COM

EIKE DÜRRFELD
+49 (0)172 30 89 074
EIKE@GALERIETHOMASSCHULTE.COM

© 2026 the artists, the photographers, and Galerie Thomas Schulte.

This preview was published on the occasion of *Like a Rubber Rung on a Ladder*. Please note that all information in this preview may be subject to changes.

With special thanks to Sfeir-Semler Gallery and Paula Cooper Gallery for their kind cooperation.